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ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS

**Letter dated 23 October 2003 from the Permanent Observer for Palestine
to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the Chairperson
of the Commission on Human Rights**

I examined the letter of the Permanent Representative of the Government of Israel dated 18 September 2003 (E/CN.4/2004/G/9), as well as its insubstantial allegations towards the Special Rapporteur on the right to food, Mr. Jean Ziegler, regarding his way of discharging his duties. Based on these allegations, the letter claims that Mr. Ziegler should not be given any duties within the United Nations system in the future, be it in his capacity as Special Rapporteur or in any other capacity.

Israel and its Permanent Representative to the United Nations Office at Geneva are the last ones to talk about duties and their respect within the framework of the United Nations for one simple reason: successive Israeli Governments from the establishment of this State in 1948 to this day, have never shown any respect for the United Nations. To the contrary, all its Representatives to the United Nations treat Security Council, General Assembly and Commission on Human Rights resolutions and any commitment to the said resolutions with total contempt, disregard and rejection.

Successive Governments of Israel continue to prove their contempt for the said resolutions and violate through their practices, since the creation of Israel, the rules of international law, international humanitarian law and the principles of human rights. If this is not so, would the Representative of the Government of Israel care to answer this simple question: What about the stance of his Government towards all Commission on Human Rights resolutions with respect to the situation of human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, or the stance of his Government towards all General Assembly resolutions from 1947 to this day in this respect, as well as Security Council resolutions on this same matter?

The Government of Israel has been rejecting for over 50 years now not only to abide by the resolutions of this international institution, which established the State of Israel by its resolution 181 in 1947, but also is still refusing to respect and cooperate with it. Therefore, it is strange that the Representative of the Government of Israel is talking today about who is fit or unfit to work in the United Nations, whereas neither he nor his Government has shown the least respect for this international institution, its resolutions or its will based on international law. Otherwise, the Israeli Representative to the United Nations H. Herzog would never have said in front of the General Assembly, during its 1975 session, after the adoption of a resolution condemning Israeli practices: "The fate of your resolution on Israel would be the litter bin." Then he tore the resolution into pieces on the podium and trampled it under his feet. In 1948, Israeli gangs assassinated Count Bernadotte, United Nations Special Envoy to Palestine. Afterwards, Israeli settlers' gangs fired at the car of the United Nations former High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mrs. Mary Robinson, when she was undertaking a humanitarian mission in the region. Later, Israel refused to give permission to the Human Rights Inquiry Commission, headed by Mrs. Robinson, to enter Israel and inquire into the violations of human rights that the Israeli occupation authorities are perpetrating in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Furthermore, Governments of Israel were and are still refusing to cooperate with all Commission special rapporteurs and deny them entry to the Occupied Palestinian Territories to undertake the mission assigned to them by the Commission on Human Rights.

In such a context, how could this State and its Representative evaluate the work of the United Nations and that of its representatives, the special rapporteurs, such as Mr. Jean Ziegler, the Special Rapporteur on the right to food, at a time when it is dangerously defying the United Nations, its principles, resolutions and envoys?

How can he claim concern for the United Nations and for its officials, as the Israeli Permanent Representative does in his letter, before respecting his commitment to the United Nations as well as to its principles and its resolutions?

I would be most grateful if you could have this letter distributed as an official document of the sixtieth session of the Commission on Human Rights, under its agenda item 10.

(Signed): Nabil RAMLAWI
Ambassador
Permanent Observer
