

Human Rights Council, 14th session 31 May – 18 June 2010

Statement by Iceland

By Mr. Kristinn F. Arnason,
Ambassador

Item 1
Urgent Debate



Permanent Mission of Iceland
to the International Organizations in Geneva

2 June 2010

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

HRC 14 // 31 May – 18 June 2010

Item 1 Urgent Debate

STATEMENT BY ICELAND

Mr. President,

The Government of Iceland strongly condemns the Israeli raid on the Gaza flotilla while the convoy was in international waters. We are profoundly shocked to learn about the high number of civilian casualties resulting from the raid. The seriousness and international character of the incident calls for an immediate independent and transparent international investigation. In this regard we expect full cooperation from the Israeli Government to ensure that those responsible are brought to justice.

We welcome the discussion in the UN Security Council on 31 May on this issue, but would have preferred the Council to reach an agreement on a resolution with a strong wording.

The Government of Iceland strongly believes that the siege of Gaza is contrary to international human rights law and humanitarian law, inflicting collective punishment on the Gaza population. Accordingly, the Government of Iceland calls upon the Government of Israel to lift the siege immediately. The tragic incident on the Gaza flotilla only reinforces the urgency of this matter.

Mr. President,

The Israeli raid on the Gaza flotilla has received a strong response in Icelandic society. A demonstration took place the day before yesterday in front of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Reykjavik where protesters demanded that Iceland cut diplomatic relations with Israel. The Foreign Affairs Committee of the Icelandic Parliament discussed the flotilla incident the day before yesterday and again yesterday. Furthermore, the Parliament held yesterday a debate under urgent procedure on the issue.

Mr. President,

The Government of Iceland is a firm supporter of a peaceful resolution of the conflict and the two state solution. A sustainable and just peace will not be achieved in the Middle East without the realisation of the two states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security. Iceland calls upon the Government of Israel to put all its efforts into reactivating the Peace Process with a view to reach an agreement, as soon as possible, on all outstanding issues. Also, at the same time to cease all activities that put the Peace Process in jeopardy.

Thank you.