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**RIGHTS OF THE CHILD**

**Letter dated 15 November 2002 from the Permanent Representative  
of Israel to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the  
Chairperson of the Commission on Human Rights**

At a time when the international community will soon be marking the adoption of both the Declaration on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (20 November 2002), it is with regret that I must write to you once again regarding the abuse of minors by the Fatah movement (Fatah is the political-military grouping within the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) answerable directly to Yasser Arafat).

Several days ago, an Arab-Israeli minor handed himself over to Israeli security forces, confessing his intention to commit a suicide bombing inside Israel.

The youth recounted that in August 2002 he took the initiative of approaching a resident of Kalkilya, named Mohammed Masad, regarding the possibility of carrying out a suicide attack in Israel. Masad put him in contact with a Fatah activist named Ahmed Aladva. The minor stated that he wanted to carry out a suicide operation as a means of avenging the death of a friend of his who had carried out a similar suicide attack earlier this year in the village of Karnei Shomron, killing 3 Israeli adolescents and wounding 30 people, and as a means of attaining heaven where he would meet his friend. The activists informed the minor that he would conduct the suicide operation in the name of the *Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade* (this is a cover-name for the Fatah Movement).

Even though four of his young friends, also residents of Kalkilya, tried to dissuade the youth from committing this act, he had a subsequent meeting with two Fatah activists at the base of the Palestinian Authority Special Forces in Kalkilya where, together with a third Fatah activist, they set the attack timetable for the following week. They also explained to the minor

the meaning of being a so-called “Shahid” (martyr), claiming that he would feel no pain when he killed himself, that his body would not rot in a grave, and that he would meet fellow “Shahids” in heaven as well as the many virgins promised to suicide bombers. As further encouragement, the Fatah activists told the youth that even if he did not manage to kill or wound Israelis, his place in heaven was guaranteed.

In the final preparations made by the Fatah activists for the suicide attack, they suggested specific targets, such as the by-pass road of Kalkilya or the shooting of a missile at an Israeli civilian bus. The minor, however, refused these targets, insisting that he wanted to carry out his attack within Israel’s pre-1967 borders. An appointment was set for the afternoon of the following day for the minor to videotape his last testament and to give him the suicide belt he would be using in the attack. Fortunately, that night the Israeli Defence Forces entered the town within the framework of the fight against terror and, consequently, Fatah postponed the attack.

As indicated earlier in this letter, several days later the minor turned himself in to security forces, stating that he feared that too many people were cognizant of his intention to carry out the attack and that this would result in his exposure and eventual arrest in any case.

Tragically, terrorist attacks carried out by the Fatah activists against Israeli civilians continue to yield fatal consequences. Only days ago, on the evening of 10 November, a mother and her two young sons (aged 5 and 4 years) were shot and killed in cold blood in their own house by a terrorist who had infiltrated the kibbutz in which they lived. The terrorist escaped and the Fatah Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades claimed responsibility for the attack.

I appeal to you once again, in your capacity as Chairperson of the Commission on Human Rights, to call upon the Palestinian Authority, Yasser Arafat, and the Fatah movement to desist from suicide and other attacks either within Israel or within areas administered by Israel to denounce in no uncertain terms the gross violations of human rights perpetrated through the encouragement and support of those attacks, including the making of false promises to young would-be suicide bombers, and to uphold the criminal responsibility of those who, from the sidelines and with no personal risk to themselves, carefully manipulate minors lacking experience and judgement, in order to send them to certain death along with many innocent Israelis.

I would like to request that this letter be circulated as an official document of the fifty-ninth session of the Commission on Human Rights.

(Signed): Yaakov LEVY  
Ambassador  
Permanent Representative

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