



Security Council

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Letter dated 29 April 2020 from the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

During the recent videoconference meeting of the Security Council on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question, held on 23 April 2020, the representative of Israel once again accused me of antisemitism. This accusation is too grave, even when used in such an outrageous and untruthful manner, to be left unanswered.

Such accusations have been repeatedly used to taint legitimate criticism of Israel's violations of international law in the Occupied Palestinian Territory with the aim of silencing or delegitimizing anyone speaking out and must be directly challenged. This has become a systematic policy that has even targeted Security Council members, the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, as well as international figures, who – in upholding their moral, legal, political and/or humanitarian obligations – dare to denounce Israel's violations of the Palestinian people's rights and its colonization of their land.

Israel has blatantly dismissed resolutions adopted by the Security Council and the General Assembly, the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice and statements, including by its closest allies, as stemming from antisemitism instead of acknowledging that such legislation, decisions and declarations reflect on facts and are grounded in the rules that were created to save successive generations from the scourge of war by preventing and deterring violations, regardless of the identity of the victim and of the identity of the perpetrator.

Antisemitism is one of the most despicable forms of racism, which has culminated in one of the greatest tragedies of our time. Our multilateral rules-based order has been established in response to the horrors of the Second World War, including the Holocaust. The Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Geneva Conventions, the International Court of Justice, international criminal law: all were designed in response to these tragedies and to prevent their recurrence and the human suffering and turmoil they caused.

We honour the victims by upholding the rule of international law, not by undermining it. We honour them by denouncing war crimes, not by using their memory to shield perpetrators. We honour them by ensuring accountability, not by perpetuating impunity.

Antisemitism and all other forms of discrimination and racism must be condemned and confronted wholeheartedly, never justified or overlooked. We all need



to fight antisemitism, while rejecting the instrumentalization of the accusation of antisemitism to shield illegal actions from criticism and accountability.

We pay tribute to all those, from every creed, race, colour and background, who have fought for justice anywhere and everywhere, including in Palestine. We will remain steadfast in our struggle against the ills of oppression, occupation, dispossession, discrimination and injustice and will not be silenced by those who accuse us in a failed attempt to justify the crimes they are responsible for. Let them know that, when it comes to our stance for justice, we stand undeterred.

History has taught us what it means to live in a world without rules. What it means to be able to allow anyone to justify widespread and systematic denial of rights. What it means to look away when others are suffering from injustice and oppression. The representatives here at the United Nations have a particular duty to uphold that collective memory so that the words of our Charter can live on, including our determination “to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small”.

I have dedicated my life to the fight for justice, equality and freedom for the Palestinian people and beyond and to the fulfilment of that very pledge of the Charter. I have fought racism in all its ugly forms. I have served this multilateral rules-based order with commitment and principle. I doubt that my accuser can say the same.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter made available to the members of the Security Council for their immediate, valuable consideration and distributed as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) **Riyad Mansour**
Minister

Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations
