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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 9 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

We have continuously warned of Israel's escalating aggressions against the Palestinian people, yet to no avail. Once again, as has become the habit of Israel, the occupying Power, and particularly in the month of May, another military assault has been launched against the besieged Gaza Strip, exposing the same pattern of killing civilians, among them children and women, with no restraint, no remorse and no accountability.

While the international community watches – the Security Council observing from the sidelines despite its mandate under the Charter of the United Nations for the maintenance of international peace and security – Israel carries out one military raid after another and one assault after another, killing and wounding Palestinian civilians, destroying civilian objects and infrastructure and terrorizing the entire civilian population without a single consequence for its illegal actions. Innocent civilians are paying with their lives for the international community's delinquency.

How can it be that a civilian population under occupation – considered protected persons according to international humanitarian law – are left without protection, are left defenceless to military air strikes and attacks by the occupying Power, and this is somehow normalized by the international community?

It is unlawful, criminal and abhorrent and can never be normalized by those who adhere to international law and human rights and maintain any decency and morality. Such war crimes demand the international community's action to hold the perpetrators responsible, to implement the laws meant to protect civilians and ensure peace and security and to bring an end to this illegal situation.

On the heels of the perpetration of a series of extrajudicial killings in the West Bank, overnight, in the early morning hours of today, 9 May, 2 a.m. local time in Palestine, approximately 40 Israeli warplanes carried out air strikes, bombing several locations across Gaza with the blatant aim of assassinating Palestinians. As of this



moment, the death toll stands at 13 Palestinians, among them 4 children, 4 women and 1 doctor, with another 20 wounded, including 3 children and 7 women, several of whom are in critical condition.

This aggression was planned to deliberately target and murder Palestinians, i.e. to extrajudicially execute. Three members of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad were assassinated – Shaker Al-Ghannam, Khalil Salah Al-Bahtini and Tariq Mohammed Ezzedine – and their wives and children, entire families, were also murdered in the attack.

The attack also killed Dr. Jamal Khaswan, a well-known dentist and the Chairman of the Board of Directors of Al-Wafa Hospital, and killed his wife, Merfat Khaswan, and their child, Yousef Khaswan, leaving behind their orphaned young daughter. Israel's aggression has continued through the day, with a missile strike on a car, killing two more Palestinians. This attack follows Israeli air strikes in Gaza last week that killed Hashel Al-Shweiki, a 58-year-old father of 11 children, who died in recent days due to severe injuries sustained. This brings the death toll in Gaza to 16 people.

Israeli officials have been boasting about today's aggression, planned and dubbed by Israel as so-called "Operation Shield and Arrow". In fact, the Otzma Yehudit (Jewish Power) party of the extremist, terrorist Minister Ben-Gvir actually declared itself pleased with this murderous attack, openly stating: "Due to our position being accepted and the move from containment to attacking via targeted assassinations of senior Islamic Jihad [members], we will return to vote with the government. The hope is that the offensive continues over time." So, not only have they called for this criminal attack and not only did the government plan and respond with this criminal attack, but they are calling for still more bloodshed.

Israel is clearly insistent on its policy of violence and terror against the Palestinian people. It is insisting on provoking more conflict and turmoil, wilfully and wantonly murdering, collectively punishing, intimidating, destroying and traumatizing without hesitation, gravely breaching all of its obligations as the occupying Power, without fear of consequences. This reality obligates the international community to act for accountability, to act to ensure that our civilians are protected and their rights safeguarded until an end can be brought to this illegal settler-colonial occupation and apartheid regime that they have suffered for so long.

We condemn this murderous aggression against the Palestinian people and call for immediate action to hold responsible the criminal perpetrators, both government and military officials of Israel, the occupying Power, who are planning and implementing this endless series of systematic human rights violations, including a clear pattern of gross violations against children, and grave breaches of international law in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem.

The Security Council has a duty to act, the Secretary-General has a duty to act and the international community has a duty to act. It is time to bring an end to the impunity that Israel has become so accustomed to, to end its addiction to killing, destroying, colonizing and annexing. International law is patently clear and is universal. It must be upheld in all circumstances and in all cases, not least in situations where war crimes and crimes against humanity are being perpetrated. Palestine cannot be the exception.

The present letter is in follow-up to our 788 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 8 May 2023 ([A/ES-10/936-S/2023/327](#)) 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
