



# 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 31 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**

Because they have never been held accountable for their crimes, because for decades they have not only been protected and supported by the Israeli Government and occupying forces, but have actually worked in tandem with them to enable, advance and entrench Israel's colonization of Palestinian land, Israeli settlers continue to rampage through the Occupied Palestinian Territory, attacking Palestinian civilians and destroying Palestinian property in an escalating campaign of terror and incitement.

In just the past week, extremist Israeli settlers raided several towns and villages, including Burqa – where Israel and its extremist settler gangs have moved to re-establish the settlement of “Homesh” on lands seized from the village decades ago – as well as in Al-Mughayer, Deir Dibwan, Madama and Zibda, among other areas. Settlers vandalized and set fire to homes and vehicles and attacked Palestinian civilians, including with live ammunition, with one Palestinian shot in the head. Some have rightly drawn parallels between these ongoing attacks to pogroms.

The consequent dangers posed to the Palestinian civilian population and the growing risk of the outbreak of an uncontrollable spiral of violence compel our calls, yet again, for immediate international attention. Urgent and concrete action must be taken to bring a halt to this reckless impunity and criminality by Israel, the occupying Power, and its settlers. The Security Council in particular, in view of its Charter mandate to maintain international peace and security, has a duty to act.

In this regard, it must be recalled that international law explicitly prohibits the transfer by an occupying Power of its civilians into the occupied territory, and that thus the very presence of every single Israeli settler on our land is illegal, amounting to countless and continual war crimes, as likewise are all other manifestations of Israeli settlement activities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem.



These war crimes are compounded by the fact that extremist Israeli settlers function as a direct arm of this colonial apartheid occupation, harassing and intimidating the occupied population, committing land theft and vandalization and destruction of Palestinian property, establishing so-called “settlement outposts” and forcibly displacing Palestinian civilians, a longstanding phenomenon that has intensified in the recent period.

In this regard, on 22 May, the Palestinian community of Ein Samiya – home to 178 civilians, including 78 children – began dismantling and leaving the homes they have lived in for nearly 40 years as a direct result of the occupying Power’s repression and settler terror against them. As expressed by a father of nine children from the community: “We decided to leave out of fear of the settlers [...]. I left for my children [...]. My youngest said to me: ‘I don’t want to live here – the settlers come and throw stones. Tomorrow they could kill me.’”

In a statement on the matter on 25 May, the Acting Humanitarian Coordinator in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Ms. Yvonne Helle, stressed: “We are witnessing the tragic consequences of longstanding Israeli practices and settler violence. [...] These families are not leaving by choice; the Israeli authorities have repeatedly demolished homes and other structures they own and have threatened to destroy their only school. At the same time, land available for the grazing of livestock has decreased due to settlement expansion and both children and adults have been subjected to settler violence.”

This same community has been subjected to repeated forced transfer, previously for the establishment of an Israeli military base, and then a settlement, which pushed them to Ein Samiya in the Ramallah area. Similarly, as documented by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, since 2022, nearly 200 other Palestinians, a majority of them children, have also been forced from their homes and communities in Wadi as Seeq, Lifjim and Ras a Tin.

These crimes further expose the long-running pattern of dispossession and displacement of Palestinians. This represents one of the main tools driving the over-75-year Nakbah against the Palestinian people, by which Israel and its army and settler militias have imposed a hostile, coercive environment to forcibly displace them and replace them with Jewish settlers, with the ultimate objective of colonizing and annexing Palestinian land, in grave breach of the Charter and all other relevant provisions of international law, including United Nations resolutions.

Indeed, none of these illegal actions are ad hoc, but rather, all are being perpetrated deliberately and systematically, all with the singular aim of making permanent this illegal Israeli occupation of Palestinian land, namely, acquiring territory by force. This illegitimate aim was further exposed recently when the far-right Israeli Minister, Bezalel Smotrich, explicitly instructed government ministries to prepare plans to double the number of settlers living in the occupied West Bank, in addition to Israeli budget allocations for the expansion of settlement infrastructure, including for the construction of settlements and Jewish-only bypass roads throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem.

Clearly, Israel has no respect for international law, nor for the authority of the Security Council, which has repeatedly demanded the cessation of all Israeli settlement activities, including in its resolution [2334 \(2016\)](#), nor for the international community’s constant calls in this regard. It is proving over and over again that it has no interest in the two-State solution along the pre-1967 lines and is, in fact, totally opposed to it, acting every single day with the express purpose of destroying it and maintaining its unlawful control over the Palestinian people and land. Clearly, Israel is pressing ahead without hesitation, fully confident that it will never be held accountable.

We thus reiterate our continuous calls for immediate, collective efforts, in accordance with international law, including humanitarian, human rights and criminal law, to hold Israel accountable for its systematic grave breaches and human rights abuses. Moreover, we reiterate our calls for protection of the Palestinian civilian population from Israel's repression and persecution, whether through its discriminatory legislation and military orders or the coordinated savagery of its military machine and settler militias, who are endangering the lives and existence of our people in their homeland and provoking the explosion of this fragile situation, which remains a threat to international peace and security. All perpetrators of these war crimes and crimes against humanity must be held responsible to the fullest extent of the law.

The present letter is in follow-up to our 791 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 24 May 2023 ([A/ES-10/939-S/2023/375](#)) 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) Riyadh **Mansour**  
Minister  
Permanent Observer

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