Explanation of vote by Germany on the resolution to create the Commission of Inquiry at the special session of the Human Rights Council

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Germany deplores the high number of civilian deaths and injured, including women and children, in Israel, East Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza, as a result of the violence in the past weeks. Germany strongly condemns the indiscriminate firing of rockets from Gaza on Israel. Israel had a legitimate right to defend itself against these attacks. Foreign Minister Heiko Maas traveled to the region to discuss the situation with leaders in Israel and the Palestinian territories last week. We welcome the cease fire that has been achieved since.

As to the resolution before us, Germany holds strong reservations. The Human Rights Council has an important role in dealing with acute crisis and related human rights violations. The present resolution, however, does not address the recent escalation and omits any context.

Instead, it would mandate a Commission of Inquiry that stretches indefinitely into the future and the past. Furthermore, the task to be undertaken would far exceed previously mandated CoIs. At the recent 46th Human Rights Council, we appreciated the constructive negotiation spirit on the Middle East resolutions. By the way of thorough negotiations in good faith, good results were achieved. We regret that we did not come together in the same spirit and with enough time to negotiate this resolution. For these reasons, Germany cannot support the resolution presented. Germany therefore calls for a vote on the resolution and will vote against it…