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PRESS RELEASE

Belize Welcomes the ICJ Opinion on Israeli Policies and Practices in the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Belmopan. 22nd July 2024.

Belize welcomes the ICJ Opinion on Israeli policies and practices in the Occupied Palestinian Territory including East Jerusalem, which confirms all the principles affirmed by Belize in its submissions to the Court.

The Court ruled “that Israel’s legislation and measures constitute a breach of Article 3 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination” to which Belize is a party. Article 3 affirms that “States Parties particularly condemn racial segregation and *apartheid* and undertake to prevent, prohibit and eradicate all practices of this nature in territories under their jurisdiction.” This Opinion therefore upholds the National Assembly of Belize’s resolutions in 2022 affirming that “Israel’s regime of systemic oppression of the Palestinian people constitutes a regime of settler colonialism and apartheid.”

Of special interest to Belize, the Court determined that “As a consequence of Israel’s policies and practices, which span decades, the Palestinian people has been deprived of its right to self-determination over a long period, and further prolongation of these policies and practices undermines the exercise of this right in the future. For these reasons, the Court is of the view that Israel’s unlawful policies and practices are in breach of Israel’s obligation to respect the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination.”

The Court concluded that Israel must “end its unlawful presence in the Occupied Palestinian Territory as rapidly as possible”, and “provide full reparation for the damage caused by its internationally wrongful acts.” Significantly, it called for “allowing all Palestinians displaced during the occupation to return to their original place of residence.”

As for the obligations of Belize and all states, the Court ruled that “It is for all States ... to ensure that any impediment resulting from the illegal presence of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory to the exercise of the Palestinian people of its right to self-determination is brought to an end.”

Belize will do all that it is required to do by this Advisory Opinion of the ICJ through action at the United Nations and otherwise, considering that the Opinion reaffirms principles that are essential for Belize’s existence, including the right to self-determination and territorial integrity, the prohibition of the acquisition of territory by force and the elimination of all forms of racism and discrimination.

Ends