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GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Human Rights Council
22ᵗʰ Session
Item 6 : Universal Periodic Review. General Debate

The International Association of Democratic Lawyers (IADL), the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights (PCHR), the Europe – Third World Centre (CETIM) and the American Association of Jurists (AAJ) deem unacceptable the refusal of the Israeli government to submit to its Universal Periodic Review which was scheduled to take place on 29 January 2013.

Israel's decision to boycott the UPR is another illustration of its disregard for international human rights obligations and its failure to engage in international cooperation in the field of human rights which is a duty for UN Member States.

Israel's refusal to submit to the review process represents a very serious threat to the credibility of the Human Rights Council. The Universal Periodic Review was implemented by the General Assembly with the clear intention of reviewing the fulfilment by each State of its human rights obligations and commitments in order to ensure universality of coverage and equal treatment with respect to all States.

Israel is the unique country to have refused cooperation with the UPR process and, in doing so, has set an extremely dangerous precedent. The Human Rights Council should not allow Israel, or any other country, to opt out of and undermine the UPR process by refusing to appear before the Council and should instead defend its standards and procedures.

Despite Israel's refusal to participate in the Universal Periodic Review, we call upon the Human Rights Council to proceed with its review of Israel's compliance with its human rights obligations based on objective and reliable information it has at its disposal. It is urgent to preserve and enforce this mechanism.

Member States of the United Nations should question whether Israel still has a place in this institution since it does not respect the decisions of its bodies. Shouldn't Israel be suspended, like South Africa in the Apartheid Era?

15 March 2013