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Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the
rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Seventy-fifth year

Identical letters dated 29 October 2020 from the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council

Israel, the occupying Power, continues its violations and aggressions against the Palestinian people, entrenching its illegal colonial occupation, causing immense human suffering and destroying the prospects for a just peace. With every passing day, it is trampling international law, mocking the international consensus and dismantling the two-State solution on the pre-1967 borders. Regrettably, this is being done with the full support and complicity of the current United States administration.

When it comes to the Palestine question, this United States administration persists with its disrespect for international law and the resolutions and authority of the Security Council and absolute disregard for the rights of the Palestinian people. Following the provocative declaration made by the United States Secretary of State in November 2019 that the Israeli settlements established in the Occupied Palestinian Territory are “not per se inconsistent with international law”, and following the issuance by the United States President of his so-called “vision for peace”, which, inter alia, attempts to legitimize Israel’s theft and colonization of the Palestinian land, the United States and Israel yesterday signed agreements extending further United States recognition and support to the illegal Israeli settlement regime and ongoing annexation attempts.

The agreements signed directly violate United Nations resolutions, including Security Council resolution [2334 \(2016\)](#) and all those that preceded it, which affirmed the illegality of Israel’s settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and called upon all States not to recognize them as legitimate and not to render any assistance to the occupying Power in their maintenance. Moreover, this constitutes yet another step undermining the viability of the two-State solution and taking us yet farther away from the potential of a just, secure and lasting peace.

While being presented as mere “scientific cooperation” agreements, these agreements are cynically intended to bolster Israeli sovereignty claims in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, as well as the occupied Syrian Golan, by specifically



extending United States-Israeli cooperation to include the Israeli settlements, which had been excluded from previous such agreements. Not hiding the unlawful intentions in this regard, Israeli Minister Zeev Elkin provocatively declared yesterday that the agreements were “a big achievement for Israel’s sovereignty” and “another step towards international recognition of our rights” in the West Bank.

In that regard, we recall that Israel is not the sovereign in any part of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in East Jerusalem, the annexation of which is illegal, null and void, and without any legitimacy. Israel is the occupying Power and it is bound by the rules of international law, including international humanitarian law, and specifically as prescribed under the Fourth Geneva Convention, and by the relevant United Nations resolutions, which it is obligated to respect in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

We further recall in that regard the provisions of Security Council resolution [2334 \(2016\)](#), by which the Council, inter alia, unequivocally:

- Reiterated “its demand that Israel immediately and completely cease all settlement activities in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, and that it fully respect all of its legal obligations in this regard”
- Underlined “that it will not recognize any changes to the 4 June 1967 lines, including with regard to Jerusalem, other than those agreed by the parties through negotiations”
- Called upon States “to distinguish, in their relevant dealings, between the territory of the State of Israel and the territories occupied since 1967”.

These are the demands of the Security Council, not simply the Palestinian narrative, and they must be respected without exception. Moreover, these demands and the relevant resolutions remain at the core of the international consensus on the fundamental requirements and parameters for a just solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as reaffirmed yet again by one State after another at the Security Council debate held on 26 October 2020.

Here, we recall the ultimate aim of the international community’s efforts and Security Council legislation on this matter, an aim that was reaffirmed in resolution [2334 \(2016\)](#) and continues to be reaffirmed in all relevant resolutions: to bring an end to the Israeli occupation that began in 1967 and to achieve a comprehensive, just and lasting peace on the basis of the relevant United Nations resolutions.

That objective is being gravely undermined every single day by the destructive policies and measures being enacted by Israel, the occupying Power, in the occupied State of Palestine, including East Jerusalem, in violation of international law and the rights of the Palestinian people, including their inalienable right to self-determination, and by support being given to this illegal occupation, which only allows it to continue to expand and entrench itself, only further delaying the realization of a just solution and the fulfilment of Palestinian rights and freedom.

We call upon the international community, including the Security Council and General Assembly, to act on its legal obligations and responsibilities to bring an end to this injustice. We call upon the Security Council to uphold its Charter duties and live up to its determination to examine practical ways and means to secure the full implementation of its resolutions, including with regard to ongoing efforts to convene an international peace conference for that purpose. We also recall the Council’s determination, as affirmed in its resolution [2334 \(2016\)](#), “to support the parties throughout the negotiations and in the implementation of an agreement”.

In that context, we stress that creating an environment conducive to peace requires respect for the law and accountability. We call upon all States not to

recognize the illegitimate situation imposed by Israel, the occupying Power, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and not to render any aid or assistance in that regard. Moreover, we appeal for lawful countermeasures to ensure accountability. Only through consequences for the violation of the law and international consensus can we ever hope to bring a halt to these crimes and salvage the prospects for peace. We recall here the Human Rights Council's database of businesses linked to the Israeli settlements, and reiterate our call for countries to, among other lawful measures, ban the import of settlement goods illegally produced in occupied Palestine and through the exploitation of our natural resources.

We urge vigilance with regard to the obligation to differentiate between Israel and the territories it continues to occupy. Agreements signed between States and Israel must not cover any of the territories occupied by Israel since 1967. In that context, we also expect the sixteenth quarterly report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution [2334 \(2016\)](#) to refer not only to steps taken in respect of this demand, but also with regard to violations thereof. This is essential for ensuring an accurate reflection of the reality we are dealing with and ensuring the accountability that has been too long absent and that is a pillar of justice, without which peace is not possible.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) **Riyad Mansour**
Minister
Permanent Observer