

Statement by the President of the Human Rights Council

In connection with the Council considerations of agenda item 2 *Implementation of General Assembly resolution 60/251* during its second session. The President of the Human Rights Council identified the following limited number of issues without prejudice to others considered during the current session:

Expresses its concern for the continuing violations of human rights and international humanitarian law in the occupied Palestinian territories and other occupied Arab territories mainly caused by the ongoing Israeli occupation and the escalation of violence and for the suffering of the civilian Palestine population and calls for the immediate end of violence and the release of the recently abducted and detained members of parliament and other public officials, as well as prisoners.

Further expresses its concern at the continuing Israeli settlement and related activities, in violation of international law, including the expansion of settlements, the construction of the wall, the expropriation of land, the demolition of houses, the confiscation and destruction of property, the expulsion of Palestinians and the construction of bypass roads, which change the physical character and demographic composition of the occupied territories, including East Jerusalem and the Syrian Golan and emphasizes that the displaced persons of the occupied Syrian Golan must be allowed to return to their homes and to recover their properties.

Also expresses its concern at the human rights and humanitarian situation in Lebanon as a result of the Israeli attacks affecting mainly the civilian population as well as serious breaches of international humanitarian law and notes that the report of the International Commission of Enquiry on Lebanon, requested by the Council will be considered at its next session.

Urges all concerned parties to respect the rules of international humanitarian law, to refrain from violence against the civilian population and to treat under all circumstances all detained combatants and civilians in accordance with the Geneva conventions;

Welcomes the Darfur Peace Agreement, signed in Abuja and urges the remaining stakeholders to sign this agreement.

At the same time, expresses its concern at the seriousness of the human rights and humanitarian situation in Darfur and recognizing the main responsibility of the Government to protect and promote human rights, calls on all parties to put an immediate end to ongoing violations of human rights and international humanitarian law with special focus on

vulnerable groups, including women, children, internally displaced persons and on gender-based violence. It also *calls* on all parties to ensure the full, unfettered and safe access of OHCHR monitors and humanitarian workers to all those in need in Darfur.

Recalls that the Darfur Peace Agreement stipulates the principles of enhancing accountability and preventing impunity and urges all parties to fully cooperate in the implementation of this Darfur Peace Agreement and relevant UN resolutions in this regard. Furthermore, it calls upon the international community to honour pledges of support in the promotion and protection of human rights;

Condemns any advocacy of religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence and expresses its commitment and resolve to prevent and combat incitement to all forms of religious or racial hatred and violence in conformity with article 20 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, through the promotion of mutual understanding, tolerance and dialogue;

Recognizes that the Council provides an important forum to enhance dialogue and broaden understanding amongst all peoples, their cultures and religions, while reaffirming the right to freedom of religion and belief and expresses its intention to promote activities in future sessions related to this issue;

Expresses its determination to work towards the elevation of the Right to Development to the same level and on a par with all other components of the human rights and fundamental freedoms system; to advance the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals; to identify ways and means to ensure its application and to continue mainstreaming the right of development in the policies and operational activities of the United Nations and its specialized agencies, programs and funds as well as in policies and strategies of an international financial and multilateral trading system.

6 October 2006