

NORD & SUD XXI

This statement is on behalf of Nord-Sud XXI in follow up in relation to the question of the human rights of Palestinians, a question with which the United Nations has been vested for fifty years, and this Council or its predecessor since its creation. It is an issue on which this Council has recently adopted several resolutions after special sessions. It is an issue that constitutes, more than any other, the basis of judging the effectiveness of this august body and the seriousness of its members for protecting human rights.

One thing should be clear: Palestinians have a legal and moral right to fight against their oppression. This right has been recognized by the international community; it needs no further recognition. Every people have a right to protect themselves from genocide, to struggle against apartheid, to fight for their self-determination. No government has the right to subject another people to an illegal occupation, to steal their resources and their land, to destroy their cultural heritage, to kill their women, their children, the men who struggle for freedom. This is not a right that requires anyone else to legitimate it. It is a right that exists right now.

These rights are of an *erga omnes* nature. Every member of the international community can support the Palestinian struggle. The Palestinians people have the right to expect that every member of the international community will support their struggle. Those who don't are the enemies of international human rights law.

This Council cannot afford to be an enemy of international human rights law.

We ask each member state to look at its policies and its practices concerning Palestine. Why are the rights of Palestinians still violated after forty years? Why do Palestinians still live subject to an oppressive and foreign occupation? Why can the Israeli government ignore that request of the Council and its representatives with immunity?

We call on this Council to show its commitment to the human rights of the Palestinian people by renewing the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of Palestinians until the end of the occupation and by taking urgent and effective measures to ensure that the Council's decision concerning Palestine are fully implemented. Israel must be held responsible for its continuing violations of the human rights of Palestinians.