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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 24 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

I regret to inform you that Israeli provocations, incitement, land theft, forced displacement of Palestinian civilians and all other settlement activities continue unabated in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, in grave breach of international law.

On 21 May, the far-right, fanatical Israeli Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir, who was previously convicted in Israel for incitement to racism and supporting a terrorist organization, led yet another extremist incursion at the Aqsa Mosque/Haram Al-Sharif, again provoking tensions and violating the historic and legal status quo.

Ben-Gvir, who has continually called for dividing the Haram al-Sharif and agitated for Jewish rituals to be performed there in flagrant breach of the status quo, boasted that he was asserting Israel's sovereignty at this sacred Muslim holy site, declaring, "We are in charge here," and that the role of Israeli occupying forces in securing Jewish entry to the site "proves who is in charge in Jerusalem".

It is not a coincidence that these provocative and illegal actions were preceded on 18 May by the so-called "Flag March" of tens of thousands of Israeli settlers, accompanied by Israeli occupying forces, in the Old City of Jerusalem, an event that is recklessly held annually to mark the seizure and occupation by Israel of East Jerusalem in 1967. Once again, Israeli supremacist extremism and inflammatory rhetoric were on full display as militant Jewish settler youth and other Israelis, including officials and politicians, who participated in the march chanted hateful, racist slogans, including "death to Arabs", and violently attacked Palestinians and foreign journalists on the scene.

We condemn all such blatant provocations, incitement and violence, and we reiterate that Israel has absolutely no legitimate claims to sovereignty in any part of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in Jerusalem and at its holy sites, and that it is obliged to fully comply with its obligations under international law, without



exception, including the Fourth Geneva Convention and all relevant United Nations resolutions.

We also reiterate the standing demand that Israel, the occupying Power, respect the historic and legal status quo at the Aqsa Mosque/Haram al-Sharif and all other Muslim and Christian holy sites in Jerusalem. Moreover, Israel must respect the sole authority of the Islamic Awqaf at the holy site and the custodianship of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for Muslim and Christian holy sites in Jerusalem, and it must cease its denigration of their respective authority and roles.

While recognizing the many calls from around the international community for a halt to these illegal and dangerous actions, it is imperative that the Security Council also reaffirm its rejection of any Israeli sovereignty claims in Jerusalem and the rest of Occupied Palestine and demand respect by Israel for international law and the historic and legal status quo. It is vital to reaffirm, as underscored in resolution [2334 \(2016\)](#), that the Council will not recognize any changes to the 4 June 1967 lines, including with regard to Jerusalem, other than those agreed by the parties by the parties through negotiations. It is also vital to reaffirm the obligation to distinguish, as called for in resolution [2334 \(2016\)](#), and urge all States to uphold that obligation in their actions and relations with the occupying Power, including with regard to measures of accountability, which must be urgently pursued in the light of the ongoing and escalating violations.

In this regard, the Security Council must also firmly condemn Israeli settlement activities in our land, which persist in spite of the Council's unequivocal demands for a complete halt, in accordance with resolution [2334 \(2016\)](#) and all other relevant resolutions and international decisions in this regard, including those adopted by the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council, and in line with the 2004 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice.

Proving yet again its total contempt for the rule law, the Security Council and the international community's consensus position in this regard, Israel is moving forward with plans for the construction of more settlements and with the demolition of Palestinian properties and forced displacement of Palestinian civilians.

As reported earlier today by the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Tor Wennesland, Israel is implementing plans for the construction over 300 additional settlement units and has issued a military order to permit Jewish settlers to seize once again the Palestinian lands on which the settlement outpost of "Homesh", dismantled in 2005, stood. Moreover, as documented by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, in the past month alone, Israel destroyed, seized or forced Palestinian owners to demolish 50 structures in total across the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in East Jerusalem, forcibly displacing 89 Palestinians, including 45 children.

The pursuit and escalation by Israel of all of these illegal policies and practices is undeniably aimed at entrenching its illegal colonial occupation of Palestinian territory and furthering its subjugation of the Palestinian people. It is obvious that Israel is pushing forth this illegitimate agenda with the objective of creating a fait accompli that ensures its permanent control of our land (i.e., annexation) and permanent domination of our people – i.e., denial of their inalienable right to self-determination by all means of repression and racist, discriminatory measures that countless human rights organizations, jurists and scholars, as well as United Nations Special Rapporteurs, have determined constitutes apartheid.

The international community must not tolerate this patently illegal situation. All possible action must be taken to halt to Israel's gross human rights abuses and all the

war crimes and crimes against humanity it is perpetrating with impunity in an ongoing Nakbah against the Palestinian people.

We therefore reiterate our unending calls for serious, collective action, in line with international law, including in the judicial realms at the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court, to hold Israel accountable. Accountability is urgent in order to protect the Palestinian people, deter further violations and salvage the prospects for a just solution that can bring an end to this illegal settler-colonial occupation and apartheid regime, and ensure the attainment by Palestinians of their rights and of the peace, security and dignity they have for too long been denied.

The present letter is in follow-up to our 790 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 12 May 2023 ([A/ES-10/938-S/2023/346](#)) 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 an official 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