Statement by

H.E. Eviatar Manor

Permanent Representative of Israel

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Before the

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or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

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Mr. Chairperson, Distinguished Committee Members, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am honored to be here today to present the State of Israel’s 5th Periodic Report under the United Nations Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. On behalf of the Israeli delegation, I warmly welcome this opportunity to discuss Israel's efforts to fulfill its obligations under the Convention and to share some of our achievements, experiences, views and challenges.

Israel places great importance on respect for human rights. Like other democracies, it is governed by the rule of law and has an open and dynamic society as well as a vibrant and active civil society.

Fundamental human rights protections are afforded to every individual, as Israel's courts are both empowered and willing to intervene and impact public policy. According to the jurisprudence and practice of the High Court of Justice, any interested party (including non-governmental organizations) or any person, (including those who are neither citizens nor residents of Israel), who is affected or potentially affected by the actions of a government authority is entitled to petition the High Court of Justice, as a court of first instance, on any claim that a government action or an action of the IDF is ultra vires, unlawful, or substantially unreasonable.

Israel’s Supreme Court has earned international respect and recognition for its jurisprudence, as well as for its independence in enforcing international law. Its landmark rulings in several cases related to the balancing of security and the protection of individuals are highly regarded by jurists and academic scholars of international law, and have been cited favorably by foreign courts.

Mr. Chairperson, Distinguished Committee Members,

As part of Israel’s commitment to human rights values and the rule of law, Israel signed the Convention against Torture (and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment) on October 22nd 1986 and deposited its instrument of ratification with the Secretary-General of the United Nations on October 3rd 1991. Israel’s ratification of seven core UN Human Rights Conventions, reflects our country's strong commitment to the important protections established in those conventions, and our respect and appreciation to the work of this Committee and of other UN treaty monitoring bodies.

The composition of our delegation here today, reflects the importance we attribute to the UN HR Conventions.

I am pleased to present our delegation of experts from all relevant Ministries in Israel, with the ability to provide substantive responses to the Committee’s List of Issues, to be considered along with Israel’s fifth periodic report.

From the Ministry of Justice:

Dr. Roy Schondorf - Deputy Attorney General for International Law, and co-chair to the Israeli delegation.

* Ms. Jana Modzgvrishvily

Inspector for Complaints against ISA Interrogators

* Mr. Avinoam Segal Elad

High Court of Justice Department

* Ms. Liana Blumenfeld Meged

Office of the Deputy Attorney General for Criminal Law

* Ms. Ayelet Levin

Office of the Deputy Attorney General for International Law

From the Prime Minister's Office:

* Mr. Avi Abramson

Legal Counsellor

From the Ministry of Interior:

* Mr. Daniel Salomon

The Legal Adviser

The Population and Immigration Authority

From the Ministry of Public Security:

* Commander Yitzhak Almog

Head of National Delinquency Department

Israel Police

* Major Michael Avitan

International Law, Legal Division,

Israel Prison Service

From the Israel Defense Forces:

* Major Tzvi Mintz

International Law Department

Military Advocate General's Corps

From the Ministry of Foreign Affairs:

* Ms. Michal Sarig-Kaduri

Deputy Director, Human Rights Department, International Organizations

Division

* Mr. Omer Caspi

Minister-Counselor, Deputy Permanent Representative

Permanent Mission of Israel to the UN, Geneva

* Ms. Orit Kremer

Counselor, Legal Adviser

Permanent Mission of Israel to the UN, Geneva

Since its last dialogue with this honorable Committee, in 2009, the State of

Israel, while facing Constant security challenges, has taken significant steps in

order to promote and better implement the Convention against Torture and other

Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, as will be addressed by

my Colleagues shortly.

Israel’s challenges increased in light of a wave of Palestinian terror

and violence which has swept our region since September 2015.

Most of the attacks are stabbing attacks, carried by young lone terrorists,

sometimes even children. In addition, we have experienced combined stabbing and

vehicular attacks, shooting attacks, IEDS throwing, and recently suicide bombing.

This wave of Terror resulted so far, in loss of lives of 34 people, wounding 259 .

These brutal attacks are motivated for the most part by incitement, widely

circulated in the Palestinian and Arab media channels and social network sites.

This culture of hate permeates into the homes and the computers of the prospective

terrorists, encouraging them to follow in the footsteps of terrorist organizations like

Hamas, Islamic Jihad and ISIS.

Mr. Chairperson, Distinguished Committee Members,

I am sure you are familiar with Israel's position regarding the application of human

rights treaties to the West Bank or to the Gaza Strip. Nonetheless, we are here

today ready to answer all questions including those related to the West Bank and

the Gaza Strip, with a firm belief that this dialogue provides Israel with an

important instrument to further improve its mechanisms for a better

implementation of human rights.

At the same time, we hope that the discussion today will be balanced and not

focused totally on the situation in these areas, in a way that will enable us to

present before the Committee our considerable efforts taken towards better

implementation of the Convention.

Israel sees this monitoring process as an important element to promote and protect rights internationally and domestically and gives serious consideration to its conclusions and remarks.

With your permission, Mr. Chairperson, I will now give the floor to my distinguished colleague Dr. Roy Schondorf, Deputy Attorney General for International Law, at the Israeli Ministry of Justice.

Thank you.