

**Oral Statement Quadrennial panel discussion on promoting human rights through sport and the Olympic ideal Prepared and Submitted 25.06.2024 by the Islamic Human Rights Commission (UK)**



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.

IHRC has consultative status with the UN – ECOSOC.

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**Speaker: Jawad Husain**

The International Olympic Committee was founded 130 years ago in the belief that sport can contribute to peace and the harmonious development of mankind. One of the stated goals of the Olympic Movement is to "contribute to building a peaceful and better world by educating youth through sport practiced without discrimination of any kind".

It follows that where countries practice racial discrimination against people with the aim of preserving and promoting a system of racial domination they should be excluded from international events and fora, as happened with South Africa in the 1960's and 1970's.

It is incontrovertible that Israel practices a system of apartheid against the Palestinians under occupation. Since October 2023 it has also been engaged in a level of violence that has brought it before the International Court of Justice for the crime of genocide. The nature and scale of the atrocities being inflicted on the civilian population of Gaza is unprecedented and includes forced displacement, destruction of homes, hospitals, schools and places of worship, denial of basic amenities, all amid a total siege of the territory.

Israel's behaviour places outside the realm of civilised nations. Allowing it to participate at a global gathering that celebrates the unity and equalness of humanity while it prosecutes a mass slaughter of people it deems, by law and action, to be lesser human beings is an affront to all peace-loving people and Olympic ideals.

You are no doubt aware that in 1964 the International Olympic Committee (IOC) withdrew its invitation to South Africa over its practice of apartheid. In 1970, South Africa was expelled totally from the IOC. Eventually, international isolation forced the country to end apartheid.

The time is long overdue for the United Nations to do the same with Israel. Only a concerted campaign of international sanctions and isolation will end the prolonged suffering of the Palestinians and dismantle a system that has no place in the civilised world. We urge the UN to press the IOC to expel Israel with immediate effect.