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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 2 May 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

The month of May has regrettably begun with more repression and injustice against the Palestinian people, yet the international community remains immobilized, failing to pursue action to hold Israel, the occupying Power, accountable and only meekly calling for restraint and calm, namely accepting the continuation of this illegal colonial occupation and apartheid reality but with as little noise as possible.

Against this backdrop, Palestinian civilians, including children, continue to be killed by Israeli occupying forces and assaulted by Israeli settlers who continue their unchecked violence and terror throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Palestinian civilians continue to be arbitrarily arrested, detained and imprisoned by the thousands, suffering grave human rights abuses and unspeakable indignities.

Today, 2 May, a Palestinian man, Khader Adnan, age 44, died in an Israeli prison cell after 86 days of a hunger strike in protest against his detention without charge. Israel, the occupying Power, is fully responsible for his death as a result of its deliberate medical neglect and human rights violations. His death in captivity comes despite repeated appeals for his release, with Israel insisting to keep him in his prison cell despite the seriousness of his health condition and rapid deterioration.

Mr. Adnan, who leaves behind nine children and his wife and family, had been repeatedly detained by Israel without charge – 12 times in his life – and had undertaken several hunger strikes to protest his arbitrary imprisonment and gross violation of his human rights by this cruel and illegal occupier. Such a pattern of behaviour and such deliberate policies also constitute war crimes and grave breaches, as defined in article 147 of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War as including, inter alia, wilful killing, torture or inhuman treatment, wilfully causing great suffering or serious injury to body or health, unlawful deportation or transfer or unlawful confinement of a protected person, or wilfully depriving a protected person of the rights of fair and regular trial.



Mr. Adnan's captivity and the circumstances of his death following the hunger strike have dangerously heightened tensions. We thus call once again for urgent attention to the plight of all Palestinian prisoners being illegally imprisoned in Israeli jails and detention centres and call once again on the international community, in particular the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention, to uphold their responsibilities to ensure respect by Israel, the occupying Power, of its legal obligations without exception. We reiterate our standing calls for the release of all Palestinians being held captive by the Israeli occupation.

The ongoing protection crisis in Occupied Palestine has also seen the heightened vulnerability of children. Two more Palestinian boys have been killed by the Israeli occupying forces in the recent period. Israeli occupying forces shot Mustafa Amer Ali Sabah, age 15, with live ammunition on 28 April in the village of Tuqu near Bethlehem. Fragments from the bullet, which entered his chest and exited from his back damaged Mustafa's heart, lungs, liver and throat, exposing Israel's use of such lethal weaponry against children. On 1 May, Jebriil Mohammed Said Kamal, age 17, was shot in the head with live ammunition in Aqbat Jabr refugee camp near the city of Jericho, which continues to be repeatedly raided and sealed off by the Israeli occupying forces.

In just four months, since the beginning of 2023. Israeli soldiers have killed 20 Palestinian children. Clearly, Israel is carrying on with its pattern of flagrant abuse of children that warrants its being listed by the Secretary-General among those systematically violating children's rights. Such a step would constitute an important measure of deterrence and accountability, both essential for the protection of children and of the civilian population as a whole.

We call for serious consideration of this measure and for all necessary efforts to ensure the protection of Palestinian children under this illegal colonial occupation. Continued failure to hold Israel accountable only emboldens further crimes, as regrettably witnessed every day. As noted by the Director of Defense for Children International-Palestine, Ayed Abu Eqtaish: "Systemic impunity creates an ultra-permissive context where Israeli forces know no bounds and routinely shoot to kill Palestinian children ... In short, these are war crimes with no consequences." It is past time to act.

The protection crisis also continues to deepen with the ongoing seizure and demolition of homes and properties as Israel carries on with its over 75-year-old dispossession and displacement campaign against the Palestinian people. Nearly every day a Palestinian home is demolished or receives a demolition order, with thousands of Palestinians under threat of losing their homes and land throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, especially East Jerusalem, including about 70 homes Israel is pursuing plans to seize and hand over to settlers in Al-Khalil (Hebron). The residents of the Bedouin village of Khan al-Ahmar in the central West Bank are also among those who continue to face such threats.

Yesterday, 1 May, referring to Khan al-Ahmar specifically, Israeli Minister Bezalel Smotrich stated: "It's the area that will decide if heavens forbid there will be territorial contiguity that will connect Bethlehem with Nablus and Ramallah ... That's the reason we are investing in this area now and therefore Khan al-Ahmar will be evacuated." As has been the case since this current Israeli government came to power, this Minister is again not only openly rejecting the two-State solution, but openly declaring the intent to ethnically cleanse Khan al-Ahmar and the intent to continue breaching international law, including by forcible acquisition of territory it has illegally occupied, namely annexation.

This cannot be denied or ignored by those who continue trying to excuse Israel's illegal behaviour and shield it from consequences, including through attacks on those who tell the truth about this abhorrent reality.

In this regard, we denounce the attacks against the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, Francesca Albanese, who is the subject of a malicious smear campaign, unprecedented in scale, scope and coordination. Like the Special Rapporteurs who preceded her, Ms. Albanese is being targeted by the Israeli government and its supporters with distortions and unsubstantiated allegations, including on the wrongful basis of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance working definition of antisemitism, simply for drawing attention to Israel's violations and calling for a halt to these crimes, for accountability and for justice for the Palestinian people.

We call on the international community to reject the lies and attacks against Ms. Albanese for honestly and responsibly carrying out her duties, to demand a halt to the interference with her mandate and to insist on the independence of all Special Rapporteurs as vital voices advocating for human rights, including for the Palestinian people, and their ability to do their work free from fear and recrimination.

We reiterate our calls for the Security Council and all States and organizations to act with such responsibility to hasten an end to this historic injustice against the Palestinian people. In the 75 years since the start of the Nakba and the 56 years of colonial occupation and as we face the undeniable reality of apartheid, it is unconscionable to continue delaying measures of accountability that we all know can dramatically change the trajectory of this injustice and assist the Palestinian people to realize their inalienable rights, including to return and to self-determination and freedom.

The present letter is in follow-up to our 786 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 17 April 2023 ([A/ES-10/934-S/2023/279](#)) 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 Observer