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

Security Council
Seventy-fourth year

Identical letters dated 30 January 2019 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

I am compelled to write once again as Israeli crimes against the Palestinian civilian population in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, persist and continue to cause casualties and destruction, including death and injury to innocent civilians. In particular, Israeli settler violence and terror against Palestinians has sharply escalated, heightening the insecurity of our civilian population and further underscoring the need for international protection for them as this illegal occupation becomes only more brutal and extreme with every passing day.

In recent weeks, settler brutality has tragically caused more loss of civilian life, and the rise in such heinous crimes has no doubt been stoked by the Israeli Government's illegal policies and inflammatory rhetoric as it continues to act in total violation of all of its legal obligations. The lack of accountability for such crimes, whether by the occupying Power or by its colonial settlers, to whom the occupying forces typically provide protection and cover even as they commit those crimes, has also undoubtedly fuelled the continuation of such violence and terror against our people.

Recent provocative attacks by extremist Israeli settlers include the savage attack on 26 January on the village of Al-Mughayer, north-east of Ramallah, where settlers killed 38-year-old Hamdi Taleb Na'san, a father of four young children. As documented by the Palestinian Health Ministry, Na'san was shot and killed by a live bullet to his back, while 30 other Palestinians were also injured, 6 of whom were also shot with live ammunition by the settlers.

Similar acts of terror were also perpetrated this past weekend by a group of Israeli settlers and Israeli occupying forces in the city of Al-Khalil (Hebron) and near the village of Silwad. In Al-Khalil, extremist settlers from the illegal "Kiryat Arba" settlement violently attacked several Palestinian homes, injuring Hisham Saifan, age 48, and his 10-year-old son Muhammad. Concurrently, on a bypass road near the



village of Silwad, an Israeli soldier fired live ammunition at a group of Palestinian youth, shooting and killing a 16-year old boy, Ahmed Othman Hamed.

We call for full accountability for these crimes and all other crimes being perpetrated against the Palestinian civilian population by this belligerent occupation, including by its settlers that have been illegally transferred to our territory as part of Israel's illegal settlement colonization campaign. Those who murder innocent civilians must be held responsible and justice must be ensured for the victims in accordance with international law, including humanitarian and human rights law.

In this regard, we recognize the many statements of condemnation regarding these crimes against our people and welcome the recent statement by the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Nickolay Mladenov, calling for an end to such violence and calling for accountability. We underline his statement that "All must condemn violence, stand up to terror." No exceptions should be made, including for the Israeli Government, which must be demanded to condemn such barbaric actions and to bring the perpetrators to justice, in line with international law, in particular its clear obligations under international humanitarian law as the occupying Power.

Moreover, we must reiterate our call for international protection for the defenceless Palestinian civilian population. It is beyond apparent that Israel, the occupying Power, has totally abdicated its obligations to ensure the safety and well-being of the Palestinian people under its occupation and is the direct cause of their insecurity and the harm being done to them as it persists with violations and grave breaches of international law. We recall the relevant United Nations resolutions, including the most recent adopted by the General Assembly in its resumed tenth emergency special session, resolution [A/RES/ES-10/20](#), as well as the relevant recommendations in the report of the Secretary-General on the protection of the Palestinian civilian population ([A/ES-10/794](#)), and urge serious follow-up and implementation to ensure the protection of the Palestinian people for as long as this illegal, belligerent foreign occupation continues.

We also recall Security Council resolutions [2334 \(2016\)](#) and [904 \(1994\)](#), which, respectively, called for "immediate steps to prevent all acts of violence against civilians, including acts of terror, as well as acts of provocation and destruction", and for accountability in this regard, and for "measures to be taken to guarantee the safety and protection of the Palestinian civilians throughout the occupied territory, including, inter alia, a temporary international or foreign presence, which was provided for in the Declaration of Principles, within the context of the ongoing peace process". We urge the Council to act forthwith to uphold its resolutions and call on the international community as a whole to uphold the principles and commitments repeatedly reaffirmed vis-à-vis this situation, including in respect to the protection of our people.

In this regard, we reiterate the Palestinian leadership's condemnation of the Israeli Government's decision not to renew the mandate of the Temporary International Presence in Hebron, which has provided an important civilian presence for over two decades, helping to de-escalate tensions in the city between the Palestinian civilian population and the extremist Israeli population there and providing a modicum of deterrence and protection for our people. The international community must likewise condemn that decision and call on Israel, the occupying Power, to renew the mandate of the Temporary International Presence in Hebron in respect of agreements signed and its obligations under international law and United Nations resolutions.

Here, it is to be recalled that the Temporary International Presence in Hebron, which is composed of personnel from Italy, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and Turkey

and coordinated by Norway, has been operational in Al-Khalil since 1997, in accordance with an agreement between the two sides. The agreement was concluded in line with arrangements delineated in the 1993 Declaration of Principles and pursuant to the call made by the Security Council in its resolution [904 \(1994\)](#) for an international presence, following the massacre by a terrorist Israeli settler of Palestinian worshippers at Al-Haram Al-Ibrahimi on 25 February 1994. The mandate of the Temporary International Presence in Hebron has been renewed every six months since, extending its deployment and presence.

The Israeli Government's abrupt decision not to renew the mandate of the Temporary International Presence in Hebron can only be deemed a bad faith manoeuvre cynically intended to remove any international witnesses to the crimes of the Israeli occupying forces and extremist settlers in the area, further emboldening their impunity. This can only result in more lawlessness, criminal actions and terror against the Palestinian people, causing the loss of more innocent civilian lives and exacerbating already high tensions and instability.

We therefore appeal to the international community, including the contributing countries of the Temporary International Presence in Hebron and all other concerned parties, to act with urgency to address this matter. It is imperative to heed the warning signals and to act responsibly to avert further deterioration of the situation, including by calling on Israel, the occupying Power, to ensure continuation of the mandate of the Temporary International Presence in Hebron and its important deterrent capacity in the fragile and tense area in which it operates.

Moreover, we reiterate our standing appeal for international protection for the Palestinian people. International law and the commitments undertaken for the protection of civilians in situations of armed conflict, including children and women, must be upheld in the Occupied State of Palestine, including East Jerusalem, where the lives of the Palestinian civilian population are under constant threat by the actions of the occupying Power and its military forces and extremist settlers.

De-escalation of this dangerous situation and the protection of civilian lives are imperative for restoring calm and trust and creating an environment conducive to the pursuit of a peaceful solution, the potential for which continues to dramatically decline by the day in the face of unrestrained impunity. We call on the Security Council to uphold its duty for the maintenance of international peace and security and to end its silence on this matter by demanding an end to all violations being perpetrated by Israel, the occupying Power, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and demanding respect for its legal obligations under international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, and the relevant United Nations resolutions.

Should the occupying Power persist with its contempt and impunity, this must be met with serious actions for accountability, for which international law has provided legitimate and non-violent political and legal tools and methods that must be used. Only then can the prospects for peace be salvaged towards bringing an end to Israel's illegal occupation and ensuring the realization of the long-denied rights of the Palestinian people, including to live as a free people, in dignity and security, in their homeland.

The present letter is in follow-up to our 656 letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which constitutes the territory of the State of Palestine. Those letters, dated from 29 September 2000 ([A/55/432-S/2000/921](#)) to 24 January 2019 ([A/ES-10/808-S/2019/79](#)) constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of those 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 brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of 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**

Ambassador

Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations
