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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 27 November 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 week since our last letter, more Palestinian lives have been taken by the Israeli occupation's aggression and more Palestinian lives are in imminent danger as Israel, the occupying Power, carries on with its war crimes and crimes against humanity and total dehumanization of the Palestinian people.

Civilian lives are endangered due to the humanitarian catastrophe inflicted by Israel on the Gaza Strip; its threats to continue this criminal aggression against our people following the four-day truce that came into effect on 24 November, with the Israeli Defense Minister declaring that the war would resume "with great force" after the truce; its ongoing attempts to forcibly transfer our people from their land; and escalating attacks by Israeli occupying forces and settlers against Palestinians in the West Bank.

Let it be put on record: in the absence of a ceasefire, the death toll has risen to more than 14,800 Palestinians killed by Israel in the Gaza Strip as of 23 November. This includes at least 6,150 children and 4,000 women killed, comprising nearly 70 per cent of the fatalities. The casualties also include youth, elderly persons, doctors, medics, United Nations personnel and other humanitarians and journalists, the numbers of which have surpassed any single conflict in decades.

We reiterate that these shocking casualty figures are actually underestimates: they do not include the thousands of children, women and men whose bodies remain under the rubble of destroyed buildings and who are unaccounted for, among them an estimated 1,800 children. In fact, as reported on 25 November in *The New York Times*, experts are saying that "even a conservative reading of the casualty figures reported from Gaza shows that the pace of death during Israel's campaign has few precedents in this century".

This genocidal aggression against the Palestinian people must be halted. A temporary truce is not enough: a full, sustained ceasefire is imperative and must be



pursued with absolute urgency to save civilian lives and avert the explosion of this humanitarian catastrophe and its countless grave repercussions. Moreover, for every single civilian casualty caused by this Israeli aggression and every crime committed, there must be accountability. We will not relent on seeking justice for Palestinian victims; justice is their right and is crucial for healing the trauma and losses borne by our people and for any future of peace and stability.

Also, as of 23 November, over 33,000 Palestinians in Gaza have been injured in Israel's attacks, including many critically injured, suffering severe burns to their bodies and loss of limbs, and many who will die of their wounds due to lack of proper medical care and hospitalization. Among those injured are more than 9,000 children, hundreds of them permanently maimed and disabled, in addition to the lasting scars of trauma borne by every single one of the more than 1 million children of Gaza, some of whom have suffered the horrors of multiple wars, witnessing the killing of their parents, siblings, families, friends and neighbours and the destruction of their homes, schools, communities and society.

Exposing Israel's intent to inflict wanton death and destruction, the day leading up to the truce was marked by intensified Israeli attacks by air, land and sea across Gaza. Hundreds of casualties were caused, bringing tragedy to more families who believed that their lives had been spared and that they had survived the horrors of this war, only to have their lives and those of loved ones taken by this savage Israeli onslaught.

This included yet another strike on a school of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) that had been sheltering displaced civilians in the Jabaliya refugee camp, killing at least 27 Palestinians and injuring nearly 100 more people. Israeli occupying forces also carried out attacks on other refugee camps, including on Al-Maghazi camp and Nuseirat camp, where 11 civilians were killed, most of them children. Israel has also continued striking at civilian areas in southern Gaza, including attacks on 23 November on Rafah, killing 14 Palestinians, among them 6 children, and on Khan Younis, killing 5 civilians, including a pregnant woman, in addition to a strike on a home in Gaza City in which 10 civilians were killed, including women and children.

These attacks were preceded by repeated Israeli assaults on hospitals, including the Indonesian Hospital, which was attacked on 20 November, killing 12 people and wounding dozens, and an attack on 21 November on Al-Awda Hospital, which killed three doctors, all while on duty caring for their patients. Such attacks have terrorized doctors, nurses and other health-care workers, as well as patients, their families and thousands of displaced persons at hospitals, and constitute grave breaches of international humanitarian law, i.e. war crimes. Also, on the day the temporary truce came into effect, Israeli soldiers in Gaza opened fire on families attempting to return to their homes in the north, killing one civilian and injuring many others.

At the same time, as reported by numerous United Nations agencies – UNRWA, the United Nations Children's Fund, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Development Programme and the World Food Programme – the humanitarian situation in Gaza remains catastrophic, the Israeli aggression and siege on food, water, fuel, medicines and other vital supplies impairing life for the entire population of 2.3 million people.

While this temporary truce has enabled a desperately needed scaling-up of humanitarian aid in the past few days, it is nowhere near sufficient to meet the enormous needs caused by the sheer volume of casualties and the forced displacement of over 1.7 million Palestinians. More than 60,000 buildings in Gaza have been

damaged or destroyed and more than half of the population has been chased from their homes by Israel's bombs, missiles and evacuation orders, many of them displaced for the second, third and fourth times in this endless Nakba, once again stripped of their homes, possessions and livelihoods, with despair and impoverishment at levels unseen in recent history.

Their homes and neighbourhoods in ruins, the overwhelming majority of displaced families continue to shelter in overcrowded UNRWA schools and facilities, as well as hospitals and other public spaces, bearing unimaginable indignities, suffering from minimal access to basic needs and forced to live in unsanitary and inhumane conditions, where hunger, disease, hopelessness and anger are rapidly spreading among babies, children, women, men and elderly persons, a human calamity of grave proportions. While recognizing the immense and generous solidarity of countries from all over the world that have contributed vital humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people, the depth and breadth of this crisis compel us to continue imploring for the international community's sustained attention and serious efforts to accelerate the remediation of this humanitarian catastrophe.

Today, I must also draw attention to the dangerous heightened violence and tensions in the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory as Israeli soldiers and settlers continue to attack the civilian population, killing, injuring, harassing, intimidating and inciting against Palestinians with impunity. In the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, since just 7 October, more than 3,000 people have been injured, and the death toll stands at 239 Palestinian civilians, 55 of them children, raising the casualty count to 450 Palestinians thus far in 2023. Refugee camps are targeted on a near-daily basis, with attacks again on Jenin refugee camp, where five Palestinians were killed on 25 November. In the past 24 hours, Israeli occupying forces have also killed four more Palestinian children.

Settler violence and terror continue to force Palestinian families to flee their lands and homes in fear for their lives. As reported by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, since 7 October 2023, at least 1,150 Palestinians, including 452 children, have been forcibly displaced by settler attacks and access restrictions by the Israeli military, which continues to collude with settler gangs and militias in the abuse of Palestinian civilians, and attempts to seize their land for Israeli colonization and annexation. It has been documented that 11 Palestinian communities have been completely uprooted and displaced in 2023 alone, 6 of them since 7 October.

Additionally, Israel proceeds apace with the demolition of Palestinian homes in the West Bank. Since 7 October, 162 Palestinians have been forcibly displaced by the demolition of homes in East Jerusalem and surrounding areas for lack of occupation-issued permits, and another 48 Palestinians, including 24 children, have been forcibly displaced following the punitive demolitions of their homes.

This has been accompanied by declarations by Israeli government officials of plans to further expand Israel's illegal colonial settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. This includes the announcement of budgetary allocations for the specific purposes of settlement construction and even millions of funds to "search and destroy" humanitarian aid provided to Palestinian families and communities residing in "Area C" of the West Bank, clearly aimed not only at dispossessing Palestinians but making conditions unliveable and forcing them to leave their land to clear the way for Israel's colonization and annexation schemes.

Moreover, while several unjustly detained Palestinian children and women have been released from Israeli captivity in recent days, Israeli occupying forces continue daily raids across the West Bank, arresting and detaining more than 3,000 Palestinians, including children and youth, a majority of them males, in just the past

seven weeks, the majority of them administratively detained without charge. The now more than 10,000 Palestinians detained and imprisoned in Israeli jails are enduring deplorable conditions, which have only worsened under the edicts of extremists in the Israeli government who have explicitly aimed at intensifying the abuse of Palestinian detainees and prisoners and depriving them of their rights and basic needs.

Provocations and incitement also continue in Jerusalem, including ongoing incursions by extremist settlers at Al-Aqsa Mosque and ongoing attacks on the Christian presence in the city, particularly against the Armenian population. Acts of harassment, intimidation and coercion, including forced summoning for police interrogations, also persist against Palestinian Jerusalemites, who have been further isolated from their brethren in the rest of occupied Palestine.

The Palestinian leadership reiterates its appeals to the international community, including the Security Council, to act now to bring an end to this inhumanity against the Palestinian people. We appeal for all efforts, by all States, collectively and individually, to uphold international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, to stop Israel's criminal aggression on our people in Gaza and the rest of occupied Palestine and to bring an end to its illegal colonial occupation and apartheid regime that threaten the existence of our people in their homeland and threaten regional and international peace and security.

The present letter is in follow-up to our 816 letters on the ongoing crisis 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 19 November 2023 ([A/ES-10/970-S/2023/889](#)), 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 against our people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be 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