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**of victims of armed conflicts”**

New York, 10 October 2016

Distinguished Delegations to the 6<sup>th</sup> Committee,

At the outset, the Arab Group notes the lack of consensus regarding the qualifications of the Chair of this important Committee, especially in view of its mandate regarding legal matters, primarily respect of and promotion of international law.

I have the honor to speak on behalf of the Arab Group to address agenda item 81 entitled “*Status of the Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and relating to the protection of victims in armed conflict*”.

Allow me at the outset, to express our appreciation to the Secretary-General for his report on the issue.

The Arab Group underscores its principled positions concerning international law, in particular international humanitarian law and reaffirms the continuing value of established humanitarian rules relating to the protection of victims in armed conflict and appeals to States to comply fully with the provisions of international humanitarian law, in particular as provided for in the Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocols.

Distinguished Delegates,

The Arab Group is compelled to express its alarm regarding the situation in the Occupied State of Palestine, including East Jerusalem. International humanitarian law aims to protect those who do not take part or are no longer taking part in hostilities, namely civilians, wounded, sick and prisoners. These are the primary targets and victims of the Israeli occupation's illegal policies and practices. Israeli crimes and violations persist unabated against the Palestinian people and their land, in grave breach of international law and contrary to the law and norms of international humanitarian law. The settlement regime, the blockade, mass arbitrary arrest and extra-judicial killings, despite being widely condemned, have gone largely unchallenged by the international community. The immunity and impunity enjoyed by Israel, the occupying Power, has encouraged it to pursue and entrench its colonial occupation.



Distinguished Delegates,

The Arab Group encourages the promotion of respect for the obligations arising from international law