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

Security Council
Seventy-ninth year

Identical letters dated 25 April 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

It has been over 200 days of unrelenting Israeli atrocities in the Gaza Strip; over six months of war crimes and crimes against humanity perpetrated by the occupying Power; and over half a year of genocide waged by Israel against the Palestinian people in an ongoing Nakba of over seven decades in breach of all legal norms and any measure of human decency.

The international community's failure to ensure accountability has only emboldened Israel's commission of more crimes in Occupied Palestine with intensifying savagery. Shielding of Israel by the veto in the Security Council has bolstered its belief that it is exceptional, a State above the law.

Unrestrained by any consequences, Israel remains in its contempt for the Council's ceasefire demand, persisting with its siege and bombardments of all areas in Gaza, north to south, and in contempt of the International Court of Justice provisional measures orders, flouting such binding legal obligations with total impunity.

And, in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, the occupying army and Israeli settler mobs continue to hunt down Palestinian civilians in daily raids on Palestinian villages and towns, terrorizing the entire population. Fanatic and violent settlers also continue to provoke, incite and carry out raids at Al-Aqsa Mosque/Al-Haram Al-Sharif, dangerously stoking religious tensions. Just days ago, Israeli occupying forces besieged and ravaged the Nur Shams refugee camp near Tulkarem for nearly three days, killing 14 Palestinians, injuring 50 others, damaging and destroying homes, forcibly displacing at least 11 families and cutting off 4,000 people from water and electricity.

Absent a ceasefire and any form of protection, Israel thus continues inflicting unspeakable traumas on the Palestinian people. Terrified civilians in Gaza, the majority homeless and living in extreme deprivation and distress in United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) shelters



and tents, have borne witness to massacres and executions, maiming and torture, detention and disappearances of their loved ones; they have been starved as Israel weaponizes food, threatened by disease as Israel weaponizes water and medicine, disabled as Israel weaponizes medical care to those struck by its bombs and bullets. They are enduring sheer terror.

Undeterred, Israel continues mass murdering Palestinian children, women and men, wreaking mass destruction, and obstructing lifesaving humanitarian aid. Contrary to any claims otherwise, the truth is that Israel is deliberately, systematically, methodically devastating Gaza. It is a war of collective punishment, of vengeance, of annihilation against an occupied people struggling for its existence.

The mass graves found on the grounds of Al-Nasser hospital in Khan Younis in the south and Al-Shifa Hospital in the north expose a gruesome pattern of murder and total disregard for human life by Israel and its soldiers, who are perpetrating the most heinous, horrific crimes. The bodies of 392 men, women, children, elderly persons, doctors and others were found in these graves. Some with their hands still bound, wearing the clothing of detainees or medics, some with wounds indicating executions, some who appear to have been buried alive, many of the corpses so badly mutilated they could not be identified.

Every day that this criminal war against the Palestinian people continues brings only more suffering and horrors, endangering all who have until now survived this genocide, and brings only more shame on the international community and whatever shreds of our collective humanity may still remain.

In this regard, we warn again of the rising threat of an Israeli ground invasion of Rafah. We recall that the nearly 1.5 million civilians in Rafah – the majority displaced families, half of whom are children – had fled to the city for “safety” from other areas in Gaza on the orders of the occupation forces, all while being chased by Israeli war planes and tanks and Israeli politicians, military commanders and religious leaders inciting their obliteration. Their lives are in grave and imminent danger.

This grave, inhumane situation demands immediate international action to protect the millions of Palestinian lives threatened by this illegal occupation and to avert a further spillover in the region with untold ramifications. The Security Council cannot continue debating and monitoring such impunity, yet failing to take the necessary measures to ensure compliance with international law and its own resolutions, including resolutions [2712 \(2023\)](#), [2720 \(2023\)](#) and [2728 \(2024\)](#). There must be consequences for all ongoing breaches. There must be independent international investigations of all the crimes perpetrated by Israel, the occupying Power, including investigations of the mass graves recently discovered in Gaza.

We will not – and no one should – accept Israeli whitewash investigations that are solely intended to propagate Israel’s distorted narratives and lies and absolve its military and government officials of these crimes. International law, including humanitarian and human rights law, must be upheld in word and deed. There must be real accountability for all the war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide that Israel and its military forces and settler militias are committing against the Palestinian civilian population subjugated under this illegal, settler colonial occupation and apartheid regime. We will not rest until accountability is realized and justice is attained.

The Palestinian people appeal to the international community to act now to bring a halt to this genocidal Israeli onslaught that has killed over 34,356 Palestinians and injured over 77,368 people. Women and children continue to bear the brunt of Israel’s attacks on and dehumanization of our people.

According to the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), one child is killed or injured in Gaza every 10 minutes. This is unfathomable and unconscionable. Thus

far, over 12,000 children have been injured by the Israeli occupying forces, averaging at least 70 children a day, with an estimated 10 of those children losing limbs or suffering other life-altering wounds. Over 17,000 children have been orphaned or separated from their families, some of whom may never be found. The irreparable harm that Israel is wreaking on Palestinian children, as a result of mass violence and terror against them, deliberate forced displacement, famine inflicted on them, deprivation of their education, their exposure to spreading diseases and a public health catastrophe, their exposure to unimaginable traumas and the theft of their childhoods, demands that the occupying Power be listed by the Secretary-General as a serial and dangerous violator of child rights.

Accountability must begin somewhere and the time is now to act with courage and conviction in accordance with the laws created to prevent such atrocities from ever happening to any child, woman or man. Collective action, including serious diplomatic pressure, a halt of arms transfers and sanctions are needed. There must be immediate efforts to compel Israel to cease fire now and to respect the binding International Court of Justice provisional measures orders, inter alia, to cease and prevent all acts of genocide and to ensure the access of the Palestinian civilian population to humanitarian assistance and basic services in cooperation with the United Nations, including UNRWA.

The Palestinian people look to the members of the Security Council to uphold their solemn obligations under the Charter of the United Nations to stop these atrocities and protect them, including via the adoption of measures to implement the Council's multiple resolutions that remain unimplemented and are being violated by Israel with gross contempt.

They look to the General Assembly to act with the power of the overwhelming majority of the international community to uphold and ensure the realization of the Palestinian people's inalienable rights, including to self-determination and the independence of their State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem as its capital, in compliance with international law and the relevant United Nations resolutions and in accordance with the two-State solution on the pre-1967 lines. They look to the Assembly also to ensure the continuity of the UNRWA mandate and operations until a just solution is reached for the plight of the Palestine refugees. They look to the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention to fulfil their obligations to respect and enforce the Convention in all circumstances, including to ensure protection and sustenance to the occupied people.

The Palestinian people are in deep despair and their resilience is being severely tested, their coping capacities diminished after 76 years of this unrelenting Nakba against them by Israel and its 57-year belligerent occupation and subjugation, yet they remain steadfast, clinging to their rights and their land. As Israel continues to ignore the global condemnations and demands for ceasefire, and continues to wantonly kill and destroy across Occupied Palestine, thwarting the efforts to end the catastrophe in Gaza and end its illegal occupation, we look to all peace-loving nations to act for justice, recognizing the solidarity and peaceful actions of the millions of people in the streets and at universities and in parliaments around the world calling for a ceasefire, for justice for the Palestinian people, for a free Palestine.

It is time to end the extreme human insecurity, deprivations and indignations being forced upon the Palestinian people, time to fulfil the decades of unfulfilled promises and broken covenants to liberate them from this oppression and inhumanity and end this historic injustice.

The present letter is in follow-up to our 832 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 15 April 2024 ([A/ES-10/988-S/2024/307](#)) 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*) Dr. Riyad **Mansour**
Minister
Permanent Observer
