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**Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the
rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory**

Identical letters dated 19 January 2024 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

The children of Palestine are being targeted by Israel. Children are being deliberately killed, wounded, maimed, starved, orphaned, displaced, left to die from disease, infections, illness and cold. The tragic assessment that the Gaza Strip has become a “graveyard for children” has tragically become an understatement, inadequate to truly describe the threat posed by Israel to Palestinian children.

In Gaza they are being mass murdered by Israel’s occupying army, bombing, striking, sniping them, shredding their bodies to pieces or crushing them under tons of rubble. In the West Bank they are being hunted by Israeli soldiers and settlers, beating, shooting, terrorizing them, violating their bodies, detaining and torturing them.

The children of Palestine are being traumatized, psychologically, physically, emotionally. They are witnessing their mothers, fathers, sisters and brothers blown to bits by Israeli missiles and bombs, striking Gaza non-stop for over 100 days. They are witnessing the destruction of their homes and schools, their communities and lives. They are suffering the torment of hunger, thirst and cold and existential fears for their survival and their families. They are being left to bear the pain of their wounds, amputations without anaesthetics, no medicine for their illnesses, no treatment for disabilities.

The children of Palestine are being herded like cattle by a cruel occupier that is forcing them to “evacuate” from one place to another. They are being forced to leave their homes, with nowhere that is safe, forced to live in filth in crowded, unsanitary shelters, makeshift tents, hospital stairwells and in the streets, displaced over and over. They have been forced to live without education, without learning. They are witnessing the humiliation of their parents and elders and the dehumanization and denigration of their entire people, a nation under occupation, apartheid, siege and now targeted by genocide.



The harrowing figures are by now known to all. No one can say they did not hear, did not see, did not know. As of this date, Israel, the occupying Power, has wantonly killed or injured tens of thousands of Palestinian children. They constitute the overwhelming majority of the 24,987 Palestinians killed and the 66,000 people injured by Israel since it launched this genocidal war against our people across Occupied Palestine in October 2023.

These casualties are being deliberately and systematically inflicted by Israel with every means of lethal weaponry against the civilian population under its occupation, whose safety and well-being it is in fact obligated by international humanitarian law to ensure. The casualties will soon surpass 25,000 Palestinian children, women and men who have been massacred by Israel, but it must be again clarified that this horrific figure still does not include the over 7,000 people missing, presumed dead under the rubble in Gaza, the majority of them children, with the number of victims climbing daily.

As of today, it has been reported that at least 9,600 Palestinian children in Gaza and 95 children in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, have been killed by the Israeli army and settlers.

When will it be enough? How many more Palestinian children will die before the international community acts to stop this depraved Israeli onslaught, to stop arming Israel's killing machine, to hold Israeli war criminals accountable for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide?

When will the international community act to uphold, if not its moral responsibilities, then at the very least its obligations under international law? When will the Security Council act to uphold its Charter duties and stop this blatant Israeli aggression against the Palestinian people? When will the Council act to implement its own resolutions, including resolutions [2712 \(2023\)](#) and [2720 \(2023\)](#) and its countless resolutions on the protection of civilians, including children in armed conflict?

When will the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention act on their obligations to respect and ensure respect of the Convention in all circumstances, including under articles 146 and 147, to enact effective penal sanctions in cases of grave breaches?

When will States act on their obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child? Under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid and the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide?

When will Israel be listed by the United Nations as the serial violator of child rights that it is and that it has long been? When will it be sanctioned for its lawless behaviour?

What Israel is doing to Palestinian children is an abomination, a stain on humanity that cannot be explained away or swept under the rug. It is inhumane, immoral and illegal. This is no way to treat children, no way to treat any human being.

Every single human rights treaty provision regarding children is being violated, every single relevant provision of humanitarian law is being gravely, wantonly and wilfully breached. Yet, the Security Council fails to act and some continue to

shamefully equivocate and supply one pretext after another, one shipment of arms after another, for this savage Israeli war on Palestinian children and their families.

We reiterate our demand for a ceasefire now, the standing demand of the Palestinian leadership and all peace-loving nations across the region and the world since the start of this Israeli aggression, which from the outset revealed the intent to kill our people and to destroy Gaza, to carry out a ruthless collective punishment at a scope and scale unseen in modern times.

There is no justification whatsoever to permit the continued mass murder of our children, women and men; no justification whatsoever to permit the siege, starvation and deprivation of our people; no justification whatsoever to permit the mass destruction of all components of our society; no justification whatsoever to permit the transfer or ethnic cleansing of our people.

There must be a halt to this aggression and a halt to the forced displacement of Palestinian civilians, including attempts to coerce a mass exodus, there must be protection for Palestinian civilians, including special protections for children, and there must be immediate, unimpeded humanitarian aid to and throughout all areas of Gaza to address the enormous human needs for food, water, medicine, shelter, fuel and other essentials for dignified survival. Humanitarian personnel, including medical and emergency personnel and United Nations personnel – including all staff members of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), at least 151 of whom have been killed by Israel – must be protected and enabled to carry out their humanitarian missions, including in line with Security Council resolutions [2712 \(2023\)](#) and [2720 \(2023\)](#) and General Assembly resolutions [ES-10/21](#) and [ES-10/22](#), without intimidation and interference.

We have said this over and over again: there is no military solution to the Palestine question. Only a solution based on international law, that upholds the human rights of the Palestinian people, fully and completely, including to self-determination and independence, can ensure the peace and security so desperately needed by the Palestinian people, Israeli people and region as a whole and that is so threatened by this criminal Israeli aggression.

This genocidal Israeli war against the Palestinian people, including our children, must be stopped and its illegal colonial occupation and apartheid regime must be brought to an end. This is the only way to save human lives, including the precious lives of children, and to save their future.

We therefore again implore the international community, including the Security Council, including its Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict, the General Assembly, the Human Rights Council, the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court, to act forthwith in accordance with international law and their respective mandates as a matter of utmost urgency and urge all States to also act responsibly and immediately to fulfil their respective obligations, including for the protection of children, in light of continued obstruction and Israel's blatant defiance and impunity.

This letter is in follow-up to our 823 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 12 January 2024 ([A/ES-10/979-S/2024/54](#)) 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*) Riyadh **Mansour**
Minister
Permanent Observer
