

Human Rights Council

25th session

Item 6, UPR Israel

Statement by the International Organisation for the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination (EAFORD) and Geneva International Centre for Justice (GICJ)

Thank you Mr President,

This is a joint statement by EAFORD and Geneva International Centre for Justice

Mr President, the UPR is one of the most significant instruments for the promotion and protection of Human Rights. All states are treated on equal footing and have their human rights situation assessed on the same level. This unique feature makes attempts to undermine it especially critical. The failure of Israel in January 2013 to appear before the Working Group for its review thus created a dangerous precedent for the work of this Council and the respect of human rights worldwide.

When on 29 October 2013 Israel finally underwent its human rights review the proclaimed cooperation was contradicted by the fact that when Israel's participation was subject of political bargaining process such as attempts to undermine standing agenda Item 7 on the Human Rights Council's agenda.

Israel's performance before this Council then caused an even bigger disappointment than the months of political deadlock that proceeded. It presented itself as the victim of politically motivated scrutiny and lacked to address the most central controversy of its national politics: its grave human rights violations within the occupied Palestinian Territories and the illegal expansion of its settlements.

As a tragic illustration of this failure, Israel praised in highest terms the "right to adequate housing" inside this Council the same moment as we received pictures of a Palestinian family standing in front of their demolished home in East Jerusalem, which Israel had torn down the night before after granting further 1700 new housing units to settlers. The pain in their eyes stood in dire contrast to Israel's simultaneously proclaimed readiness to make painful compromises and rendered its compliance a tragic farce to avoid international criticism.

The tip of the iceberg however was Israel's rejection of all recommendations on grounds that they contain the term "State of Palestine". Such a stand is more than unreasonable and proves a further time how two-faced the state pursues its policies towards the occupied territories.

Mr President, we are deeply concerned about the continuing lack of cooperation, which is one more time reflected in this report. We call on this Council to take adequate action, not make any concessions in exchange for such a fallacy.

Thank you