# UN Human Rights Committee says Israel violates housing rights and denies Palestinians access to water

COHRE

5 August 2010 – The UN Human Rights Committee has found Israel in violation of its commitments under international law. The violations identified by the Committee include forced evictions of Palestinians from their homes, the demolition of Palestinian homes, and denying Palestinians access to safe drinking water and sanitation.

The UN Human Rights Committee issued its findings against Israel at the conclusion of its three-week session in Geneva,

The Committee found that the Israeli violations of Palestinian's housing rights, including forced evictions and house demolitions in Gaza, the West Bank and East Jerusalem, amounted to cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment.

For the first time ever, the Human Rights Committee also addressed denial of access to water and sanitation as violations of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), finding that in the case of Israel, they amounted to violations of the right to life and the right to equal protection under the law.

"The Committee's findings on water and sanitation are groundbreaking," said Bret Thiele, COHRE's Senior Expert on Litigation and Legal Advocacy.

"What this means is that the ICCPR is now yet another avenue to address lack of access to water and sanitation by communities. But the challenge remains to ensure that these breakthroughs result in real change on the ground in Palestine and Israel."

The Human Rights Committee also found that Israeli violations of housing rights and its denial of access to water and sanitation by the Bedouin communities in the Negev region amounted to violations of the right of communities to enjoy their own culture.

**Notes to editors:**

- The UN Human RightsCommittee is a body of independent experts that monitors implementation ofthe International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) by its Stateparties.
- All States that haveratified the ICCPR – including Israel – are obliged to submit regularreports to the Committee on how the rights are being respected. TheCommittee examines each report and addresses its concerns andrecommendations to the State party in the form of "concludingobservations".
- COHRE and the independentPalestinian human rights organization Al-Haq submitted a report to the UNHuman Rights Committee in advance of its examination of Israel regardingthe organization's concerns regarding human rights violations by Israel,particularly in the area of housing and access to water and sanitation.

**To see a full copy of the COHRE and Al-Haq report on Israeli violations with regard to house demolitions, forced evictions and lack of safe water and sanitation, click here.**

**The read the UN Human Rights Committee's Concluding Observations, please click here.**

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