



Media Release

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## Australia's disappointing voting on resolutions pertaining to the Israel-Palestine conflict at the 37<sup>th</sup> UNHRC session

During the recent session of the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) in Geneva, only the United States and Australia voted against all five resolutions condemning Israel's illegal occupation and its denial of Palestinian human rights. Three of the five resolutions concerned issues that have, until this point, garnered broad and bipartisan support in Australia. The resolutions a) acknowledging the Palestinian right to self-determination on the 1967 borders, b) calling for an immediate halt to settlement expansion, and c) denouncing Israel for its ongoing human rights violations in the occupied territories, address exactly those things that should be implicit in Australia's official and long-standing position on the conflict – i.e., a two-state solution. We hope, despite this concerning and contradictory voting, that Australia continues to support international law and maintain its respected status in the international community and the rules-based order.

By joining the US and Israeli circle at UN fora, however, Australia has in fact chosen on this occasion to ignore international law (including but not limited to articles 49 and 53 of the Fourth Geneva Convention), specifically the Palestinian people's legal right to statehood, and the illegality of Israeli settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem that preclude such statehood. We fear, as a result of this latest stance, that the morale of the Palestinian people will be further diminished. This is especially true with respect to Australia's voting against the resolution that called for "ensuring accountability and justice for all violations of international law in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem".

We also fear that this voting pattern will have a negative impact on the vibrant and esteemed relationship between Australia and the Arab world, which both the Australian and Palestinian governments have worked hard to enhance and promote over the years.

The government of the State of Palestine deeply regrets Australia's recent voting at the UNHRC for the one-sided and prejudicial precedent that it ultimately establishes.