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**QUESTION OF THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE
OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES, INCLUDING PALESTINE**

**Letter dated 20 November 2002 from the Permanent Observer for Palestine
to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the United Nations
High Commissioner for Human Rights**

I examined your statement issued on 16 November 2002 under the title “High Commissioner for Human Rights Condemns Hebron Killings” and after a thorough study of the statement, I would like to put before Your Excellency the following observations:

1. Hebron is a Palestinian city, occupied by the Israeli armed forces during the 1967 war. All the resolutions of the United Nations Security Council, General Assembly and the Commission on Human Rights have been affirming this fact for 34 years now.
2. The Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territory in 1967 to this day is the main reason for denying the Palestinian people the possibility to exercise their holy right to self-determination, in accordance with the provisions of the United Nations Charter and the International Covenants on Human Rights.
3. The Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territory since 1967 constitutes under international law an aggression and a crime against humanity and world peace, in addition to being a flagrant violation of the right of people to self-determination set forth in the International Bill of Human Rights.
4. The incident that took place in the occupied Palestinian city of Hebron on 15 November 2002 comes within the framework of the legitimate Palestinian resistance, based on the right of the Palestinian people to resist the Israeli occupation with

all the means at their disposal, including armed struggle, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 37/43 of 3 December 1982, reaffirming the legitimacy of the struggle of peoples against foreign occupation by all available means, including armed struggle.

5. The incident that took place in the occupied Palestinian city of Hebron on 15 November 2002 targeted a number of the Israeli soldiers and Israeli armed settlers, it did not target Israeli civilians.

6. Condemning resistance to the Israeli occupation inside the Palestinian territory occupied by Israel is in fact tantamount to a condemnation of international law, which prohibits the acquisition of land by force, and constitutes a grave condemnation of the resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly and the Commission on Human Rights in this respect, which is totally inadmissible.

7. The fact that you have failed to mention in the first paragraph of your statement on the Hebron killings that the West Bank and Hebron city in particular are occupied Palestinian land could contribute to concealing the reality from the international public opinion, thereby failing to promote the human rights of the Palestinians that are violated daily by the Israeli occupation army in the occupied Palestinian territory for over 34 years now. These breaches amount to flagrant violations, war crimes and crimes against humanity, according to the many resolutions adopted by the United Nations General Assembly and the Commission on Human Rights as well as the reports of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Palestine.

8. Your expression of sympathy, in the last paragraph of your statement, with the Israeli families of those killed, and your failure to express sympathy with the families of the thousands of Palestinian civilians including men, women and children, who have been killed so far by the Israeli occupation forces, with the death toll rising daily, prompt astonishment and bewilderment.

9. All the forms of violence and the legitimate resistance of the Palestinian people against the Israeli military occupation of their territory are but a natural consequence of the persistence of the Israeli occupation. An end to all these forms of violence will only be achieved by the total withdrawal of Israel from all the land it occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem.

I would be most grateful if you could arrange to have this letter circulated to the distinguished members of the Commission on Human Rights, as an official document of its fifty-ninth session under agenda item 8.

(Signed): Nabil RAMLAWI
Ambassador
Permanent Observer
