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ORAL STATEMENT

HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL MUST ESTABLISH INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATION TO BREAK THE CYCLE OF IMPUNITY

UN Human Rights Council
Thirtieth Special Session
26 May 2021

Madame President,

My name is Waed Abbas and I work for Amnesty International in East Jerusalem. I have documented a chilling pattern of Israeli forces using abusive and wanton force in East Jerusalem. Also, potential war crimes and other violations of international humanitarian law by both Israeli forces and Palestinian armed groups during 11 days of deadly hostilities, which left over 250 dead in Gaza and 12 in Israel.

In Sheikh Jarrah, I witnessed the chilling pattern of Israeli forces using abusive and wanton force against largely peaceful Palestinian protesters and the families in the neighbourhood.

I saw how the families were affected by such violence and heard from them about their continuous dispossession since 1948 until today where they are living under the imminent threat of being replaced by Jewish Israeli settlers.

From Gaza, I heard harrowing stories about how entire families were killed by Israeli strikes. They spoke with desperation that this was the fourth time since 2008 they experience this destruction, and how this is all happening as they are locked in a punitive blockade.

There is now a ceasefire, and I hope this could be the beginning of an end to the institutionalized discrimination and systematic human rights violations that Palestinians suffer on daily basis, this which is the root cause of the cycle of violence.

This is why it is essential for the Human Rights Council to do its part to break the cycle of impunity that pervades. The international community must ensure an independent and thorough investigation parallel to and complementing the ongoing investigation by the ICC.

Thank you, Madam President.