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

**Letter dated 2 May 2003 from the Permanent Observer for Palestine to  
the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the United Nations  
High Commissioner for Human Rights**

In violation of the provisions of human rights, at the forefront of which is the right to life, the rules of international law and international humanitarian law and the principles of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, and only 24 hours after the Palestinian side accepted the long-awaited presentation of the “road map”, the destination to a final and comprehensive settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by 2005, as presented in President Bush’s speech of 24 June and welcomed by the European Union, Russia and the United Nations in the 16 July and 17 September Quartet ministerial statements, in total violation of this instrument and despite the establishment of a new Palestinian government, the Israeli occupation forces committed another barbarous massacre against the Palestinian people into the densely populated Shajayia neighbourhood of Gaza City.

Tens of Israeli tanks, backed by Apache helicopters, in the early morning hours of Thursday, 1 May, invaded the Shajayia neighbourhood of Gaza City, firing tens of missiles and directing heavy tank fire at Palestinian’s homes, killing innocent babies, children and civilians peacefully asleep inside their homes, including three brothers in one family. The Israeli attack lasted for 16 hours, causing death, injuries and wide destruction of property. At least 13 martyrs lost their lives in this massacre, among them 4 children, and 36 others are in hospital fighting for their lives; 20 homes and a number of stores, factories, schools and telephone, electricity and water networks were destroyed on that bloody day by the Israeli occupation forces. Moreover, and to further escalate the dire humanitarian situation the Palestinian people has deliberately been exposed to for years now and to make things ever worse - as is usually the case after any Israeli attack against Palestinians - the Israeli forces hindered the work of public services and hospitals, including ambulances which were not allowed to rescue the wounded who are intentionally, deliberately and cruelly left bleeding to death in the streets.

Among those killed in the Shajayia massacre were a 2-year-old toddler, Ahmed Iyad, who was struck by a bullet to the head, Mohamed Dahdouh (12 years old), Ahmed Ramadan Al-Teter (15 years old), Bakr Moheisen (40 years old), Mohamed Kamel Abu Zreineh (30 years old), Abdallah Faraj Al-Omrani (21 years old), Nacer Oma Heles (26 years old), Mohamed Naeim Bassem Naeim (25 years old), Shehdeh Kamel Al-Ghrabli (70 years old), Rami Khadr Sa'ad (27 years old), Yousef Khaled Abu Hein (20 years old), Amrou Khaled Abu Hein (38 years old) and Aymen Khaled Abu Hein (29 years old).

Meanwhile, the Israeli occupation forces shot dead two Palestinians in Yatta, south of Hebron in the West Bank, one in Tobas, and two others in Rafah camp. They also arrested 12 men in operations in Nablus, Qalqiliyah, Hebron and Bethlehem.

Israel, together with its occupation forces, bear full responsibility for these massacres and criminal practices against Palestinian civilians as well as for the obstacles this Government deliberately uses to hinder the implementation of the "road map" that the Palestinian side has agreed on. This massacre, like all the previous massacres, aims to destroy all peace efforts we have accepted in our struggle to achieve a just, lasting and permanent solution with the Government of Israel. Therefore, we call on Your Excellency, and through you the international community, to intervene with the Government of Israel and urge this Government to immediately put an end to its bloodshed, perpetrated on a daily basis against our Palestinian people.

I would be most grateful if you could arrange to have this letter distributed as an official document to the members of the Commission on Human Rights.

(Signed): Nabil RAMLAWI  
Ambassador  
Permanent Observer

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