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ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS

**Letter dated 18 September 2003 from the Permanent Representative
of Israel to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the
Chairperson of the Commission on Human Rights**

I wish to raise a matter of concern regarding the report of Mr. Jean Ziegler, United Nations Special Rapporteur on the right to food, on his mission of 3 to 13 July 2003 to Israel and the disputed territories, to be submitted to the sixtieth session of the Commission on Human Rights.

It was the understanding of the Permanent Mission of Israel that, according to normal procedure regarding the submission of mission reports, the unedited report of Mr. Ziegler's mission would be submitted to the Government of Israel, the country concerned, in order to allow it to make official comments before the report is made available to the public. The Permanent Mission of Israel was, therefore, surprised to receive, on 16 September 2003, a telephone call from a journalist who stated that he had received the advance unedited and unpublished draft of the mission report - a report that the Government of Israel, based upon discussions with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, does not expect to receive for another week - directly from Mr. Ziegler.

The actions of Mr. Ziegler, intentionally contravening the proper process of report submission by giving a copy of his mission report to a journalist when it had not yet been submitted to the concerned Government is very worrisome and raises serious questions about his work ethic.

The Permanent Mission of Israel must point out that this is yet another incident in which Israel has made earnest efforts to cooperate with the special mechanisms of the Commission on Human Rights, resulting in complete disregard for standard protocol on the part of the mechanism.

The Permanent Mission of Israel wishes to strongly protest regarding the manner in which Mr. Ziegler, in his capacity as United Nations Special Rapporteur on the right to food, ignored the correct procedures and made a report available to a member of the public before it was made available to the country concerned. The Permanent Mission of Israel wishes, furthermore, to request that appropriate sanctions and other steps be taken to ensure that such blatant disregard for procedure does not recur.

The Permanent Mission of Israel would like to request that this note be submitted as an official document under item 10 of the provisional agenda of the sixtieth session of the Commission on Human Rights.

(*signed*): Yaakov LEVY
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
