



General Assembly Security Council

Distr.: General
20 June 2022

Original: English

General Assembly
Tenth emergency special session
Agenda item 5

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

Security Council
Seventy-seventh year

Identical letters dated 20 June 2022 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

A State that commits extrajudicial executions, targets civilians of a specific ethnicity, nationality or race for ethnic cleansing and arbitrarily jails civilians and systematically abuses their human rights, including by acts of torture, is not a democratic or law-abiding State; it is a State in contempt of international law. When that State is able to get away with war crimes and crimes against humanity with zero consequences, the result is unbridled impunity that is the cause of grave human suffering.

In the absence of accountability for such grave breaches, Israel, the occupying Power, continues to hunt down and assassinate Palestinians, to demolish homes aimed at achieving the forced transfer of Palestinian families and communities, and to arbitrarily imprison thousands of Palestinians, destroying countless lives and the prospects for a just and peaceful solution to this historic injustice.

In the pre-dawn hours of 17 June, Israeli occupying forces raided Jenin refugee camp and once again perpetrated the murder of Palestinian civilians. Dozens of Israeli soldiers ambushed and executed in cold blood three young Palestinian men: Yousef Nasser Salah, aged 23, Baraa Lahlouh, aged 24, and Laith Abu Srour, aged 24. These premeditated killings are being justified by the occupying Power as so-called “counter-terrorism”, the pretext constantly exploited by Israel to commit what are obvious extrajudicial executions of civilians who are accused by the occupier that then condemns them to death without a shred of evidence and without a fair trial.

The execution of these young men is yet further proof not only of Israel’s callous disregard for Palestinian life but of its prevailing presumption of the guilt of all Palestinians, whether for their mere insistence on their right to live peacefully and securely in their homeland or for exercising their right to resist this illegal colonial occupation and apartheid regime, rights enshrined in international law.



Acting as judge, jury and executioner, Israel also carries on with its unlawful and arbitrary arrest and detention of thousands of Palestinian civilians, among them children. Human rights monitoring indicates that, just since the start of the year, Israel has detained 450 Palestinian children, the majority of them – 353 children – from occupied East Jerusalem, where the occupation’s anti-Palestinian campaign is frenzied.

Currently, 170 Palestinian children are captive in Israeli prisons, in addition to dozens of others who were minors when they were imprisoned by Israel’s juvenile military courts, the only juvenile military courts in the world. One of those who has lost his childhood to the cruelty of the occupation’s military prisons is Ahmed Manasra, who is being held in “Ramla prison hospital”. Arrested by Israeli occupying forces in 2015 when he was only 13 years old, Ahmed has remained in Israeli captivity for the past 7 years in spite of grave psychological illness and now deteriorating physical health due to years of torture. We call for an end to the torture of this young man and for the immediate release of Ahmed and all Palestinian children and youth imprisoned by this illegal occupation.

Another case is that of Mohammed El-Halabi, a former programme director for the charity organization World Vision in the besieged Gaza Strip, who has been arbitrarily detained by Israel since 2016, with 24 extensions of his detention, and was convicted last week of so-called “terror financing” on the basis of secret evidence. Mr. El-Halabi was charged with “diverting funds for terror” despite multiple international audits, including by World Vision itself and by the Government of Australia as a major funder of the charity, that found no material evidence whatsoever of the diversion of funds.

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has continually raised serious concerns about the plight of Mr. El-Halabi, a father of five children, and his subjection to “cruel, degrading and inhuman treatment that may amount to torture” and other human rights violations during six years of administrative detention and countless coerced interrogations. Moreover, this is yet another case of Israel’s exploitation of counter-terrorism laws to target human rights and humanitarian actors – just as it has charged six Palestinian non-governmental organizations with being terror organizations, aimed at silencing them – and of the Israeli judicial system’s complicity in this illegal occupation.

On 16 June, United Nations human rights experts – Francesca Albanese, Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights situation in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, Fionnuala Ní Aoláin, Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism, and Diego García-Sayán, Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers – issued a statement reading, inter alia: “Convicting a humanitarian aid worker in serious violation of the right to a fair trial and on baseless charges of ‘terrorism’ is further evidence of Israel’s egregious misuse of counter-terrorism measures to suppress voices of human rights defenders”. They also stressed that “this practice of arbitrary arrest and detention is part and parcel of the protracted military occupation, which subjugates Palestinians to oppression and strips them of any sense of human rights and dignity”.

Likewise, in another glaring case of the absence of due process and the abuse of human rights, Israel continues the administrative detention of Mr. Salah Hammouri, a Palestinian-French citizen, and has revoked his residency rights in Jerusalem. Mr. Hammouri’s illegal detention and the violation of his right to live in his city, Jerusalem, with his wife and children is illustrative of a recurrent practice by Israel aimed at stripping Palestinians of their rights and emptying Jerusalem of its indigenous Palestinian inhabitants.

We reiterate the calls for the release of Ahmed Manasra, Mohammed El-Halabi, Salah Hammouri and all of the 4,700 Palestinians being illegally held captive by Israel in its jails and detention centres. It must be demanded that Israel cease all such illegal actions and respect its obligations as the occupying Power in accordance with international humanitarian law, including all relevant provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention, and we call upon the High Contracting Parties to uphold their obligation to enforce the Convention in all circumstances.

Furthermore in this regard, we again draw urgent attention to the protection crisis being faced by more than a thousand Palestinians in Masafer Yatta, near Al-Khalil (Hebron). Despite the international community's calls upon Israel to halt its illegal plans, it continues with the seizure and demolition of homes and other civilian structures aimed at the forcible transfer – that is, ethnic cleansing – of more than 1,200 Palestinian children, women and men in order to establish a so-called “military training zone” for the illegal occupying forces in our land. The homes of five families in Khirbat al-Fakhit village and another four homes in Markaz village have already been demolished, forcing the families to sleep in tents and caves, and Israeli occupying forces continue to harass and intimidate communities, including through menacing military drills in the area that are traumatizing the population, especially children, and are clearly aimed at coercing them into leaving. Similarly, Israel persists in its attempts to forcibly displace Palestinians in occupied East Jerusalem, including in Silwan, Wadi Qaddum, Shaykh Jarrah and other neighbourhoods. As documented by the Norwegian Refugee Council, “in East Jerusalem, one third of Palestinian homes are at risk of demolition”, and Israeli laws effectively prohibit Palestinians from building in about 85 per cent of the City.

All such actions constitute grave breaches against protected persons in an occupied territory. These are war crimes, and the pretexts being used by the occupying Power are offensive and reflective of its total contempt for the rule of law and human rights. It is blatantly obvious that Israel's intention is to clear the land so that it can proceed with its illegal settlement colonization and annexation plans. We urge the international community to act forthwith to pressure Israel to cease all of these illegal measures against the Palestinian civilian population. We recall once again: Israel is not the sovereign in any part of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and has no right whatsoever to impose its control and laws on our people and land. Such sovereignty rests only in the Palestinian people and the State of Palestine, in accordance with international law and the relevant United Nations resolutions.

The international community, and first and foremost the Security Council, must act to uphold international law and bring a halt to this destructive impunity. Only such collective action – with real measures of accountability – can protect civilian lives, end this illegal Israeli colonial occupation and apartheid regime, including its inhumane and deplorable 15-year blockade of Gaza, and finally enable the Palestinian people to realize the freedom, rights and dignity that they are being unjustly denied, for more than 74 years since the Nakba and 55 years since the onset of the Israeli occupation in 1967.

This letter is in follow-up to our 757 letters regarding 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 9 June 2022 (A/ES-10/904-S/2022/466) 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, 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
