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**Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the
rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory**

Identical letters dated 29 August 2024 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

The humanitarian catastrophe wrought on the Gaza Strip by Israel, the occupying Power, is worsening by the day, endangering the lives of millions of Palestinian children, women and men. With every day that passes, this unlawful occupation exposes further its illegality, immorality and depravity.

In the absence of a ceasefire, and commanded by extremist Israeli officials, Israeli occupying forces are carrying on with their lethal rampage across Gaza, causing vast human suffering and devastation. Israeli soldiers continue to kill, maim and destroy with unprecedented savagery, threatening the lives of Palestinian civilians and also humanitarian workers, including United Nations staff desperately trying to aid the population.

Despite Israel's insidious propaganda campaign, the facts are borne out by its deliberate, indiscriminate bombing, striking and shelling by air, land and sea, directly targeting homes, schools, hospitals, churches and mosques. They are also borne out by its repeated targeting of United Nations operations in Gaza.

This includes direct fire on humanitarian convoys, such as Israeli troops spraying a clearly marked World Food Programme vehicle with bullets, and includes incessant strikes on the staff and facilities of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), in which more families sheltering under the United Nations flag have been brutally murdered. Israel also persists with its libelous campaign against UNRWA, shockingly labelling this United Nations body and humanitarian agency as a "terrorist organization", in blatant breach of the Charter of the United Nations, United Nations resolutions and international humanitarian law.

As Israel continues to restrict and obstruct the entry of food, water, medicines and other essentials into Gaza, including hygiene and sanitation supplies, and deliberately impedes humanitarian access, the Palestinian civilian population is being ravaged by starvation and famine, infectious diseases and illnesses, and hopelessness



and despair. The terrifying outbreak of polio, which has already paralysed a 10-month-old baby girl and partially paralysed an 11-month-old baby boy, now threatens the lives of hundreds of thousands of children, who comprise the majority of Gaza's population. Among them are 640,000 children under the age of 10, among them at least 50,000 infants born during the past 10 months who are unlikely to have received any vaccinations, including against polio, as Israel has decimated the health system in Gaza.

Against this gruesome backdrop of bombardments, hunger and disease, another 300,000-plus people, among them sick, injured, disabled and elderly persons and orphans, have been demanded to evacuate areas across Gaza, again forced to flee the Israeli killing machine. In just the span of the past week, the Israeli military issued 5 evacuation orders, out of the 16 orders issued in the month of August, vowing to strike areas to which civilians had previously been told to go for safety. As of now, at least 89 per cent of Gaza has been placed under Israeli evacuation orders, forcibly displacing nearly the entire population and leaving nowhere safe.

We are witnessing humanity unravelling in Gaza at the hands of this illegal Israeli occupation. We are witnessing the unravelling of rule of law in Gaza, including the humanitarian laws meant to protect civilians and avert such wanton killing and destruction. Nothing is sacred, not even the precious life of a child, and nothing is too shameless, too deranged or too vicious for the occupying army to commit, as Israel continues to justify its war crimes and crimes against humanity and to justify genocide.

We are also forced to bear witness to the unbearable rising numbers of casualties in Gaza – at last count, surpassing at least 40,500 Palestinians killed and over 93,600 injured, the majority of victims being women and children.

Likewise, in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, Israeli occupying forces, inseparable from terrorist Israeli settler militias, are ramping up their attacks on Palestinian civilians, incited and directed by Israeli politicians who are threatening to wage war against the entire occupied population and vowing to do to the West Bank “what has been done to Gaza”.

Military invasions, including air strikes by drones and other weaponry, targeting Palestinian villages, towns, cities and refugee camps have escalated in both frequency and ferocity. According to United Nations data, in the first three weeks of this month of August alone, 136 Palestinians, among them 41 children, were killed by Israeli air strikes in the West Bank, in addition to other acts of violence and terror against our civilians.

The majority of victims have been from the northern West Bank – from Janin, Nablus and Tulkarm and adjacent refugee camps – as Israel continues to strike those areas, each attack more violent than that preceding it. In what constitutes the largest Israeli military invasion of the past 20 years, Israeli occupying forces have invaded homes, deliberately targeted civilians, destroyed vital infrastructure and even besieged the four main hospitals in the area, preventing the wounded from receiving care. Now Israeli officials are threatening the “evacuation” of Palestinians in the West Bank, as they have done in Gaza. This must be stopped.

The casualty count in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, since October 2023 has now risen to over 622 Palestinians killed and over 6,000 injured by Israeli occupying forces and in settler attacks. Thousands of Palestinians, including children, have also been illegally abducted since October, forcibly held captive in Israeli jails and detention centres and exposed to the most horrific abuses, including rape, psychological torment, vicious beatings and other forms of torture.

Extremist settlers also continue to abet and carry out Israel's ethnic cleansing campaign against the Palestinian people, terrorizing and forcibly displacing more and more Palestinian families from their land. As reported by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, since October alone, at least 1,566 Palestinians, including 758 children, have been displaced, just in the context of Israeli settler attacks, in addition to the thousands who have been displaced by the occupation's orders for home demolitions, especially in and around East Jerusalem, an integral part of its illegal colonial settlement drive.

In this regard, the Israeli President recently provocatively declared that "settlements have existed since the dawn of Zionism. They are inseparable", in blatant defiance of the Security Council, the General Assembly and the International Court of Justice, which unequivocally reaffirmed in its 19 July advisory opinion the illegality of Israel's settlement campaign, as well as the illegality of the occupation in its entirety and the obligation of all States to bring an end to this unlawful situation.

Every single day that this abhorrent, unlawful and inhumane situation continues brings only more atrocities, more civilian casualties, more destruction of vital civilian infrastructure and more risk of an all-out conflagration that will consume everyone and everything in its path in Palestine, in Israel and in the region.

That risk is amplified by extremist Israeli government officials who continue their reckless provocations vis-à-vis the holy sites in Jerusalem, intensifying their threats in particular against the Aqsa Mosque/Haram al-Sharif. Just days ago, the extremist so-called Israeli national security minister, Itamar Ben-Gvir, who has repeatedly incited and carried out incursions at the Aqsa Mosque compound, declared that "if I could do anything I wanted, I would put an Israeli flag on the site" and, when asked by a journalist if he sought to build a synagogue at the site, affirmatively replied, "yes".

Such dangerous provocations and violations of the historic and legal status quo, breaches of international law and disrespect for the custodianship of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan of the Muslim and Christian holy sites in the city must be stopped before they ignite a religious war with unthinkable consequences. Israel cannot continue to be allowed to violate every law, every norm and every sanctity, dragging us all into the abyss.

Israel must be stopped, and the international community must act decisively. Every single day it proves that it has zero regard for international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, nor any regard for the Charter and the authority of the United Nations. It does so, flagrantly and unapologetically, because it remains undeterred, basking in the impunity that has too long been granted to it. It does not fear consequences because it has never been held to account, thus continuing to believe that it can get away with its crimes, imposing its deranged lawlessness as a de facto way of life, not only on the Palestinian people, but also on our region and the international community as a whole.

The international community cannot allow this travesty of justice to continue. The Security Council in particular must overcome its paralysis and shore up the political will to act now to press for a halt to all these illegal actions that are imperilling millions of human lives and international peace and security.

This begins with demanding an immediate ceasefire, demanding respect for the International Court of Justice provisional measures orders and imposing an arms embargo on Israel.

Israel has made it patently clear that it does not want a ceasefire; rather, it seeks to prolong its genocidal war as it openly pursues ethnic cleansing and annexation throughout Occupied Palestine. A ceasefire must therefore be demanded and imposed

by the Security Council, in line with its Charter duty and authority. It is time to stop the bloodshed and ensure lifesaving humanitarian aid for the millions of civilians in need, including swift action to stem the public health disaster in Gaza. United Nations agencies, including UNRWA, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Children's Fund and others, are ready and must be enabled to carry out their humanitarian duties.

Our collective action must also include the pursuit of accountability for all crimes perpetrated by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people. This is imperative and can no longer be delayed. It is essential to deter future crimes, as doing so is equally essential for protecting civilians and for ensuring international peace and security.

We thus again implore the Security Council to act. Stop this genocide. Protect the Palestinian people and preserve international law, both of which are under existential threat by Israel. Act now to end this illegal occupation and apartheid regime and all its horrors.

The present letter is in follow-up to our 846 letters on 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 10 August 2024 ([A/ES-10/1007-S/2024/606](#)), 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 against our 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