

**Item 2: Interactive dialogue with the ongoing independent, international commission of inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel 53<sup>rd</sup> Session Human Rights Council, 20 June 2023**  
**Agenda Item 2, Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and reports of the Office of the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General**

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Islamic Human Rights Commission (IHRC) is a not-for-profit campaign, research and advocacy organisation founded and based in the United Kingdom. It was set up in 1997 and works for redress of human rights violations and a better understanding of rights and norms across confessional, ethnic, national, political and other boundaries.

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Recent months have seen an intensification of the brutal Israeli occupation of Palestine. It is not a coincidence that the increased killings of Palestinians and other components of ethnic cleansing, namely land seizures, evictions and house demolitions, follow the election by Israelis of the one of the most extreme governments in the country's history. Since the turn of the year, Israeli forces have killed well over 150 Palestinians, including 26 children. In one horrific event on 26 February 2023, armed colonial settlers rampaged through the town of Huwara, torching houses and in doing so receiving encouragement from government ministers, one of whom then chillingly called for the state to launch more pogroms against Palestinians.

The waging of asymmetric violence against the Palestinians by Israeli forces - understood anywhere else in the world as war crimes - is brushed over in media and political debate as acts of Israeli 'self-defence' against 'terrorists'. This cognitive dissonance masks a deeper problem than simply institutional bias, racism and Islamophobia against the Palestinians.

Despite increasing numbers of human rights organisations designating Israel an apartheid state, both in terms of its treatment of Palestinians living inside the 1948 borders of Israel and those subject to occupation and blockade in the West Bank and Gaza, the international community continues to tolerate and even aid and abet the status quo. Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, B'Tselem and even the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the occupied Palestinian territories are among the many authorities that have classified Israel as an apartheid regime.

Instead of turning a blind eye to the Israeli occupation and presiding over the continued oppression of Palestinians the international community must take up its responsibility to end the world's last remaining system of racial domination.