



49th Regular Session of the Human Rights Council

Item 3: Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing, 17 March 2022

Mr. Special Rapporteur,

While your report acknowledges Israel's policy of spatial segregation in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, we highlight the derivation and purpose of this policy as one directly serving Israel's apartheid system against the Palestinian people as a whole. The Israeli authorities' interconnected policies and practices of racial segregation, forced displacement, population transfer, spatial planning, and demographic engineering are tools that *intentionally* serve Israel's institutionalized system of oppression and domination.

Of foundational importance to this system are the Israeli policies in the Gaza Strip, including its closure and blockade, which *de facto* segregate more than two million Palestinians from the rest of Palestine and the outside world in what is tantamount to a South African bantustan—with the difference that, unlike in apartheid South Africa, Israel regularly bombs Gaza, with whole residential apartment blocks and individual houses targeted pursuant to an apparent policy of targeting civilian homes.

During the last offensive in May 2021, Israel destroyed more than 1,300 housing units and damaged more than 6,000, thereby displacing around 38,000 Palestinians within 11 days. However, Israel's severe restrictions on the free movement of goods to and from Gaza, including a ban on [quote] “dual-use” items, deliberately prevent the proper re-construction or building of new housing units.

We echo the call for the Special Rapporteur to undertake a country visit to investigate and report on Israel's obligations on the right to adequate housing for all Palestinians under its jurisdiction and subject to its apartheid system.

Thank you.