



General Assembly Security Council

Distr.: General
15 March 2019

Original: English

General Assembly
Tenth emergency special session
Agenda item 5
**Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the
rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory**

Security Council
Seventy-fourth year

Identical letters dated 12 March 2019 from the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council

I write to draw the international community's urgent attention to destabilizing developments in Occupied East Jerusalem. Acts of aggression and incitement against both civilian worshippers and holy sites continue to be perpetrated by Israel, the occupying Power, in a reckless manner.

Amidst already-heightened tensions, such illegal and provocative actions threaten to spiral out of control, with dangerous consequences. Immediate efforts are required to de-escalate the situation in order to protect civilian lives and the sanctity of holy sites in Occupied East Jerusalem, including the Haram Al-Sharif, which houses the holy Aqsa Mosque and Dome of the Rock.

Israel's decision today to seal all gates to the compound, as well as to the entirety of the Old City of Jerusalem itself, has seriously inflamed tensions that have already been exacerbated by the occupying Power's earlier attempts to force the closure of the Bab al-Rahma gate and prayer area, which had been recently reopened by the Waqf. Prior to sealing off the Aqsa Mosque Compound, Israeli occupying forces attacked Palestinian worshippers, including men and women who had been praying inside the Dome of the Rock, and also assaulted several Waqf personnel, before forcibly removing all worshippers from the compound. The Palestine Red Crescent Society has reported that at least four civilians have been taken to hospital due to injuries sustained.

This attack by the Israeli occupying forces was carried out on the pretext of an alleged firebombing of a nearby police station, an allegation that has not been corroborated. Following the attack on the worshippers, occupying forces also detained several worshippers, including three women. Grand Mufti Mohammed Ahmed Hussein has also been barred from entering the compound, and occupying forces continue to assault Palestinian worshippers who have gathered outside the gates of the Old City and are holding evening prayers in the streets as access to the compound continues to be obstructed.



We condemn these attacks, which constitute a grave violation of the sanctity of this holy site. Israel's closure of the Haram Al-Sharif also constitutes a grave violation of the historic status quo at this holy site, as well as a grave violation of the right to freedom of worship. This provocative and aggressive act must be unequivocally condemned by the international community. Israel must be demanded to cease all acts of provocation and incitement, including attacks on worshippers, the desecration of prayer areas by soldiers and repeated incursions by extremist settlers, and to reopen the compound forthwith. Further, Israel must be demanded to abide by its obligations as the occupying Power under the Fourth Geneva Convention and in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions, including numerous Security Council resolutions from 1948 to the present day, and to respect the historic status quo and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan's custodial role at this sensitive and sacred site.

We call on the Security Council to give due attention to this crisis and to act urgently to uphold its resolutions, ensure accountability and avert further escalation of the situation in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, which constitutes a threat to international peace and security.

Lastly, I regret to also inform you once again that the excessive, indiscriminate and unlawful force that continues to be used by the Israeli occupying forces against the Palestinian civilian population continues to cause civilian casualties, including death and serious, disabling injuries. The overwhelming majority of victims of the occupation's brutality continue to be unarmed, defenceless civilians, including children, as revealed by the shocking findings of the United Nations independent international commission of inquiry recently reported to the Human Rights Council.

Yesterday, 11 March, a young Palestinian man, Musa Mohammed Abdelkarim Musa, age 23, died as a result of wounds sustained when he was shot by Israeli soldiers on 1 March during the Great March of Return protests in the Gaza Strip and thereafter prevented by this illegal Israeli occupation and blockade from leaving Gaza for life-saving medical treatment abroad. Also this week, another young Palestinian, Bassam Sami Safi, age 22, died of wounds sustained when he was hit by a tear gas canister shot by occupying forces two weeks earlier in protests. And today, 12 March, a Palestinian man, Fawzi Shweiki, was shot and killed by the Israeli occupying forces in the Old City of Al-Khalil (Hebron).

The present letter is in follow-up to our 660 letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which constitutes the territory of the State of Palestine. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 ([A/55/432-S/2000/921](#)) to 27 February 2019 ([A/ES-10/812-S/2019/189](#)), constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations being committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) **Riyad Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations