



MEDIA STATEMENT

SPECIAL MISSION BY MYAQSA TO PROSECUTE ISRAEL AT THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT (ICC)

“TRACKING DOWN THE VICTIMS AND WITNESSES OF ISRAEL’S BRUTALITY IN JERUSALEM”

1. This press conference is held to report MyAQSA’s latest initiative in demanding the International Criminal Court (ICC) to prosecute Israel on the grounds of war crimes and crimes against humanity as well as continuous breach of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2334.
2. In response to the ICC’s own recommendation to MyAQSA during a joint meeting held in The Hague, Netherlands last May to identify the witnesses that can be used during the prosecution, MyAQSA has taken the initiative to send a special delegation consisting of 10 observers to the West Bank, Palestine in early October.
3. The MyAQSA’s Special Delegation consists of several lawyers, translators and media crews. The delegation went to Palestinian settlements which often face Israel’s demolition actions which are Wadi Al-Hummus, Issawiyya, and At-Tur (Mount of Olives). All of these places are located within Jerusalem, West Bank, Palestine.
4. We were at Jerusalem for three days to directly meet the victims, to gather evidences and to collect direct testimony regarding the crimes against humanity committed by the Israeli regime against the Palestinian victims.
5. Whilst the delegation was there, we were able to meet and interview more than 20 victims and lawful Palestinian land owners whose homes were ravaged by the Israeli regimes. Their testimonies were taken in great detail and recorded so that the evidences can be brought to the attention and action of the Prosecutor’s Office of the International Criminal Court.

6. The MyAQSA's Special Delegation is of the view that the Israeli regime has adopted a systematic and deliberate way of wrongly changing the demographic of the area that it has illegally occupied and currently, we are in the process of collecting further data to reinforce the criminal case against Israel.
7. In the cases that had occurred in Wadi Al-Hummus, most of the homes belonging to the Palestinian citizens were demolished on the grounds of security because the location of their homes were located near a Separation Wall that was illegally constructed by the Israeli regime. For the record, in 2004, the International Court of Justice declared the Israeli Separation Wall as unlawful in the eyes of the law and construction had to be stopped immediately.
8. Our team was informed that the area declared as a security area around the illegally constructed Separation Wall was done arbitrarily and justification was not given to the Palestinian land owners. Numerous unnecessary restrictions were imposed on the land owners which caused some of them to eventually move out. The excuse of unlawfully constructing their houses without permit were often used to demolish the houses belonging to the Palestinian citizens without any compensation being given. As a result, not only the area became inhabitable, the land owners also had to pay damages to the Israeli regimes for the demolition. Eventually, this led to some of the Palestinian citizens having to become squatters or stay outside their own village area.
9. Whereas in Issawiya and At-Tur, the original Palestinian settlers faced constant harassment by the Israeli regime. We were informed that they were under constant threat of having their houses being demolished, raided and searched, which occurred frequently, as well as arrest and detention without any reasons by the Israeli authorities. In fact, some of them claimed that their houses were demolished after a member of their family was arrested and jailed by the Israeli authorities. Such an environment is seen to be purposely planned in a systematically way by the Israeli regime to make the Palestinians in the area having to move out and find a new settlement elsewhere.

10. Our team were also able to see how the area inhabited by the Palestinian citizens appeared to be in poor condition with poor, narrow roads and lacking of infrastructure and public facilities. It was informed to us that new settlements and areas were built completely and exclusively for the Jews. This is the practice by the Israeli regime to increase the ratio of Jewish:Palestinians population in favour of the former and as a result, constitutes to the changing of the demographics in an unfair and wrongful manner as well as in violation of the international law applicable to Israel as an occupying force in the area.
11. In conclusion, the findings and research conducted by our team directly in the field found that there is a strong evidence and testimony to convict Israel on the grounds of committing crimes against humanity against the Palestinian citizens which is one of the crimes that has been provided for by the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. At the same time, Israel's violation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2334 is apparent and clear when they continuously build new settlements for the Jews on lands belonging to the Palestinians. This is in violation to the Resolution 2334 passed by the United Nations Security Council in 2016 whereby Israel was asked to immediately stop all new settlement activities for the Jews on Palestinian soil.
12. MyAQSA will prepare a complete report of our findings and will submit the findings to the Prosecutor's Office of the International Criminal Court in The Hague, Netherlands in the near future. MyAQSA is confident that with the findings obtained by us, as well as the other findings that has been obtained by the International Criminal Court, the International Criminal Court is left with not much choice but to quickly begin the official prosecution process against the Israeli regime.
13. Lastly, MyAQSA calls on all international communities as well as the local communities to jointly make demands and pressure so that the Israeli regime can be brought to face its crimes. MyAQSA would also like to invite other bodies around the globe to participate in submitting evidences and reports of Israeli's cruelty to the International Criminal Court.

14. MyAQSA hopes that all initiative that has been taken by MyAQSA will have an appropriate impact so that the atrocities committed by the Israeli Zionist regime against the Palestinians can be judged as fairly as it can be through all existing legal provisions. What is important is Palestine and the Palestinian citizens should be given the right to exist in peace and fairness whilst Jerusalem and Al-Aqsa Mosque be remained in the hands of the Muslims without any interference by Israel.

LUKMAN SHERIFF BIN ALIAS

Head of MyAQSA Special Delegation

MyAQSA Foundation

23 October 2019M / 24 Safar 1441H

Website : www.myaqsa.my

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