



General Assembly

Distr.: General
XX August 2020

English only

Human Rights Council

Forty-fifth session

September–October 2020 (TBC)

Agenda item 4

Human rights situations that require the Council's attention

Written statement* submitted by Institute for NGO Research, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[23 August 2020]

* Issued as received, in the language(s) of submission only.

Institute for NGO Research:

War crimes and Lessons from the Beirut Tragedy

The massive explosion at the Beirut port and the tragic loss of life, injuries and damaged lives highlights the hypocrisy of those claiming to constitute the human rights community.

Although the cause of the explosion has not been conclusively determined, the potential for disaster from the weapons and related components stored in civilian areas throughout Lebanon is well known. These weapons include missiles, missile fuel and warheads, and potentially, additional stores of ammonium nitrate (the material that, according to reports, was stored in a Beirut port warehouse near Lebanon's national grain storage warehouses, and exploded on August 4, 2020.)

The storage of weapons in civilian installations constitutes a blatant war crime, whether these installations are port facilities, homes, schools, hospitals, or houses of prayer. And if these weapons are again used to attack innocent civilians, each such attack would also constitute a war crime.

Were this incident to have occurred in other parts of the world, notably in areas south of Lebanon, the Council would have immediately convened a Special Session and appointed a Commission of Inquiry to investigate such an atrocity. A responsible Council in this case would demand a close examination of the role and culpability of Hezbollah and Iran.

And yet, this Council, its officials, and the powerful NGOs that are closely aligned with the Council, have deliberately turned a blind eye to these war crimes and to those responsible. With detailed evidence on these activities readily available, such behavior by those who claim to lead the world's human rights agenda is unacceptable.

Instead, the Council and the influential NGOs expend extraordinary resources on demonizing the intended targets of these weapons.

This hypocrisy is destroying any moral standing that the human rights community might still have.
