



Call for Permanent Commission for Israel and Palestinian Areas

Why in News

Member states of the **Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)** are calling on the **UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC)** to set up a permanent commission to report on human rights violations in Israel, Gaza and the West Bank.

- The move comes in the wake of the [latest surge](#) in violence in the [Israel-Palestine](#) conflict.

Key Points

▪ About the Proposed Permanent Commission:

- It will be **an independent, international commission of inquiry appointed by the UNHRC president** to investigate violations of international humanitarian and human rights law in Israel and Palestinian areas.
 - A **commission of inquiry (COI)** is the **highest level of scrutiny** that the **council can authorize**.
 - **Another COI**, for example, has been **regularly reporting on Syria's war** nearly since its inception a decade ago – partially in hopes of collecting evidence that could be used in court one day.
- The commission **would also investigate** all underlying root causes of recurrent tensions, instability and protraction of conflict including discrimination and repression.
- **Israel**, backed at times by the United States, **accuses the council of anti-Israel bias** and has generally refused to cooperate with its investigators.

▪ Organisation of Islamic Cooperation:

- OIC is the **second-largest intergovernmental organization after the [United Nations](#)** with a membership of 57 states.
 - **India is not a member of the OIC**. However, India was invited as a **guest of honour at the [46th Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers](#)** in 2019.
- It **represents the collective voice of the Muslim world**. It works for the protection of the interests of the Muslim world in the spirit of promoting international peace and harmony among various people of the world.
- It was **established upon a decision of the historical summit** which took place in **Rabat, Kingdom of Morocco, in 1969**.
- **Headquarters:** Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

▪ UN Human Rights Council:

- An **inter-governmental body within the United Nations system** responsible for strengthening the promotion and protection of [human rights](#) around the world.
- The Council was **created by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in 2006**. It **replaced the former United Nations Commission on Human Rights**.

- The **Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)** serves as the **Secretariat** of the Human Rights Council.
 - OHCHR is **headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.**
- It is made up of **47 United Nations Member States** which are **elected by the UNGA** on the principle of equitable geographical distribution.
 - Members of the Council **serve for a period of three years** and are not eligible for immediate re-election after serving two consecutive terms.
 - **India was elected to the Council** for a period of three years beginning **1st January 2019.**
- **Mechanisms:**
 - **Universal Periodic Review: UPR** serves to assess the human rights situations in all United Nations Member States.
 - **UN Special Procedures:** These are made up of **special rapporteurs**, special representatives, independent experts and working groups that monitor, examine, advise and publicly report on thematic issues or human rights situations in specific countries.
- **Recent Developments:**
 - The **United States has announced that it would [rejoin the UNHRC](#)** that it left in 2018.
 - The Council has **adopted [a resolution](#) to scrutinise the gross violations of human rights in Sri Lanka.**

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