

Draft Statement on behalf of the Group of Arab States on the Situation in
the Palestinian Territories
Delivered by H.E. Mr. Mohamed Mezghani
Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Tunisia
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Mr. Chair,

1. The Group of Arab States strongly believes that the assembly of the CCPJ at this important juncture in time provides an invaluable opportunity to review the global status of the implementation of the foundational principles of the Commission. The Group underscores that the work of the Commission must not be conducted in isolation of its international surroundings.
2. From this viewpoint, the Group of Arab States reaffirms that striving to ensure the respect for the rule of law and the safeguarding of criminal justice are key tenets of the work of the CCPJ. The Group believes that states, which deliberately disregard the principles upon which the commission was founded and refuse to uphold them, risk the propagation of all forms of crime within their own territories and beyond. As the injustices perpetrated by these states, which amount to the status of state-sponsored crimes, create an environment that undermines the goals that the Commission seeks to achieve.
3. In this context, the Group of Arab States condemns in the strongest terms the occupying Power's repeated attacks against Palestinians, its confiscation and demolition of their homes, lands and properties, including in the Sheikh Jarrah and Silwan neighborhoods of East Jerusalem, its assaults on Muslim and Christian worshippers and their holy sites, including the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound, its arbitrary detention of peaceful protesters, all of which are part of a systematic, deliberate ethnic cleansing campaign aimed at changing the historical and legal status of the Holy City and further colonising Palestinian land.

4. These illegal actions are being carried out every single day in grave breach of international humanitarian and criminal law and in violation of Security Council, General Assembly and Human Rights Council resolutions, including the specific prohibitions on policies and measures aimed at altering the character, demographic composition and status of the Holy City of Jerusalem.
5. The Group of Arab States holds Israel, the occupying Power, fully responsible for these heinous acts, including terrorist acts perpetrated by fanatic Israeli settlers against defenseless Palestinian civilians. These illegal and violent actions are being carried out with the full protection and support of the occupation army. We must be alert of these grave developments and their potential serious repercussions as religious sensitivities in the City continue to be dramatically provoked and inflamed.
6. Here the Group of Arab States emphasises that approaching the volatile situation in occupied East Jerusalem with false equivalence, in a fundamentally asymmetric context of settler colonialism, is both unacceptable and disingenuous. Equating a coloniser and a colonised people indicates not only a lack of seriousness to stop the escalation but also the absence of a credible political process in the horizon that is based on international law and respectful of human rights.
7. The international community must uphold its legal responsibilities and act decisively to bring a halt to Israel's crimes against the Palestinian people and their properties in Al-Quds and the entire land of Palestine; to protect Palestinian civilians, including from Israel's genocidal military assaults against the civilian population in the besieged Gaza Strip, which have since 10 May led to the massacre of tens of Palestinians, including children, and to the wounding of hundreds; to put an end to the illegal occupation of Palestinian land; and to hold Israel accountable in view of bringing long-overdue justice to all victims of its colonial and apartheid regime and in view of deterring further crimes.

8. Finally, the Group of Arab States reiterates their adherence to a just, lasting and comprehensive peace based on the two-State solution and to East Jerusalem being the capital of the State of Palestine, in line with the endorsed international principles, including as enshrined in the relevant United Nations resolutions and the 2002 Arab Peace Initiative.

9. We urge the international community to take tangible international action to salvage the prospects for this internationally agreed solution, before it is too late.

Thank you Chair,