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COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS  
Sixtieth session  
Agenda item 8

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

**Letter dated 8 March 2004 from the Permanent Observer for Palestine  
to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the Acting  
High Commissioner for Human Rights**

The Israeli occupation forces are persisting with the violent and bloody military campaigns they have been waging in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, including East Jerusalem.

The Israeli occupation forces perpetrated yesterday, Sunday, 7 March, another bloody massacre in the centre of Gaza, killing 15 Palestinians, including children, among them 7-year-old Yousef Abdullah Younes, a 15-year-old boy named Mohammad Ali Badawi and 12-year-old Mohammad Amer Abu Zureik, and wounding at least 85 others, 15 seriously, during a deadly invasion of the poverty-stricken and densely populated Gaza Strip refugee camps of Al-Nusseirat and Al-Burreij.

Dozens of Israeli tanks and armoured vehicles, backed by Apache attack helicopters, stormed the two refugee camps under a barrage of heavy fire on people and their property causing death to Palestinian civilians, including children.

The massacres that the Israeli Government and the Israeli occupation forces are committing against the Palestinian people are no less savage and cruel than the Sabra and Shatila, Qibia, Khan Yunis and Nahalin massacres.

In every city and refugee camp that they have entered, Israeli occupation forces have repeated the same pattern: indiscriminate firing and the killing of innocent civilians, intentional harm to water, electricity and telephone infrastructure, taking over civilian houses, extensive damage to civilian property, shooting at ambulances and prevention of medical care to the injured.

According to the Palestinian Red Crescent Society, Israeli occupation forces have killed at least 55 Palestinians and injured 437 in the Occupied Palestinian Territory during last February alone.

Furthermore, in violation of international law, which prohibits without exception the extrajudicial killing of protected persons, namely the Four Geneva Conventions, according to which people living under occupation are deemed protected persons, and also in grave breach of international humanitarian law and human rights law, last week, Israel, in a renewed extrajudicial execution, killed seven Palestinians, including a 10-year-old boy in Gaza City.

Israeli extrajudicial assassinations have claimed the lives of at least 150 Palestinians and 110 bystanders in three years.

Meanwhile, despite the Palestinian efforts to achieve a peaceful solution, Israel persists in its criminal practices of wilful killing of innocent Palestinians, using sporadic machine gun fire to kill children even inside their school courtyard, sealing off the Occupied Palestinian Territories, tightening its siege of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, besieging President Yasser Arafat's headquarters in Ramallah, tightening the military roadblocks and checkpoints, severely restricting the movement of people and goods all throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territories, escalating detention campaigns against Palestinians, demolishing Palestinian houses and property and forcibly annexing Palestinian lands.

It is evident that the Israeli occupation authorities are intentionally and deliberately escalating such attacks against the Palestinian population in an attempt to ignite the situation on the ground in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. The daily actions of the occupation forces, including the killing and wounding of civilians, the continued confiscation of land, the destruction of property and the construction of the Wall are clearly intended to aggravate the situation, inflame tensions and kill any attempt to restore quiet and revive the peace process.

For all of these war crimes, State terrorism and systematic human rights violations committed against the Palestinian people, Israel must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

In the light of the systematic Israeli massacres against Palestinian civilians, we once again appeal to Your Excellency, and through you to the international community, to intervene and stop the ongoing Israeli massacres against the Palestinian people and to stop the Israeli siege of Arafat's headquarters.

I would be grateful if you would arrange to have the present letter distributed as an official document of the sixtieth session of the Commission on Human Rights, under agenda item 8.

(Signed): Nabil RAMLAWI  
Ambassador  
Permanent Observer

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