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General Assembly
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Agenda item 5**Security Council**
Seventy-sixth year**Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the
rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory****Identical letters dated 24 August 2021 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**

I write today to draw the international community's attention to the critical situation being faced by the Palestinian civilian population in the Gaza Strip as Israel persists with its occupation, blockade and military siege and assaults on the area. Humanitarian and socioeconomic conditions there are dire and worsening, only further exacerbated by the global pandemic that has left no country and no people unscathed.

Violating the 21 May ceasefire and persisting in its systematic oppression and collective punishment of the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, has responded to civilian protests at the Gaza border fence once again with excessive and indiscriminate force, reminiscent of its lethal attacks on civilian protesters through 2018 and 2019 as Palestinian children, women and men peacefully engaged in the Great March of Return. On Saturday, 21 August, as Palestinians in Gaza gathered at the border fence to protest Israel's 54-year occupation of the Palestinian territory, its 14-year blockade of Gaza and its ongoing crimes against the Palestinian people and their holy sites, on the date marking the fifty-second anniversary of the shameful and illegal arson attack on Aqsa Mosque, Israeli occupying forces used live fire against the protesters, including at least 41 civilians, among them 22 children. Two of those shot by the Israeli occupying forces are in critical condition, including a young boy who sustained a bullet wound to the head.

These attacks, which also included military air strikes on areas of Gaza on 22 and 23 August, are of course not the first such Israeli violations of the May 2021 ceasefire, reached after the vast destruction and bloodshed caused by Israel's violent bombardment and air strikes against Gaza, including the killing of over 260 Palestinians, among them 66 children and 41 women. The fact is that such violations by the occupying Power have been incessant and ongoing since the date the ceasefire came into force. Regrettably, however, as accountability for Israel's crimes remains absent, its impunity persists and escalates, with grave consequences for the



Palestinian civilian population, whose every fundamental right is being violated by this illegal, belligerent foreign occupation.

At the same time, Israel continues to hamper reconstruction efforts in Gaza, persisting with its suffocating blockade and restrictions on necessary reconstruction and recovery materials, as well as vital humanitarian assistance in spite of the valiant efforts of the United Nations, including the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, the World Food Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), and other humanitarian organizations to provide urgent support. As thousands of Palestinian families remain displaced and homeless, their homes destroyed or damaged as to be made unliveable by the Israeli attacks, the occupying Power continues to impose its draconian restrictions on the entry of goods and construction supplies into Gaza. Yet, at the same time, Israel has the audacity to claim that it is "no longer occupying", even as it controls Gaza by air, land and sea and violates every single applicable tenet of international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, in its inhumane treatment of the Palestinian civilian population in Gaza, inflicting grave human suffering and insecurity on the 2 million residents there.

We reiterate our ongoing calls for the full lifting of the Israeli blockade on the Palestinian civilian population in Gaza and the imperative of unimpeded access for humanitarian needs, relief and reconstruction. We caution the international community about the grave dangers posed by rapidly rising tensions as Israel persists with its blockade of the Gaza Strip and all other violations it is committing throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem.

Such violations, including its continued settler colonization and annexation measures and use of force against Palestinians, including the daily detention, arrest and imprisonment of civilians, among them children, and its repeated violations of the historic and legal status quo at Aqsa Mosque/Haram al-Sharif, threaten to further destabilize this already fragile situation, putting human lives at risk.

In this regard, we regret to inform you of the killing of yet another Palestinian child by the Israeli occupying forces. Today, 24 August, Israeli occupying forces raided the Balata refugee camp near Nablus in the northern West Bank to carry out yet another arrest operation of Palestinian civilians. A teenage boy, Emad Khaled Hashash, age 15, was shot with live fire by the Israeli occupying forces and killed, devastating his family and bringing sorrow and grief to yet another community.

We thus call once again for international protection for the Palestinian people, in accordance with international law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention. We also reiterate our calls for accountability aimed at reigning in Israel's violations of international law in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and ultimately bringing them to a halt. This is imperative and urgent to salvage the prospects for a just and peaceful solution in accordance with international law and the relevant United Nations resolutions, including Security Council resolution [2334 \(2016\)](#).

It is past time for the international community, particularly the Security Council, to go beyond statements and condemnations and take serious action for the sake of justice and peace. There are many existing lawful countermeasures to deter further breaches by Israel, the occupying Power, and the international community must overcome its historical hesitance to use them, which has only compounded this injustice, harming generation after generation. Only real accountability can one day compel Israel to end this ruthless, illegal occupation – and it must end – and ensure

the necessary respect for international law that will open the doors wide to the possibility of peace, stability and coexistence.

The present letter is in follow-up to our 730 letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which constitutes the territory of the State of Palestine. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 ([A/55/432-S/2000/921](#)) to 17 August 2021 ([A/ES-10/877-S/2021/731](#)) constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations being committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

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) Riyadh **Mansour**
Minister
Permanent Observer
