



# General Assembly Security Council

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

Security Council  
Seventy-eighth year

## **Identical letters dated 5 April 2023 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**

Once again, even on these holiest of days, and despite repeated warnings and appeals, Israel continues to inflame religious sensitivities and risk a destructive implosion during the convergence of Ramadan, Passover and Easter, persisting with its violence on Palestinian civilians, including innocent Muslim worshippers at Al-Aqsa Mosque/Al-Haram Al-Sharif in Jerusalem, dangerous provocations, incitement and assaults at this holy site, the arrest and detention of hundreds of civilians, and military airstrikes on the Gaza Strip.

Israel's occupation of Palestine's territory, driven and sustained by its illegal settler-colonial enterprise and system of apartheid policies against the Palestinian people, is the direct source of the instability and violence and the impediment to a just peace and security.

This is not a so-called "cycle of violence" or "clashes" between two sides, and the recurrent scene of brutality against peaceful Palestinian worshippers at Al-Aqsa Mosque, a site holy for Muslims worldwide and solely for Muslim worship, is not normal, regardless of how often repeated by this illegal occupation. It is condemnable, violates international law and all tenets of moral behaviour and cannot be normalized and met with silence. One can only imagine the outcry across the international community if such horrific scenes were witnessed at any synagogue or church.

Yet, once again, in the pre-dawn hours of today, we are forced to witness Israeli occupying forces raiding Al-Haram Al-Sharif and violently attacking and beating Palestinians worshippers at Al-Aqsa Mosque, many of whom traditionally stay overnight to pray, reflect and recite Qur'an during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan. This aggression was blatantly aimed at forcing them to leave the compound, rather than letting them pray in peace.

Video documentation shows Israeli soldiers viciously assaulting worshippers with batons, stun grenades and tear gas to force them out, and women and children



can be heard crying for help. Several Palestinians were wounded in the attack, and, according to the Palestine Red Crescent Society, Israeli occupying forces also prevented medics from reaching the wounded. Moreover, at least 500 Palestinians were arrested and detained by Israeli occupying forces. A medical clinic inside the compound was also stormed by Israeli soldiers, who ransacked it and destroyed everything inside.

All of this is happening against a backdrop of escalating calls by extremist Jewish settlers intent on breaching the sanctity of Al-Aqsa Mosque/Al-Haram Al-Sharif with ongoing threats to carry out sacrificial rituals, including slaughtering an animal, at the holy site during the Jewish holiday of Passover, which begins today. These dangerous extremists, including members of the so-called “Temple Mount Faithful Movement”, have been inciting the mass storming of Al-Haram during Passover and have repeatedly called for the destruction of Al-Aqsa Mosque, threatening to ignite a catastrophic religious war. It is clear that they have been even more emboldened by the extremists now present and leading in the Israeli government, including the far-right Minister Ben-Gvir, who, persisting in a long-pattern of provocation and racist incitement, recently said: “Jews must ascend to the Temple Mount. The Temple Mount is not just for Arabs.” All such dangerous and criminal actions must be condemned and halted.

We call upon the international community, including the Security Council, to unequivocally condemn these aggressions against the Palestinian people and their holy sites and to demand that Israel, the occupying Power, cease all its illegal and dangerous actions and abide by its obligations under international law, including humanitarian law, and relevant United Nations resolutions, inter alia, Security Council resolutions [476 \(1980\)](#), [478 \(1980\)](#) and [2334 \(2016\)](#), and agreements reached.

Israel must also be demanded to ensure full respect for the historic and legal status quo at Al-Aqsa Mosque/Al-Haram Al-Sharif and for the authority of the Islamic Waqf and custodianship of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Upholding the status quo at this most sensitive holy site during Ramadan and at all times, as well at all other holy sites in Jerusalem, including its churches and particularly on these days that the Christian faithful will come to the City to celebrate Easter, is essential for ensuring the freedom of worship and safety of all worshippers and averting the outbreak of a religious conflict with grave consequences.

Moreover, we are compelled to also remind once again that Israel is the occupying Power and has no sovereignty rights whatsoever in occupied East Jerusalem, including in the Old City and at its holy sites, regardless of any unilateral claims, declarations, so-called “Basic Law” or otherwise. Palestinian worshippers have the right to freely and safely pray at their holy sites in the City, including at Al-Aqsa Mosque, whenever and at any time, without any obstruction or fear of violence and reprisal by the occupying Power and its extremist military forces and settler militias, whose presence in our land is illegal.

The disturbing and dangerous reality we are facing cannot be ignored and must be addressed with urgency. Israel is proving daily that it has no interest in peace and is intent on persisting with its aggressions against the Palestinian people, violating their human rights, colonizing and annexing their land and destroying all prospects for a just and secure peace. And it is doing this in full view of the international community, confident in its long-held assumption that it will suffer no consequences for its crimes.

It is time to prove this assumption wrong. Swift and serious collective action is required to protect civilian lives and avert further destabilization by the occupying Power and its warmongering military and extremist, radical settlers, who are openly instigating an explosion. Such action must include measures of accountability for all

Israeli human rights violations and war crimes, including at the International Criminal Court and International Court of Justice, to bring pressure to bear on Israel to end all of its illegal policies and practices.

We will not relent in our efforts to attain justice for the Palestinian people and their inalienable human rights, including to return and to live as a free people in peace and security in their homeland. We thus call again upon all peace- and freedom-loving nations of the world to join our just struggle and to act forthwith to uphold their Charter obligations and all other relevant obligations under international law. It is time for responsible action by all States and organizations to hold Israel accountable and to undertake concrete measures aimed at decolonization and the dismantlement of apartheid, for as long as this illegal colonial occupation and apartheid regime exists, there will never be peace.

This letter is in follow-up to our 783 letters regarding the ongoing historic injustice against the Palestinian people and the crimes being perpetrated by Israel, the occupying Power, 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 27 March 2023 ([A/ES-10/931-S/2023/228](#)) 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 must be held accountable and the perpetrators 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) **Riyad Mansour**  
Minister  
Permanent Representative