



General Assembly Security Council

Distr.: General
13 April 2022

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-seventh year

Identical letters dated 12 April 2022 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

In the absence of international protection and accountability, the situation in Occupied Palestine is dangerously destabilizing, as Israel, the occupying Power, continues its violent aggressions against the Palestinian people, violating their every human right, including their fundamental right to life.

Once again, even in these holiest of days, Israel is showing that it has no mercy and no limits in its aggression against the Palestinian people under its subjugation. Despite repeated warnings and appeals, Israel continues to inflame religious sensitivities during Ramadan, Passover and Easter, persisting with its killing of Palestinian civilians, violent and punitive military raids, and detention of civilians en masse.

In the span of just 24 hours, Israeli occupation forces have killed four Palestinians, including women and children, and dozens of Palestinians have been violently detained. The situation is particularly intense in the West Bank city of Janin and its environs, where Israeli occupation forces serving this illegal occupation are committing one brutal crime after another.

Mohammad Qassim, age 16, was shot and killed by Israeli occupation forces in Janin. According to Defense for Children International – Palestine, Mohammad was shot in the abdomen by an Israeli soldier from a distance of four metres (13 feet). Doctors found multiple bullet fragments in his pelvis and buttocks. Mohammad is the sixth Palestinian child shot and killed by Israeli occupation forces since the start of this year, and the third killed near Janin.

Ghada al-Sabateen, a widowed mother of six, was shot at point-blank range by Israeli occupation forces and left to bleed to death at a military checkpoint in the town of Husan, near Bethlehem. Ghada, who was visually impaired, has left her six children orphaned. No weapon was found near Ghada, which prompted the Israeli army to justify her killing with an absurd and offensive claim that Ghada intended to commit suicide by “behaving suspiciously”. Such rhetoric demonstrates the extent of Israel’s



disregard for Palestinian lives and its failure to accord Palestinians respect in either life or death. This heinous crime yet again highlights the incompetence and insecurities of heavily armed soldiers whose only aim is to enforce Israel's illegal regime of oppression, even if it means killing a widowed mother of six children.

A few hours later, a young Palestinian woman, Maha al-Zaatari, age 24, was shot and killed at a heavily militarized checkpoint in Al-Khalil (Hebron) by Israeli soldiers claiming an alleged attack. Maha's killing came hours after armed Israeli settlers marauded through the Old City of Al-Khalil with the aim of intimidating and inflicting harm on Palestinian residents and their properties, all under the protection of Israeli occupation forces.

Later in the evening, Israeli occupation forces shot and killed 19-year-old Mohammed Ghnaim in Khidr, near Bethlehem. Mohammed was shot in the back by Israeli occupation forces based on an accusation of his allegedly throwing a Molotov cocktail at occupying forces, who then executed him on the spot. Israeli occupation forces used the same false pretext last month to justify the killing of 14-year-old Mohammed Shehadeh, also in Khidr.

It is unsurprising that the killing of Palestinians has intensified since last week's declaration by the Prime Minister of Israel that "there are not and will not be limits ... We are granting full freedom of action to the army", in effect greenlighting the deliberate and excessive use of lethal force against unarmed and defenceless civilians. Since that statement, Israeli occupation forces have launched countless home invasions, mass arrests and large-scale military raids across the occupied West Bank, and Janin refugee camp has been the prime target of Israeli incursions aimed at breaking the resilience and resistance of the population there.

Exactly 20 years ago, Israel committed a horrific massacre in Janin and wantonly destroyed the refugee camp. Within days, the camp became unrecognizable as entire homes and neighbourhoods were reduced to rubble by Israeli warplanes, tanks and bulldozers, and was the scene of gruesome atrocities perpetrated by the occupying army. Human Rights Watch documented the massacre, as did Amnesty International, which reported on countless Israeli crimes, including wilful killing, torture or inhuman treatment, wilfully causing great suffering or serious injury to body or health, unlawful deportation or transfer, unlawful confinement of a protected person, compelling a protected person to serve in the forces of a hostile Power, taking hostages, and extensive destruction and appropriation of property, not justified by military necessity and carried out unlawfully and wantonly.

Israel's latest attacks on Janin – in which four Palestinians have been killed and dozens injured in just the past week and as military raids continue – remind us of that heinous crime of attempting to erase the Janin refugee camp and its residents from the map, and underscore the urgency of averting its recurrence and protecting the Palestinian civilian population from such atrocities.

Hundreds of Palestinians have also been arrested and detained by Israeli occupation forces, and their numbers continue to rise as Israel persists with its arbitrary detention and imprisonment of thousands of Palestinian civilians, including children. In this regard, Amnesty International has warned: "The Israeli authorities' widespread and systematic use of arbitrary arrest, administrative detention and torture against Palestinians forms part of the state's policy of domination and control over the Palestinian population. These actions amount to the crimes against humanity of apartheid, imprisonment and torture."

Israel also continues to target Palestinian officials through its arbitrary arrest campaign, including Adnan Ghaith, the Governor of Jerusalem, who has been repeatedly harassed, detained and arrested by Israeli occupation forces in the past

month. Israel has prevented him from travelling abroad and from entering the occupied West Bank, directly targeting Palestinian representation in Jerusalem. Since becoming the Governor of Jerusalem in 2018, Mr. Ghaith has been detained more than 25 times. In fact, in 2019, the current Ambassador of Israel to the United Nations, who was then the Israeli occupation Minister of Public Security, incited against Mr. Ghaith and authorized Israeli occupation forces to attack his family during arrests. Mr. Ghaith remains under house arrest, with Israeli occupation forces routinely attacking his home.

In another instance, Salah Hammouri, a French-Palestinian human rights defender, has been held in “administrative detention” since 7 March, becoming yet another victim of Israel’s unlawful practice of detaining Palestinians indefinitely without charge or trial on the basis of claims that are accessible neither to the detainees nor their lawyers. We must also draw attention to the plight of Khalil Awawda, who is now in the fortieth day of his hunger strike in protest of his unlawful “administrative detention”. According to Khalil’s lawyer, Israel continues to deny him medical treatment, as it does dozens of Palestinians who are on hunger strikes in protest of their unlawful imprisonment.

We appeal again to the international community, in particular the Security Council, to give urgent attention to the plight of the thousands of Palestinian civilians, including children, women and the severely ill, who are imprisoned in Israeli jails under the most deplorable and inhumane conditions, and to demand that Israel, the occupying Power, fully respect its obligations under international humanitarian law and the human rights of those civilians, including the right to life.

Against the backdrop of these ongoing Israeli crimes and escalating persecution of our people, we are compelled to once again call for protection of the Palestinian people in accordance with international law, including humanitarian and human rights law. The Palestinian people under Israel’s occupation in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and in the Gaza Strip cannot continue to be left to the mercy of this ruthless, illegal 55-year military occupation, which is in every manifestation an act of violence, oppression and apartheid, constituting a decades-long war against the very existence of our people.

We call on the Security Council to act forthwith, in line with the Charter of the United Nations and the Council’s relevant resolutions, to avert the further deterioration of this already-volatile situation and to protect innocent civilian lives. We call on the Council to act responsibly, and not just react to crisis after crisis, to redress this injustice, which has been on its agenda for nearly 75 years and continues to pose a threat to international peace and security.

We cannot accept that such acts of aggression by Israel against the Palestinian people are normalized or excused; they must be stopped. We reiterate that the selective application of international law, including the Charter and United Nations resolutions, is unacceptable and indefensible and is causing great harm not only to our people but to the international rules-based order. It is time to stop exempting Israel from its obligations under international law and time to hold it fully accountable for all of its transgressions against the Palestinian people, including war crimes and crimes against humanity.

The present letter is in follow-up to our 747 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 1 April 2022 (A/ES-10/894-S/2022/283) 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**
Minister
Permanent Observer
