

Motion to the Faculty of Humanities concerning the abuse of Human Rights in Palestine and the Occupied Territories

Noting the United Nations Security Councils specifically call for an immediate and unconditional ceasefire, respect for humanitarian law and protection of civilians in Gaza; the general worldwide condemnation of the Israeli government's sustained air borne assault and ground force military incursion into Gaza, which has resulted in over 1,035 deaths of Palestinians (of which 218 deaths have been children); the deaths of 3 Israeli civilians; the injuring of 6,200 Palestinian people and the displacement of 100 000 Palestinian individuals by the 27th of July 2014;

Noting further that this current 2014 incursion in Gaza is consistent with a sustained campaign waged by the Israeli government to subjugate the people of Palestine and the Occupied Territories by lethal military force since the 2008 'Operation Cast Lead', which has resulted in the estimated deaths of more than 1,400 Palestinian civilians (of which nearly 300 were children) including 13 Israelis;

And finally, noting the founding provisions of the Constitution of a democratic South Africa as committing South African citizens to upholding an ethic of human rights, protecting the right to life and the civil liberties of citizens, including their right to freedom of association and freedom of expression;

In an act of conscience that is mindful of our recent apartheid past and the generous spirit of international solidarity that was extended to South Africans in their own struggle against extensive human rights abuse in the era of apartheid, solidarity that compelled the South African government of the apartheid era to negotiate a peaceful resolution of the South African conflict:

We now call on members of the Rhodes University academic community to support the position that:

Academics holding Israeli citizenship, as well as official representatives from Israel, in advance of an invitation to visit Rhodes University, be requested to make a statement renouncing the use of lethal military force by the Israeli government against unarmed civilians in Palestine and the Occupied Territories and the forcible displacement of Palestinians from their homes.

Motion Prepared by:

Prof Larry Strelitz – Head of the School of Journalism and Media Studies

Prof Robert Van Niekerk – Director of the Institute of Social and Economic Research

