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40th SESSION OF HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

General Debate on Agenda Item 7 -Human rights situation in Palestine and other occupied Arab territories

Remarks by Pakistan

(18 March 2019)

Mr. President,

Pakistan reaffirms the importance of this important Agenda Item. Lack of progress on the Palestinian issue has not only betrayed the hopes and aspirations of generations of Palestinians but has also sowed the seeds of endless hostility and discord in the region.

The Right to Self-Determination is a basic human right which is enshrined in the UN Charter and Common Article 1 of the two Covenants. It is unfortunate and regrettable that in some parts of the world, including in Palestine, millions of people have been denied this fundamental human right for more than seven decades.

The long-suffering Palestinian people continue to face well-entrenched and systematic violations of their fundamental human rights at the hands of the Israeli occupation. During the past seventy years, they have been driven from their homes and their homeland, militarily occupied and obliged to live in conditions resembling apartheid.

Mr. President,

Pakistan strongly condemns the forceful closure of Al-Aqsa mosque's compound. This is inhumane and a clear violation of the UN charter for freedom of religion. The systematic aggressions and attacks against Al-Aqsa Mosque by the occupying power calls for public mobilization at all levels to protect it and to thwart the Israeli plans aimed at controlling and dividing it.

We regret that Israeli settlement activity, characterized by house demolitions, forced evictions of families and communities, and building new colonies, in grave violation of UN Security Council Resolution 2334 (2016)

continues with impunity.

To end this ongoing pattern of human rights violations, violence and insecurity, the international community must take urgent action to resolve the longstanding dispute of Palestine by supporting the two State solution on the pre 1967 borders, based on a free and secure State of Palestine with Al-Quds Al Sharif as its capital, living side by side and in peace with all its neighbours. We also urge Israel to end the illegal occupation of all occupied Arab territories, including the occupied Syrian Golan and the Lebanese territories, and the continuing violations of the human rights of their people.

I thank you.