



Human Rights Council 47th Session

Item 3: Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the human rights
of internally displaced persons
25 June 2021

Statement by: Al Mezan Centre for Human Rights
Delivered by: Mr. Issam Younis

Joining Organizations:

Addameer - Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association
Al-Haq, Law in the Service of Man

Madame,

We welcome your report and draw your attention to the situation in Gaza, occupied Palestine.

Between 10-21 May 2021, Israel, the Occupying Power, carried out a full-scale military offensive against Gaza. The bombardment was characterized by a disproportionate use of force and the deliberate targeting of civilians and civilian infrastructure, including of family homes.

Israeli military attacks either damaged or destroyed at least 140 buildings, many of which held multiple housing units. Consequently, tens of thousands of Palestinians—including my family and I—were forced to leave their homes to seek shelter elsewhere, knowing full well that nowhere in Gaza is actually safe.

We remind this Council that the deliberate, systematic attacks against civilian Palestinian homes, notably while residents are still inside, clearly amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity. Similarly, the ensuing forced displacement of thousands of civilians violates a wide set of human rights, including their right to adequate housing.

Gaza's longstanding housing shortages meant that many displaced families were forced to seek shelter in UNWRA schools, where some are still living in precarious humanitarian conditions. Indeed, despite the ceasefire, there are currently around 8,000 people who remain internally displaced in Gaza.

Special Rapporteur, we invite you to further investigate this issue and urge this Council and its Member States to hold Israel accountable for violating Palestinian rights, including those of IDPs in the Gaza Strip.

Thank you.