



**General Assembly
Human Rights Council
42nd session**

Item 7 – Human rights Situation in Palestine and other occupied Arab territories

General debate

Mr. President,

The American Association of Jurists expresses its deep concern about the continuing campaign questioning the existence of Palestinian refugees, which also challenges the legitimacy and the existence of UNRWA and its fundamental role in supporting thousands of Palestinian refugees in East Jerusalem, the West Bank, Gaza Strip, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria.

AAJ reaffirms the fundamental right of the Palestinian refugees to return to their motherland and calls upon the UN members States to firmly support the work and the mandate of UNRWA.

The American Association of Jurists also expresses its deep concern about the economic cost of the Israeli Occupation for the Palestinian People analysed by UNCTAD in its last August report¹ at the request of the UN General Assembly². AAJ strongly condemns the illegal plundering by the Occupying power of the natural resources, including oil and natural gas, of the Palestinian people.

The longstanding illegal military occupation of Palestinian Territory by Israel has led to a severe economic crisis³, where about one in three Palestinians are unemployed (in Gaza the unemployment rate is above 50% and the poverty level has reached 53%).

The American Association of Jurists calls upon the Human Rights Council to ensure that all recommendations of the investigative bodies it mandated and all of its resolutions are implemented.

I thank you for your attention.

23rd September 2019

¹ <https://unctad.org/en/pages/PublicationWebflyer.aspx?publicationid=2505>

² The UN General Assembly (GA) Resolution A/RES/69/20 (2014) paragraph 9 requests UNCTAD to “report to the General Assembly on the economic costs of the Israeli occupation for the Palestinian people”. This was affirmed by paragraph 9 in resolutions A/Res/70/12 (2015), A/Res/71/20 (2016), A/Res/72/13 (2017) and A/RES/73/18 (2018).

³ Report on UNCTAD assistance to the Palestinian people: Developments in the economy of the Occupied Palestinian Territory (TD/B/EX(68)/4 – 22/07/2019)