



CAIRO INSTITUTE  
FOR HUMAN RIGHTS STUDIES  
Institut du Caire pour les études des droits de l'homme  
مركز القاهرة لدراسات حقوق الإنسان

United Nations Human Rights Council – 45th Session

Joint statement<sup>1</sup>

Item 7: Human rights situation in Palestine and other occupied Arab territories

30 September 2020

Speaker: Ms. Nada Awad, Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies

Madam President,

The release of the UN database of business enterprises involved in illegal settlement activities in the occupied Palestinian territory<sup>2</sup> (oPt) on 13 February 2020 by the Office of the High Commissioner is a critical step to ensure corporate actors respect human rights, the environment, and international law. Monitoring corporate involvement in human rights abuses through tools like the UN Database and the report<sup>3</sup> by the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar are significant developments in international efforts to stop corporate exploitation in situations of occupation and conflict, which are often rife with human rights violations and impunity.

In the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, businesses not only profit from, but their activities also help maintain, facilitate, and sustain the illegal settlement enterprise, allow for de facto annexation, and contribute to the systematic denial of the basic rights of the Palestinian people, including self-determination and access to land and resources, with devastating socioeconomic impacts.

The database also provides an important contribution to the understanding of the broader economic incentive structure perpetuating the occupation, and it is critical that the database is made publicly available and annually updated to include additional businesses that are involved with settlement activities and remove those that have disengaged. We, therefore, urge Member States to support the annual update of the database and the work of the

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<sup>1</sup> Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (CIHRS), Al-Haq, Law in the Service of Man, Al Mezan Center For Human Rights, the Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counselling (WCLAC), Conectas Direitos Humanos, International Service for Human Rights (ISHR) Ramallah Center for Human Rights Studies (RCHRS), Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association, Center for Defense of Liberties and Civil Rights (Hurriyat), Al Dameer Association For Human Rights, Jerusalem Legal Aid and Human Rights Center (JLAC), CNCD-11.11.11, 11.11.11.

<sup>2</sup> United Nations, Human Rights Council, *Database of all business enterprises involved in the activities detailed in paragraph 96 of the independent international fact-finding mission to investigate the implications of the Israeli settlement on the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of the Palestinian people throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem*, A/HRC/43/7, 12 February 2020, at: [https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/RegularSessions/Session43/Documents/A\\_HRC\\_43\\_71.docx](https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/RegularSessions/Session43/Documents/A_HRC_43_71.docx).

<sup>3</sup> United Nations, Human Rights Council, *The economic interests of the Myanmar military*, A/HRC/42/CRP.3, 12 September 2019, at: [https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/RegularSessions/session42/Documents/A\\_HRC\\_42\\_CRP\\_3.docx](https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/RegularSessions/session42/Documents/A_HRC_42_CRP_3.docx).

OHCHR by ensuring that the necessary resources are allocated. Moreover, states should engage with companies included in the database and which are domiciled in their territory to ensure adherence by these companies to international legal standards concerning their operations in the oPt.

We also call on States to promote the efficacy of the database by communicating with listed companies to remind them of their responsibilities under international human rights and humanitarian law in any operations or business relationships in the oPt and to develop and strengthen national regulatory frameworks for businesses operating extraterritorially in the oPt by requiring mandatory enhanced due diligence procedures.

Thank you.