



45th Regular Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council

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

Joint Oral Intervention¹

Date: 30 September 2020

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Madam President,

Israel has aggressively pursued a policy of [silencing](#) those who seek justice and accountability for violations committed against the Palestinian people, as a tool to maintain its apartheid regime. The targeting of individual human rights defenders has been integral to Israel's numerous attempts to shrink civil society space. At a time when Israeli impunity lingers, Palestinian human rights defenders have endured [death threats](#), [arbitrary arrests](#), [travel bans](#), [residency revocation](#), and [deportation](#), as well as other intimidating tactics that aim to oppress, dominate and delegitimise them.

Earlier this month, Salah Hammouri, a 35-year-old Palestinian-French human rights defender and lawyer with Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association, was officially notified of the intention to revoke his permanent Jerusalem residency for so-called 'breach of allegiance' to the State of Israel. Previously, Israel banned Salah from the West Bank for almost 16 months and deported his wife, Elsa Lefort, a French national, separating Salah from his wife and son.

Israel illegally applies its domestic Entry into Israel Law to the protected Palestinian population in occupied East Jerusalem, revoking permanent residencies, as a measure of direct forcible transfer, in violation of Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, to establish an Israeli Jewish majority in the city.

Forcing Palestinian allegiance to Israel, the Occupying Power, further breaches Article 45 of the Hague Regulations which states that "it is forbidden to compel the inhabitants of occupied territory to swear allegiance to the hostile Power".

By silencing Palestinian civil society, Israel maintains its repressive and prolonged 53-year military occupation, while rapidly expanding its colonisation and annexation of occupied Palestinian territory, and denying the Palestinian people their inalienable right to self-determination. We call on the international community to take immediate action to protect Palestinian human rights defenders and to hold Israel accountable.

Thank you.

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