



The Permanent Mission of Iceland to the United Nations

Statement by
H.E. Ambassador Gunnar Pálsson
Permanent Representative

**Report of the Human Rights Council
General Assembly**

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Mr. President,

The comprehensive report of the United Nations Fact-Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict (A/HRC/12/48) has concluded that there is evidence indicating serious violations of international human rights and humanitarian law committed both by Israel during *Operation Cast Lead* and in the West Bank, as well as by Palestinian armed group in their repeated launching of rockets into southern Israel.

The report deserves serious consideration and follow-up. The conclusions drawn require concrete action, including the establishment of a credible system of investigation into the alleged violations. We reiterate our shared principle that every Member State must commit itself to full cooperation with the United Nations.

Mr. President,

Iceland fully recognizes Israel's legitimate security concerns, including over weapons smuggling and the unacceptable firing of rockets from Gaza, which destroy and endanger the lives of innocent civilians. At the same time, such violations do not justify the disproportionate use of force or the breaching of international humanitarian and human rights law.

Mr. President,

The conflict continues to threaten stability far beyond the region and the situation in the occupied Palestinian territory remains of grave concern. The people of Gaza remain besieged by limited freedom of movement, import and export restrictions and a worsening economic situation. Their situation remains unacceptable by international standards.

Meanwhile, the closure regime is still operating in the West Bank. Iceland remains deeply concerned over the situation there as well, including violence and evictions in East Jerusalem. Settlement activities must be ended. The prolonged climate of impunity has created a crisis of justice in the occupied Palestinian territory that needs to be addressed. In this regard, the aforementioned system of investigation, recommended by the Fact-Finding Mission Report, would be a welcome step in the right direction.

Mr. President,

In line with the Report, we urge both the Israeli and Palestinian parties to launch independent investigations, in conformity with international standards, into the allegations of serious violations of international human rights and humanitarian law. We also support requests to the High Commissioner for Human Rights to report to the next session of the Human Rights Council on the situation in the occupied Palestinian territory and for the Secretary General to report to this Assembly on further development.

Thank you, Mr. President.