



UN Human Rights Council: 45<sup>th</sup> session

Agenda Item 2: Interactive Dialogue

Joint Oral Intervention<sup>1</sup>

September 29, 2019

Delivered by: Osamah Al-Fakih

Thank you, Madam President,

This statement is delivered on behalf of the Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies, in cooperation with Mwatana for Human Rights.

Distinguished member states, we urge you to strongly support international investigations into war crimes, other serious violations of international humanitarian law, and grave human rights abuses by renewing and strengthening the mandate of the GEE this session. As a Yemeni human rights defender, I can attest to the fact that the situation here requires nothing less.

We welcome the GEE's third report, which highlights the responsibility of all parties to the conflict in Yemen for the continuous deterioration of the human rights situation. Since 2014, parties to the conflict have continued to carry out human rights abuses, serious violations of international humanitarian law and acts that may amount to war crimes. Yemen is suffering from an "acute accountability gap," according to the GEE report.

Accountability is key to ensure justice and redress for the tens of thousands of Yemeni civilians unlawfully harmed by the warring parties throughout this conflict.

More importantly, in its third report, the GEE calls upon the Security Council to refer the situation in Yemen to the International Criminal Court, and to expand the list of persons subject to Security Council sanctions. It supports the establishment of a criminally-focused investigation body, similar to the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism for Syria, to conduct further investigations and prepare case-files.

Furthermore, the Human Rights Council is the only international venue currently open for Yemeni victims. It is time for states to act to deter further violations and protect civilians by renewing and strengthening the GEE's mandate, including to collect, consolidate, preserve and analyse evidence related to, and clarify responsibility for, the most serious crimes under international law and violations of international law and tasking the GEE to issue a special report advising states on practical steps they can take to help ensure justice and redress. Furthermore, the GEE again emphasized that states supplying arms to parties to the conflict may be violating their obligations under the Arms Trade Treaty. States must end arms supplies to the warring parties in Yemen.

Finally, I have witnessed this armed conflict since 6 years ago and have seen its massive impact on vital infrastructure and on civilians including relatives and loved ones. I have personally met and interviewed with victims of different types of violations, and their words are still resonating in my ears calling for justice. I'll conclude with the GEE Chairperson Mr. Kamel Jendoubi's quote: "Accountability is key to ensure that justice is served to the people of Yemen and to humanity."

Thank you, Mr President.

---

<sup>1</sup> Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies and Mwatana for Human Rights