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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 17 October 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

In the wake of the Security Council's failure to rise to its responsibilities to stop the catastrophe that Israel, the occupying Power, is wreaking on the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip, hundreds more innocent civilians have been killed, thousands more have been wounded, and another massacre has been perpetrated on your watch.

In the less than 24 hours since the Security Council convened on 16 October, another 224 Palestinians were murdered and 2,500 wounded across Palestine in this depraved, criminal Israeli onslaught. These human lives could have been saved were it not for the dereliction of duty that has enabled such Israeli impunity.

The deaths of those civilians brought the casualty toll of the past 11 days to at least 3,000 Palestinians killed and 12,500 injured in Gaza, and 61 Palestinians killed and 1,250 wounded in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Children are overwhelmingly among the dead and wounded, with Defense for Children International – Palestine stating that a Palestinian child is killed every 15 minutes at the rate of Israel's attacks. The impact on those who survive is grave.

But the spilling of this blood was not enough for the international community to act, and not enough for Israel to stop its terror campaign against the Palestinian people. As we waited for the Security Council to act, pleading with anyone with conscience and a shred of humanity to stop the carnage against our people, Israeli missiles struck Al-Ahli Arabi Baptist Hospital in Gaza City. The extent of the carnage is devastating.

Initial estimates are that at least 500 people – sick and wounded who were being treated at the hospital, medical personnel who were working day and night to save lives, and families that were sheltering at the hospital with nowhere else to go – have been massacred in this barbaric Israeli attack. But the toll will likely be much higher.



The hospital should have been protected; all civilian areas should be protected. But Israel has been allowed to run roughshod over all laws and every standard of human decency, with zero accountability and infinite consequences.

The scenes in Gaza are scenes of war crimes and crimes against humanity, too many to count and too many to absorb. Soon, we may no longer be able to count the dead and wounded, to count the number of displaced as Israel presses on with no limits. No responsible action is being taken to demand a ceasefire, threatening millions more civilian lives.

We reiterate: there is nowhere safe in Gaza. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) openly admitted this today following an Israeli airstrike on Al-Maghazi refugee camp, where 4,000 people had taken refuge. The attack killed six civilians and dozens more were injured, many severely. As stated by UNRWA: “No place is safe in Gaza anymore, not even UNRWA facilities”.

The past 24 hours also witnessed Israeli airstrikes on southern Gaza, to where Israel had demanded that over 1 million Palestinian civilians “evacuate” – a criminal act of forcible transfer and ethnic cleansing – and yet which it continues to ruthlessly target. 70 civilians were killed in attacks on Khan Younis, Deir al Balah and Rafah. Many of those killed had fled their homes in the north in fear for their lives, only to find death in the south at the hands of the Israeli war machine.

Israel is shredding international humanitarian law – which it never respected, always violated, and clearly aims to dismantle – and seeks to render the blue flag of the United Nations meaningless, showing that it cannot protect, cannot stop the violence and bloodshed. It is making a mockery of the Security Council.

We implore the Security Council and the international community as a whole to restore meaning to international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, to demand its respect and to act to enforce it. You have a moral, legal, political and humanitarian duty to act, a human duty to act to stop the carnage and stop this catastrophe.

We reiterate our appeals:

1. A ceasefire must be demanded now. Stop the Israeli aggression and carnage against the Palestinian people.
2. The slaughter and forced transfer of our people must stop now.
3. The inhumane siege on Gaza must be stopped. Humanitarian aid – food, water, fuel and all other human necessities – must be allowed to reach all in need.

The entirety of the Palestinian civilian population in Gaza is gravely suffering and in peril. We call on you to act as a matter of urgency and as a matter of humanity. The Palestinian people must be protected from Israel, the occupying Power. International law must be upheld in all circumstances, in word and deed. Affirming principles while failing to act is unforgivable.

The Security Council must demand an immediate ceasefire; it cannot continue to stand idly by while war crimes and crimes against humanity are being perpetrated before the eyes of the world. It must act to save civilian lives and avert the spread of this explosion in the region, gravely threatening international peace and security. Do not wait any longer to act.

The present letter is in follow-up to our 807 previous 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 16 October 2023 ([A/ES-10/956-S/2023/778](#)) 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
