



Campaign for the Right of Entry/Re-Entry to the Occupied Palestinian Territory (oPt)

A Grassroots Campaign for the Protection of Foreign Passport Holders Residing in and/or Visiting the oPt

**For Immediate Release
December 16, 2008**

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Israel Denies Entry To UN's Monitor Of Human Rights In The Occupied Palestinian Territory

(Ramallah, December 16, 2008) – The United Nations' Special Rapporteur for Human Rights in the Israeli-Occupied Palestinian Territory (oPt), U.S. Jewish-American Professor Richard Falk, was deemed *persona non grata* and denied entry upon arriving in Israel yesterday. On official UN business, Prof. Falk arrived at Tel Aviv's Ben Gurion Airport on Sunday and was held in the airport's detention center overnight before being sent back to Switzerland, the place he arrived from.

The Campaign for the Right of Entry / Re-Entry to the oPt deplores this continued Israeli practice of prohibiting unfettered access of persons to the oPt who do not pose any security threat to the State of Israel, be they senior UN human rights professionals, or average persons, Palestinian and non-Palestinian, who are trying to reach the oPt for family, work, or educational reasons.

On March 26, 2008, the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) appointed Prof. Falk to a six-year term as Special Rapporteur on human rights violations by Israel in the oPt. Prof. Falk extended his mandate to include investigating human rights violations of Palestinians against Israel. He has been outspoken in making the case that Israel is committing war crimes against the Palestinians.

Most recently, in a June 2007 article titled "*Slouching toward a Palestinian Holocaust*¹," Falk compared some Israeli policies with regard to the Palestinians to the Nazi Germany record of collective punishment. Identifying himself as an American Jew, Falk stated that his use of the term "holocaust" "represents a rather desperate appeal to the governments of the world and to international public opinion to act urgently to prevent these current [Israeli] genocidal tendencies from culminating in a collective tragedy [for the Palestinians]." Falk also stated that "the comparison should *not* be viewed as literal, but...that a pattern of criminality associated with Israeli policies in Gaza has actually been supported by the leading democracies of the 21st century."

The Campaign for the Right of Entry / Re-Entry to the oPt calls on third parties, including the United Nations, to take appropriate measures readily available to them to promote Israel's compliance with international humanitarian law including the granting of unfettered access to the oPt, and to scrutinize Israel's unlawful exercise of authority over this territory.

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¹ http://www.transnational.org/Area_MiddleEast/2007/Falk_PalestineGenocide.html