

Adalah The Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel

عدالة المركز القانوني لحقوق الاقلية العربية في اسرائيل
עזאלה המרכז המשפטי לזכויות המיעוט הערבי בישראל



8 November 2010

Ms. Raquel Rolnik
Special Rapporteur on adequate housing
OHCHR-UNOG
8-14 Avenue de la Paix
1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland
Email: srhousing@ohchr.org

Re: Urgent Action to Address Housing Rights of Palestinian Arab citizens of Israel

Dear Ms. Rolnik,

On 25 October 2010, Adalah – The Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel submitted an NGO report to the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights to assist the Committee in drawing up its "List of Issues" towards its full review of Israel in 2011. In our report, which is attached, we gathered significant information regarding the land, housing and planning rights of Palestinian Arab citizens of Israel and with this letter, we request your urgent attention to the housing challenges facing them.

In the attached report, we highlight the lack of access for Arab citizens of Israel to land and housing, as well as discrimination in planning. We include information on the new land reform law passed in 2009 that allows for the privatization of state-held land including land in destroyed and evacuated Palestinian villages belonging to internally-displaced persons (IDPs) as well as Palestinian refugees living abroad (pp. 26-32). Finally, Adalah is particularly concerned with State policies of widespread demolition and evacuation of the unrecognized Arab Bedouin villages in the Naqab (Negev), which has left the populations of entire villages homeless (Appendix 3).

With this information, Adalah hopes that you will invite a response from the State of Israel and remind the Government of its international obligations to secure adequate housing for all citizens. Additionally, given the dire and urgent situation of the Arab Bedouin in the Naqab, Adalah believes a country visit to Israel would be very helpful. We would be honored to assist your office in some arrangements for that visit, including the organization of meetings with civil society organizations and other relevant stakeholders in order to address the grave violations of the housing rights of Palestinian citizens of Israel.

Thank you for your consideration of our report and request. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Rina Jabareen, International Advocacy Director
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