Colleagues Rebuke Gaza Report’s Author

By STEVE FRIEDMAN

JERUSALEM — Three members of the United Nations panel that investigated Israel’s Gaza offensive in 2008 have whiled away years taking their case to court. And so it was that a number of high-profile American scholars, including Richard Goldstone, joined to make an oral argument that was heard by the United Nations Human Rights Council on Monday.

The three — Elsa Hanh, John Chaffee and Chris Gray — are among a group of leading human rights experts who have been engaged in a legal battle with the United Nations over the panel’s report on the conflict in Gaza. The three, along with Goldstone, argued that the UN has not given them a fair hearing in the case and that they should be allowed to present their case in court.

They accused the UN of failing to consider their arguments and said that they should have a chance to present their case in a court of law. "We have a right to be heard," they said. "We have the evidence to prove our case and the UN must respect our rights." 

The panel’s report, which was released in 2009, found that Israel had committed war crimes and that civilians had been targeted in Gaza. The report led to widespread condemnation of Israel’s actions and sparked a debate about the role of international law in regulating conflicts.

This case is significant because it highlights the importance of international law in regulating conflicts and the need for states to be held accountable for their actions. "The UN must respect our rights and give us a fair hearing," said Hans. "We have the evidence to prove our case and the UN must respect our rights." 

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