

51st regular session of the Human Rights Council (12 September – 7 October 2022)

Item 3: Interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples

The Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy (MIFTAH)

Special Rapporteur Francisco Cali Tzay,

For over 4 decades, Israeli occupation authorities have been attempting to forcibly transfer the indigenous Palestinian villages in Masafer Yatta, in the South Hebron hills of the occupied West Bank. Right now, there are 215 Palestinian families in Masafer Yatta that are at imminent risk of forced displacement, a total of 1,150 people, including 569 children.

The Israeli occupying military has designated the area as “Firing zone 918”, in an attempt to ethnically cleanse the area of its indigenous population to the benefit of Israeli settlers and Israel’s illegal settlement project. Already, the two villages of Khirbet Sarura and Kharoubah have already been evicted and now the village of Khalet ed Daba is facing a serious risk of demolition at any moment due to ongoing Israeli terror against our people and land. Such crimes and human rights violations amount to war crimes and are part of a long-standing policy of displacement and replacement, in line with Israel’s settler-colonial project and apartheid regime.

Last week, Israeli settlers joined by Israeli occupation forces assaulted my father, who is also a human rights defender, and was later detained. We cannot expect accountability from a colluding regime with a long record of human rights violations. Therefore, we, the indigenous population in Masafer Yatta are urging this council and the international community to intervene immediately with concrete measures of accountability to put an end to forcible transfer and to ensure that our right of self-determination on our land is protected.

Thank you.