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H.E. Mr. Antonio Guterres
United Nations Secretary General
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29 November 2021
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HTUR/MG

29 November 2021

In 2022 the UN should lead an international Israel-Palestine peace conference and update the UN Database.

Your Excellency,

This year, an ITUC [report](#) has highlighted the exploitation of Palestinian workers due to the expansion and deepening of the occupation and the illegal settlements. Within one year, the 75th anniversary of the adoption of UN Resolution 181 on the Partition of Palestine and the establishment of the State of Israel will be marked, yet the Palestinian people remain under the yoke of the Israeli occupation, held hostage to Israel's willingness or unwillingness to negotiate around their future.

Today the peace process is at a dead end. The negotiations failed to set international human rights as a basis for reaching a two-states solution. Recognising the current inadequacy of the Middle East peace process and the stalemate in negotiations, we call upon the UN to relaunch in 2022 an international Peace Conference to lead a peace initiative strongly centred on the fulfilment of human rights for all. For the Palestinian people, this involves the right to self-determination, return and security in the face of ongoing Israeli violations and crimes against Palestinians. It is time to recognise the State of Palestine as a sovereign and autonomous state, as the 194th full member of the United Nations.

Moreover, the extraction of profits by Israeli companies and multinational corporations is reliant upon impeding Palestinian economic development, annexation of land and the plunder of Palestinian natural resources. In this context, the prospect for a viable two-states solution is fading as illegal settlements continue to be expanded, and as long as businesses supporting the expansion of these settlements and their infrastructure will be tolerated.

The ITUC has fully welcomed the publishing of the UN Database of 112 companies operating in illegal Israeli settlements on Palestinian land. We recall that the mandate provided by resolution 31/36 included the annual update of the database and recommended "*that the Human Rights Council establish a group of independent experts, with a time-bound mandate, to report directly to the council for such a purpose.*" Adding and removing companies from the long-awaited database creates a necessary incentive and deterrent against engaging with Israel's illegal settlement industry, as mandated by Human Rights Council resolution 31/36.

It is therefore critical to annually update the database to bring an end to corporate complicity in Israel's prolonged occupation and widespread and systematic human rights abuses. We strongly call upon the UN General Secretary to fully support the OHCHR in fulfilling its mandate in its entirety to annually

update the UN database and ensure the allocation of the required financial resources.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. Ban', written in a cursive style.

General Secretary