

**Statement before the 26th session of the HRC under item 4
made by Richard Sadoune on 23 June 2014 on behalf of
B'nai B'rith International**

Madame Vice-President,

In April, Fatah and Hamas signed a cooperation pact that formed a new government to run the Palestinian Authority. The Quartet, of which the United Nations is a member, set out three specific conditions for Palestinian governments that must be met to be eligible for international recognition and aid, and, more importantly, to be considered a partner for peace talks with Israel. We think it is necessary to review these criteria.

1. Has Hamas recognized the right of the State of Israel to exist? The answer is no. Its leaders still refer to Israel as the "Zionist entity," and they have made it abundantly clear since the pact's announcement that this policy of non-recognition has not, and will never, change.
2. Has Hamas recognized past agreements with Israel? Hamas doctrinally rejects a two-state solution or negotiations that would lead to a final peace agreement.
3. Has Hamas renounced violence? The answer again is no. Hamas continues to see the violent destruction of Israel as its *raison d'être*, continues to stockpile missiles and fire them indiscriminately at Israeli civilians. Just this past week three innocent Israeli boys were taken hostage by terrorists, and both Hamas and other Palestinian groups openly celebrated.

Clearly, Hamas still miserably fails all three vital Quartet conditions for engagement.

Rather than resuming ritualistic condemnations of Israel alone, it is the urgent obligation of this Council to stand against ongoing Palestinian terrorism -- beginning with a demand for the unconditional freeing of three kidnapped Israeli schoolboys. Let us all join now to #BringBackOurBoys.

Thank you, Madame Vice-President.