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GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Human Rights Council
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ITEM 3 : Interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food

Oral statement
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**Palestinian Food Sovereignty:
The Israeli Occupation's use of starvation as a weapon for genocide**

Mr. President,

I am Yasmeen El-Hasan from the Union of Agricultural Work Committees in Palestine, speaking on behalf of CETIM.

We thank the Special Rapporteur for the presentation of his critical report.

In Palestine, fisher-people, farmers, peasants, and rural communities are – paradoxically – gravely affected by food insecurity. The Israeli occupation has manufactured a mass starvation of the Palestinian people in Gaza, and many actors in the international community are making the intentional choice to not only allow but actively participate in the Israeli genocide of Palestinians.

Our struggle for food sovereignty is necessarily interconnected with our struggle for our national sovereignty and self-determination. It is intentional that we speak of food sovereignty rather than food security. Food insecurity is not due to a lack of resources – it is human-made. If we had sovereignty over our land and natural resources, Palestinians would be food secure. Gaza's population of 2.3 million, over half of whom are children, would not be facing famine.

By targeting and deliberately destroying Palestinian food systems and all infrastructure for self-sustenance, Israeli settler colonialism is aiming to ensure that those who it does not massacre with its bombs will be killed by preventable starvation, dehydration, or disease – all of which are happening as we speak.

We urge the Special Rapporteur and this Council to implement all necessary measures to put an end to the Israeli occupation and its use of starvation as a weapon for genocide.

Thank you.

Geneva, 7th of March 2024