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Call for input: Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967

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### Call for input: Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967

### **Questions:**

1) In your views, what are the most serious violations of international law in the occupied Palestinian territory that warrant the Special Rapporteur's attention and reporting?

2) Among those issues, which one do you consider the Special Rapporteur may be able to address in the most effective and strategic manner, based on the scope of her mandate, working methods and approach?

3) What actions would you suggest that the Special Rapporteur takes to address the issue, within the purview of her mandate?

4) Who are the important duty-bearers and other actors that could influence positive change (e.g. Government authorities, civil society organizations, businesses, media, religious groups, diplomatic community, other international human rights mechanisms) that you would recommend the Special Rapporteur to more proactively engage with? **1.** Recently, extreme violence and attacks became widespread in the OPT and have resulted in the death of many Palestinians.<sup>1</sup> Amnesty International<sup>2</sup> and the OHCHR<sup>3</sup> have already denounced the impunity of Israel. Those attacks violated the right to life, the right to liberty and security of person.<sup>4</sup> It could also be seen as an act of cruel, degrading, and inhumane treatment which is prohibited by international human rights. In addition to this incitement to hatred, there is the destruction of Palestinian homes as collective punishment which are violations of the prohibition of property destruction but also to the right to own a property.<sup>5</sup>

According to reports published by human rights organisations and the CEDAW Committee, the violation of rights of women persists in Palestinian territory, as forced marriages and crimes against honour.<sup>6</sup> According to Human Rights Watch, "the PA has not taken the necessary steps to ensure access to justice for victims of sexual violence."<sup>7</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Le HuffPost, « Cisjordanie : le chaos à Huwara inquiète jusqu'à Paris et Berlin », 27 February 2023, Available <u>here</u>.; Haaretz, "Far-right Netanyahu Ally 'Pleased With Deterrence' After Settlers Riot in West Bank", 27 February 2023, Available <u>here</u>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Amnesty International, « Israel/OPT: Israeli military cannot keep killing Palestinians like Shireen Abu Akleh with impunity", 15 November 2022, Available <u>here</u>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> United Nations, 'Israel: UN rights chief calls for end to 'culture of impunity' 14 may 2022, Available <u>here</u>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> See the Appendix 1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Amnesty International, « Les femmes, deux fois victimes du conflit Israélo-Palestinien », 31 March 2005, Available <u>here</u>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Ibid.

**2.** According to the prerogatives of the SR, which give the possibility to investigate violations by Israel of the principles of international humanitarian law, she could investigate cases of destruction of houses in the OPT, which are not justified by military necessity but used as measures of collective punishment which constitutes a serious violation of IHL. Also, the judicial reform undertaken by the Knesset – whose adoption would question Israeli democracy and allow the legislative organ to legalise unlawful West bank settlements – may be a priority for the SR to prevent new violations of the right to property.<sup>8</sup>

Secondly, the SR may also investigate on violations committed by the Palestinian Authority on women's rights, who are victims in two ways: victims of being Palestinian under Israeli occupation and victims because of their gender in a patriarchal Palestinian society.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> United Nations, OHCHR, "Israel : UN Human Rights Chief expresses concern over proposed legislative change, urges pause", 21 February 2023, Available <u>here</u>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Medfeminiswiya, "CEDAW faces a fierce battle in Palestine", 22 March 2021. Available here.

**3.** Regarding the prohibition of destruction of property, the SR could take advantage of the recent Abraham  $Accords^{10}$  with the Arab states to encourage them in preventing these violations.

The ongoing judicial reform would weaken the powers of the Supreme Court, potentially giving unprecedented power to ultra-orthodox groups. The Knesset could legalize settlements without the Supreme Court being able to block them. The SR could leverage the strong opposition from the Knesset and NGOs to launch an advocacy campaign denouncing the threat that this reform poses to democracy. It would aim to mobilize a substantial portion of the Israeli population, tarnish Israel's reputation, and impact its soft power.

On the UPR of Israel to be held on the 9<sup>th</sup> of May,<sup>11</sup> the SR could draft a report to present to the Permanent Missions in Geneva to encourage States to make specific recommendations on the rights mentioned above.

Concerning the violations of the rights of women in the Palestinian territory, the SR can act with the PA to better advise human rights policies. Specially to work on new "drafts of criminal and family laws to prevent forced marriages".<sup>12</sup> Another possible action would be to train "government employees who come into contact with victims of physical and sexual violence on how to deal with such cases appropriately and establish clear and explicit guidelines of intervention in line with international standards and best practices"<sup>13</sup>. The SR could also work with the CEDAW to submit reports on the implementation of the Convention.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> U.S. Department of State, The Abraham Accords Declaration, Available <u>here</u>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> United Nations, Human Rights Council, *Universal Periodic Review*, Meetings and events, 43rd session, Timetable, Available <u>here</u>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> HRW, "A question of security - Violence against Palestinian Women and Girls", 6 November 2006, Available here, *Op. Cit.* 

 $<sup>^{13}</sup>$  Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> CEDAW, Article 22.

**4.** Based on the above, the Israeli parliamentary opposition could positively influence the actions we recommend to the SR. Its legislative power may prevent the adoption of a law that would adversely affect Palestinian rights.

Arab States that have recently normalised their relations with Israel could be helpful actors to achieve the actions we recommend to the SR in the sense that they may have leverage on Israel. Algeria, which has reunited several Palestinians factions under an agreement to hold presidential and legislative elections<sup>15</sup>, could encourage the protection of human rights in the Palestinian territory.

In view of its political and economic influence, the EU can impose substantial constraints on Israel in response to its failure to comply with its international obligations.<sup>16</sup>

The SR could also contact companies with subsidiaries on Israel's territory to remind them of their due diligence regarding serious violations of human rights. Indeed, international law, through the UN Guidelines on Business and Human Rights<sup>17</sup> or the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises<sup>18</sup>, although not binding, establishes a line of conduct that companies must respect in their activities.

Finally, the SR could approach FIFA<sup>19</sup> and Eurovision to press for a suspension of Israel's participation because of its apartheid policy.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> "Quatorze factions palestiniennes, dont le Fatah et le Hamas, signent un accord de réconciliation », France 24, 13 October 2022, Available <u>here</u>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Centre for European Reform, "Can Europe overcome its paralysis on Israel and Palestine? ", 26 February 2020, Available <u>here</u>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> The UN guiding principles on business and Human Rights, Available <u>here</u>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises 2011 Edition, Available <u>here</u>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> See also, the Appendix 4.

## APPENDIX

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## Summary table of the main violations committed by Israel against the Palestinians

Violated rights	<b>CEDAW</b> (Signed by Israel in 1980, ratified in 1991. Ratified in 2014 by State of Palestine)	ICCPR <sup>20</sup> (Signed by Israel in 1966, ratified in 1991)	CERD <sup>21</sup> (Signed in 1966, ratified in 1979)	IVth Geneva Convention <sup>22</sup> (Signed in 1950, ratified in 1951)
Elimination of prejudices and stereotypes	Article 5			
Elimination of discrimination in marriage and family relations	Article 16 b)			
Prohibition of torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment		Article 7		Articles 27, 32
Right to liberty of movement and freedom to choose his residence and freedom to leave any country		Article 12	Article 5 d) i)	Article 35
Right of privacy and family life		Article 17		
Right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion		Article 18	Article 5 d) vii)	Article 58
Right to own a property			Article 5 d) v)	
Prohibition of collective punishment				Article 33
Prohibition of property destruction				Article 53

 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, Status of ratification interactive dashboard.
 Available <u>here</u>.
 <sup>21</sup> *Ibid*.
 <sup>22</sup> *Ibid*.

## **A.** Most serious violations of international law identified in the occupied Palestinian territory

#### a. Violation of freedom of religious worship and access to holy places

#### General Assembly of the United Nations, A/ES-10/589|S/2013/269, 6 May 2013. Available here.

Israel, the occupying Power, continues its oppression of the Palestinian people by means of all illegal policies, including, by violating their freedom of religious worship and access to holy places. This has again been starkly reflected in the recent obstruction of Christian Easter ceremonies, particularly in the Old City of Occupied East Jerusalem, where the Church of the Holy Sepulchre is located, a holy site and major pilgrimage centre for Christians from around the world.

Tens of thousands of Palestinian Christians and their brethren who were attempting to access Occupied East Jerusalem were physically and verbally harassed, some of them beaten, at various checkpoints erected by the Israeli occupying forces in and around the city. Many of them were completely prevented and others delayed from participating in religious ceremonies to mark Holy Saturday on the eve of the Christian Orthodox Easter. This included the obstruction of a visit organized by Palestinian Christian groups and the Palestinian Governor of the Jerusalem Governorate with foreign diplomats.

Such aggressive behaviour by the occupying Power once again marred the Easter celebrations and the centuries-old rituals performed on this day. Moreover, Israel's actions constituted yet another attempt to undermine and deny the Christian identity and presence in the city, along with other unlawful measures it continues to pursue targeting the Palestinian, Arab and Muslim identity and character of the city. Such illegal measures include, but are not limited to, settlement and wall construction, home demolitions, evictions of Palestinian families, revocation of residency rights, excavations, restrictions on access to the city and the continued closure of official Palestinian institutions.

#### b. Destruction of private property in Gaza

#### Amnesty International, "Israel's Apartheid against Palestinians", 2022, p. 171. Available here.

#### **DESTRUCTION OF GAZA'S INFRASTRUCTURE**

Between 2000 and 2005, at least 2,500 homes were destroyed along the "buffer zone" outside the context of military offensives.<sup>897</sup> Israel's four major military operations in Gaza between 2008 and 2021, carried out within the context of the illegal blockade devastated civilian housing and essential infrastructure, including electricity, water and sewerage and sanitation plants.<sup>898</sup>

## B'Tselem, "4.5 years after Israel destroyed thousands of homes in Operation Protective Edge: 13,000 Gazans still homeless", 3 March 2019. Available <u>here.</u>

During the fifty days of Operation Protective Edge in the summer of 2014, Israel bombed and shelled the Gaza Strip, causing massive damage to civilian infrastructure and homes. About 18,000 residential units were either completely destroyed or heavily damaged, leaving more than 100,000 Palestinians – some 17,000 families – homeless. The destruction was caused by Israel's unlawful open-fire policy, which included bombardment of civilians and civilian structures from the air, land and sea. According to the military's own figures, as reported in the media, the scale of shelling during the operation was unprecedented: 35,000 artillery shells of different types and 14,500 tank shells, not including air raids. Artillery is known as a "statistic weapon" because it is intrinsically inaccurate and can land anywhere within a range of dozens of meters. Using artillery in a crowded urban environment inevitably causes destruction on a large scale.

After the shelling ended, families who had lost their homes received financial aid from international organizations, chiefly UNRWA. Some families rented apartments and others moved in with relatives or into pre-fabs.

Today, more than four years later, about 20% of the homes are still unusable and some 2,300 families – about 13,000 people – remain homeless.

#### c. Destruction of private property in East Jerusalem

Aljazeera, "Israeli forces demolish Palestinian home in Sheikh Jarrah", 19 January 2022. Available <u>here.</u>

**Sheikh Jarrah, occupied East Jerusalem** – Israeli forces have destroyed the home of a Palestinian family in Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood in occupied East Jerusalem, days after the family tried to stave off the demolition by threatening to blow up the house.

Large numbers of Israeli police and special forces raided the Salhiyeh home and cordoned off the surrounding area at 3am (01:00 GMT) on Wednesday. The family told Al Jazeera that dozens of heavily armed forces broke into their home while they slept and assaulted family members, arresting six of them including the head of the household, Mahmoud Salhiyeh.

#### **B.** Duty-bearers and other actors that could influence positive change

Important duty bearers	Means
Palestinian Authority	A dialogue with the Palestinian authorities can be established to ensure the promotion and violation of human rights with a particular focus on women's rights.
Hamas	The above-mentioned measures can also be taken in partnership with Hamas. Beyond the fact that Hamas is the <i>de facto</i> authority in the territory of Gaza, since 2007, together with Fatah, both are the most politically and socially influential groups in Palestinian society and dispute among themselves the representation of the Palestinian people.
Egypt	The common border with Egypt, called Rafah, in the Sinai region, makes the country currently governed by the President Sisi an important player in the region. Under the justification of the security and stability of the Sinai region, the border is tightly controlled - when the crossing is not formally closed for several days. <sup>23</sup> Aiming to control the clandestine shipment of weapons to Hamas <sup>24</sup> - the group that controls the Gaza enclave and whose origin is the Muslim Brotherhood, connected, in turn, to the political opposition to Sisi's government -, the declarations of Palestinian people who cross the border reveal an arbitrary and truculent action by the border police <sup>25</sup> . In addition to the violation of the right to come and go of Palestinians living in Gaza <sup>26</sup> , this border control also affects the right to health, work and education, once people spend hours - maybe days - waiting for the liberation of crossing the border, which results in many Palestinians missing their appointments in the neighbouring country <sup>27</sup> . Furthermore, the negative effect on the supply of basic items for daily life in the Gaza region, such as fuel, food and natural gas, is also notorious. In practice, Egypt's control of the Rafah border

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Amnesty International, "Israel's Apartheid against Palestinians", February 2022, *Op. Cit.* p. 20, 95.
<sup>24</sup> Hebdo Al-Ahram, « Gaza: La sécurité de l'Egypte avant tout », 19 November 2013, Available <u>here</u>.
<sup>25</sup> UJFP - Union Juive Française Pour la Paix, « Gaza: La prison à ciel ouvert d'Israël, 15 ans déjà », 14 June 2022, Available here.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> HRW, « Israël: 50 ans d'occupation et de violations répétées », 4 June 2017, Available <u>here</u>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> Ibid.

	results in an increase in the humanitarian shortage of the overpopulation that inhabits Gaza <sup>28</sup> . In this sense, it is important to remember that one of the competencies of the UNRS is to send communications to States in order to make urgent appeals to stop violations: within the scope of this work, contact with the Egyptian government would be providential.
African Union	The African Union regularly adopts decisions on its position on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Since its creation in 2002, the AU has adopted 18 decisions on "the situation in Palestine", sometimes holding Israel "responsible for the failure of the peace process and negotiations" (18th session) or calling on the international community to "pressure Israel to engage in a process of genuine peace negotiations and to cease all settlement activities" (27th and 37th sessions). On this basis, the AU can be a relevant actor that the UNSR can call upon to adopt new decisions and put
Morocco	pressure on Israel. Having recently normalised its relations with Israel, Morocco is a privileged interlocutor in the Arab world, notably because of the Moroccan Jewish community and the economic cooperation between the states. The King of Morocco is the Chairman of the Al Quds Committee. <sup>29</sup> This status could allow Morocco to impose itself as a mediator and advocate for the protection of Palestinian rights.
Brazil	With the re-election of President Lula in Brazil, the Global South country reappears in the international sphere as an important player in defending the Palestinian cause. In addition to the country's interest in disputing a permanent seat at the UNSC, raising the Palestinian issue as an object of international mediation in favour of the international recognition of the two States, that is, Palestine and Israel "coexisting side by side in security and with internationally recognised borders recognized" - in the words of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mauro Vieira <sup>30</sup> -, the Palestinian cause also mobilizes an ideological dimension of Lula's political party, the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Le Monde Diplomatique, « Gaza, le blocus au quotidien », 18 January 2008, Available <u>here</u>.
<sup>29</sup> Organisation de la Coopération Islamique, « Les Comités », Available <u>here</u>.
<sup>30</sup> Gov.br, Ministério das Relações Exteriores "Discurso do Embaixador Mauro Vieira por ocasião da posse no cargo de Ministro de Estado das Relações Exteriores - Brasília", 2 January 2023, Available <u>here</u>.

Workers' Party (PT): historically linked to anti- imperialism and anti-colonialism, which caused "the sympathy for the Palestinian cause, represented by the party relations with the PLO since the 1980s and the personal contact between Lula da Silva and Yasser Arafat" <sup>31</sup> . In this sense, it is worth considering the possibility of the UN Special Rapporteur working directly with the Brazilian government in order to strategically bring the issue to the international sphere.
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Other actors	Means
International community	The inviolability of the right to self-determination confers obligations of an <i>erga omnes</i> character, as recognised by the International Court of Justice in its jurisprudence <sup>32</sup> . Consequently, it entails obligations for all states of the international community, since the purpose of this obligation is the protection of the fundamental values of the international community and in particular those relating to respect for the dignity and inherent worth of the human person concerning fundamental human rights <sup>33</sup> . As such, States, on the basis of article 48 of the International Law Commission's Draft Articles on the International Responsibility of States for International responsibility of the State of Israel. Moreover, despite the existence of a debate as to whether or not this law has the status of a norm of <i>jus cogens</i> , regional law, through the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights <sup>34</sup> , seems to have closed it in its jurisprudence. As far as international law is concerned, the International Court of Justice, although it has not yet explicitly pronounced in its jurisprudence on the <i>jus</i>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> PONTES, Marina, "A questão palestina nos governos de Lula da Silva : pragmatismo ou ideologia?", 11 June 2019, Available here.

 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> ICJ, Legal consequences of the separation of the Chagos Archipelago from Mauritius in Mauritius (Mauritius v. United Kingdom), advisory opinion of 25 February 2019, p. 139, par. 180.
 <sup>33</sup> ICJ, Barcelona Traction, Light and Power Company, Limited (Belgium v. Spain), judgement of 5 February

<sup>1970,</sup> p. 32, par. 34.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights, Bernard Mornah v. Benin and 7 other States, Application No. 028/2018, 22 September 2022, par. 298.

	<i>cogens</i> quality of the right to self-determination, also seems to corroborate the African Court's assertion through evidence based on the provisions of international law such as Article 1 §2 of the United Nations Charter. Finally, if one considers that such a right has the character of <i>jus cogens</i> , Article 41 of the above-mentioned draft also offers the possibility for States to take lawful measures, particularly of a commercial nature, against the State of Israel, a relatively small State that depends on the international community for trade and investment. In any case, the international community, through the UN General Assembly, could adopt lawful measures to make Israel respect the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people according to the International Court of Justice. <sup>35</sup>
USA	They act as Israel's diplomatic protector at the UN and in all international bodies and block any sanctions that might be taken against Israel. <sup>36</sup> This is particularly the case in the UN Security Council because of the systematic rejection by the US of Council drafts or resolutions that explicitly condemn Israel's continuing violation of international law and whose purpose could be to take both coercive and non-coercive measures. <sup>37</sup>
European Union	Israel is a member of several important scientific and economic cooperation agreements initiated by the European Union, which is its main trading partner and several of its main members supply it with large quantities of arms. In view of its political and economic influence, the EU can impose substantial constraints on Israel in response to its failure to comply with its international obligations and to fully end its occupation in East Jerusalem. <sup>38</sup> Except for a minority of states, unity emerges amongst European states concerning the reprehension of Israel's

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> ICJ, *Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory* (Palestine v. Israel), advisory opinion of 9 july 2004, p. 16, par. 26.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> Financial Times, "Ban Ki-moon: US should back a new approach to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict", 21 June 2021, Available <u>here</u>.

 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> Sud Ouest International, « Israël : les Américains mécontents d'un projet de résolution condamnant les colonies », 17 February 2023, Available <u>here</u>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> Centre for European Reform, "Can Europe overcome its paralysis on Israel and Palestine?", 26 February 2020, Available <u>here</u>.

	illicit acts. <sup>39</sup> As a result, sanctions from the European Union in reaction to Israel's illicit behaviours may be envisaged (such as massive and unprecedented sanctions adopted by EU against Russia in response to the war of aggression against Ukraine <sup>40</sup> ). Sanctions are effective in 34% of cases, <sup>41</sup> if they do not meet the primary goal (the behaviour's change of the state targeted by sanctions), they have a significant impact in contributing to the isolation of the latter and sending messages to its allies and its population <sup>42</sup> .
NGOs	HRW, Amnesty International, B'Tselem : Its main task is to "document and inform the Israeli public and decision-makers about human rights violations in the occupied territories, combat the situation of denial prevailing in the Israeli public, and help create a culture of human rights in Israel", <sup>43</sup> Yesh Din : Volunteers for Human Rights is an Israeli organisation working in Israel and in the West Bank. The purpose of Yesh Din, as reflected in its publications, is to work "for structural, long-term improvement to human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT)". <sup>44</sup> PCHR : the Palestinian Center for Human Rights is an independent Palestinian human rights organisation based in Gaza City. The Centre enjoys Consultative Status with the ECOSOC of the United Nation. The Centre was established in 1995 by a group of Palestinian lawyers and human rights activists. <sup>45</sup> Health Work Committees: is a leading Palestinian non-governmental health and development organisation that works in a rights-based approach providing health services and building development models to all segments of the Palestinian population particularly the poor and the marginalised; they also do lobbying and advocacy in support of favourable policies

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> Resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly on the status of Jerusalem, 21 December 2017. Amongst European countries, solely Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Latvia, Poland and Romania abstained on a resolution to protect the special legal status of Jerusalem.

 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> Council of the European Union, "EU sanctions against Russia explained", Available <u>here</u>.
 <sup>41</sup> G.C. Hufbauer, J.J. Schott, K.A. Elliott et B. Oegg : Economic Sanctions Reconsidered.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup> Les Carnets du CAP, « Les sanctions internationales sont-elles efficaces? », pp. 108-109, April 2012, Available here.

 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup> B'TSELEM, "The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories", Available <u>here</u>.
 <sup>44</sup> Yesh Din, Settler violence, Available <u>here</u>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup> Palestinian Centre for Human Rights, Available <u>here</u>.

	and legislation. <sup>46</sup> Al-Haq: an independent Palestinian non-governmental human rights organisation based in Ramallah, West Bank. Established in 1979 to protect and promote human rights and the rule of law in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT), is one of the oldest NGOs in the Arab world. The organisation has special consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council and they are also working to challenge companies that are complicit in the occupation. <sup>47</sup> Palestinian Federation of Women's Action Committees. <sup>48</sup> Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association. <sup>49</sup>
Companies	On 13 February 2020, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) published a list of 112 companies, 94 of which are based in Israel and 18 in six other countries. Among the foreign companies are Airbnb and Booking.com, whose advertisements allow the rental of housing built on land confiscated from Palestinian residents. <sup>50</sup> The purpose of the list is to identify companies that contribute to the operation of Israeli settlements that are considered illegal in order to call these companies to account for their role in certain human rights violations.
Opposition	A judicial reform that would weaken the powers of the Supreme Court in favour of the Knesset is under discussion in the eponymous institution. <sup>51</sup> On 21 February, the Israeli legislative body partially adopted the reform in the first reading. <sup>52</sup> With 47 votes against and 66 in favour, the opposition has a strong position. <sup>53</sup> Many Israelis marched in the streets to protest against this reform. Indeed, the imbalance of power that the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> Health Work Committee, Available <u>here</u>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup> Al-Haq, Available <u>here</u>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>48</sup> Palestinian Federation of women's actions and committees, Available <u>here</u>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>49</sup> Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association, Available <u>here</u>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>50</sup> HRW, « Israël : La liste de l'ONU vise à renforcer la responsabilité des entreprises », 13 February 2020, Available here.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>51</sup> Le Monde, « En Israël, la fronde anti gouvernementale gagne la rue et les institutions », 16 January 2023,

Available <u>here</u>. <sup>52</sup> Euronews, "Israel's controversial judicial overhaul passes its first parliamentary hurdle despite uproar", 21 February 2023, Available <u>here</u>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>53</sup> The Times of Israel, " 'History will judge you': Opposition lashes government for advancing judicial bill" 21 February 2023, Available here.

	reform foresees jeopardizing the democratic process. <sup>54</sup> The risk for the Israelis is that the ultra-Orthodox will be invested with unprecedented power, and for the Palestinians that the illegal Palestinian settlements will be legalised by the Knesset, without the Supreme Court being able to block them. <sup>55</sup> The SR could approach the opposition and Israeli NGOs so that a communication/advocacy campaign denouncing the hindrance to democracy that such a reform might constitute can be disclosed. The aim is to mobilise a substantial part of the Israeli population, to contribute to tarnishing Israel's reputation, and to impact its soft power. <sup>56</sup> Israel is very attached to its reputation, the final goal would be to abandon the reform. In the long run, this would allow, in addition to the preservation of Israeli democracy, the impossibility for the Knesset to legalise the illegal settlements in the West Bank.
FIFA and Eurovision	The SR could use the precedent between Russia and Ukraine to request a suspension of Israel's participation in the various competitions due to its continued occupation of the Palestinian Territory and the apartheid it commits against the population.

 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>54</sup> Al Jazeera, "What you need to know about Israel's judicial reforms", 20 February 2023, Available <u>here</u>.
 <sup>55</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>56</sup> BrandFinance, "Soft Power: Why it matters to Governments, People, and Brands", 25 February 2020, Available <u>here</u>.