



General Assembly Security Council

Distr.: General
28 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 28 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 light of continuing Israeli human rights violations and war crimes in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the provocative distortions and false narratives that continue to be peddled by the Israeli representative in the Security Council, most recently in the 25 April open debate, I am compelled to clarify and reaffirm the following:

- (a) A people living in their own homeland are not terrorists;
- (b) A people seeking to live freely, securely and peacefully in their land and homes are not terrorists;
- (c) A people defending themselves from the aggressions of an occupying force perpetrating violence and terror against them are not terrorists;
- (d) Such characterizations of a people – occupied, colonized, repressed and persecuted for decades – are false, racist, inhumane and must be unequivocally rejected and condemned.

Day after day, the number of Palestinians killed is rising. Within the past 48 hours, Israeli occupying forces have shot and killed two more young Palestinians. During a predawn military raid on the Aqbat Jabr refugee camp, near Jericho, Israeli occupying forces killed 20-year-old Ahmad Owaidat by shooting him directly in the head. During a predawn military raid on the Jenin refugee camp, Israeli occupying forces killed 18-year-old Ahmad Masad by also shooting the teenager directly in the head.

And yet, somehow, our people, including our children, are blamed for their plight, the occupation using every excuse to justify its savagery against them, condemning them for simply being Palestinian, for daring to refuse to continue living under occupation, for protesting against its cruel oppression and dispossession, all callously labelled terrorists, denigrated and dehumanized.



Such offensive distortions are spread not only in the media, but also actually presented to the international community as the official Israeli narrative and position. Time after time, Israel's representatives have come before the world peddling such lies, demanding that the international community believe that Israel, the occupying Power, is a benevolent occupier – or not an occupier at all – even as it imposes military rule, represses, discriminates and colonizes, systematically committing war crimes against an unarmed occupied people because every Palestinian is deemed a threat to its domination and control. Such crimes and cruelty are justified by Israel in the name of “security”, with zero regard for international law.

In the days since the Israeli representative's gaslighting of the Security Council with false narratives, more Palestinians have been killed by Israeli occupying forces, countless raids have been carried out in Palestinian towns, villages and refugee camps, hundreds more Palestinians have been imprisoned, holy sites and freedom of worship remain under attack, settler violence continues to surge, illegal settlement plans are being advanced and movement restrictions on Palestinians are further being tightened.

Are we to believe that all these crimes are necessitated and justified by “legitimate security concerns”? The Israeli representative can have his own opinions, but cannot create his own facts. International law is patently clear, and the facts are that Israel, its occupying army and settler militias are perpetrating grave crimes against the Palestinian people. Inaction in the face of such impunity regrettably continues to enable Israel's manipulation of the law and entrenchment of its colonial and apartheid regime.

As stressed in our 16 March letter, Israel's methodical killing of Palestinians demonstrates a clear pattern of extrajudicial killings, as most Palestinians killed in 2022, including children, have been targeted with direct gunshots to the head or chest. Since 2022 began, over 50 Palestinians, including women and children, have been killed by Israeli occupying forces as a result of Israel's shoot-to-kill policy and excessive use of lethal force.

Of course, Israel resorts to “security concerns” as its trigger-happy occupying forces carry out deadly raids across Palestine. The intention of these raids is not to ensure the safety of Palestinians living under Israel's occupation or to protect them from surging settler violence, as international law obligates the occupying Power to do. Rather, these raids are designed to kill Palestinians, to assert violent control and to entrench the occupation to a point of no return. If Israel truly cared about so-called “security concerns”, its forces would be on the other side of the Green Line, not in Palestinian villages, refugee camps, kindergartens and hospitals, where they are intentionally killing civilians and yet brazenly claiming self-defence.

Another blatant lie presented to the Security Council was Israel's claim of ensuring the freedom of worship for all religions and commitment to protecting holy sites and the status quo. Every year, the international community witnesses the scope and scale of Israeli incursions and raids on Al-Aqsa Mosque/Al-Haram Al-Sharif, the brutal attacks on worshippers and the desecration of the holy site. While some have “welcomed” Israel's alleged role in maintaining the status quo at holy sites, we must remind the international community that Israel is the occupying Power and is not the sovereign in occupied East Jerusalem or any other part of the Occupied Palestinian Territory and has no rights whatsoever to implement its illegal colonial designs on our land, including in the Old City and at its holy sites.

Regardless of how much Israel falsely boasts about the so-called freedom of worship that it provides to “all people”, decades of repressive Israeli policies have proved otherwise. Palestinians cannot pray in their own mosques during Ramadan without being attacked by forces armed to the teeth. Although Bethlehem is only 6 miles

away from Jerusalem, Palestinians from Bethlehem cannot pray at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre without facing numerous restrictions. Palestinians in Al-Khalil (Hebron) face numerous and dehumanizing restrictions on their prayer at the Ibrahimi Mosque despite living in the vicinity of the Mosque.

Like Al-Aqsa Mosque/Al-Haram Al-Sharif, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and other Christian holy sites are facing an aggressive Israeli campaign aimed at minimizing Palestinian presence and characteristics throughout Jerusalem, in grave breach of international law and the historic and legal status quo. The Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem has stated: “The Patriarchate is fed up with police restrictions on freedom to worship and with its unacceptable methods of dealing with the God given rights of Christians to practice rituals and have to access their holy sites in the Old City of Jerusalem ... The police must stop imposing restrictions and violence that, unfortunately, have become part of our sacred ceremonies.”

Just in the past week, the international community witnessed Israel’s campaign targeting holy sites during the convergence of holidays, whether the aggression against the Aqsa Mosque and Muslim worshippers or the segregation of Palestinian Christians from other pilgrims coming to pray at the Holy Sepulchre, restricting their entry into the Church. It is a fact that Israel is altering the demography, character and status of Jerusalem and violating the historic and legal status quo at the holy sites with the deliberate intent to assert its illegal control, colonization and Judaization of the City.

Meanwhile, Jewish extremists and settlers have the absolute freedom to worship wherever they please, even if it means encroaching on Muslim and Christian holy sites, as seen in recent weeks in Jerusalem, Al-Khalil and elsewhere in Palestine. Whether it is Israeli politicians and extremist Jewish groups seeking to take over Al-Haram Al-Sharif and Christian properties in Jerusalem or the heavily militarized checkpoints around holy sites in Bethlehem and Al-Khalil, Israel’s false claims about ensuring the freedom of worship and protecting holy sites under its occupation are exposed by actions that its false narratives cannot conceal. Giving credence to Israel’s words while ignoring its actual actions amounts to complicity in such impunity.

We call once again upon the Security Council to act without delay by using the means and measures afforded by international law to hold Israel, the occupying Power, accountable for all of these violations and crimes. We call upon the Security Council to act in respect of its duty under the Charter of the United Nations to maintain international peace and security through the non-selective application of international law in order to bring an end to this illegal colonial occupation and apartheid regime.

International action does not require reinventing the wheel on the question of Palestine. It requires the implementation of the rule of law, as enshrined in countless Security Council and General Assembly resolutions, via the available political and legal mechanisms. This must include the implementation of United Nations resolutions by all States at the national level to ensure respect for international law, including via distinction in all dealings between the occupied territory and the territory of the occupying Power; upholding the collective and individual responsibility to ensure accountability for violations of the Fourth Geneva Convention and the Rome Statute; support for legal action in courts such as the International Criminal Court and the International Court of Justice; and the implementation of the Secretary-General’s recommendations on the deployment of United Nations-mandated forces or unarmed observers to ensure the protection of the Palestinian people.

Over 50 years ago, the international community gave into previous Israeli distortions regarding the occupation of Palestine by believing that the belligerent occupation would be “temporary”. Fifty-five years later, the occupation continues with no end in sight. In his final report to the Human Rights Council, the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, Michael Lynk, concluded that, “with the eyes of the international community wide open, Israel has imposed upon Palestine an apartheid reality in a post-apartheid world”.

The international community, particularly the Security Council, must act now to save generations from decades more injustices that have no place in the modern world. The path forward is clear: accountability and implementation must remain at the forefront of global efforts.

This letter is in follow-up to our 751 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 19 April 2022 (A/ES-10/898-S/2022/328) 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