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LETTER DATED 18 JANUARY 1978 FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE
ON THE EXERCISE OF THE INALIENABLE RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN
PEOPLE ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

At a time when the question of the future of the Palestinian people is receiving increasing attention in the context of recent talks, the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People has deemed it necessary to authorize me, as its Chairman, to draw the attention of all concerned to the fundamental principles relating to this question contained in the Committee's report 1/ to the General Assembly of the United Nations, which were adopted by the Assembly at its thirty-first session.

Among the most important of those principles, we would recall the following:

(a) The question of Palestine is at the heart of the Middle East problem, and, consequently, no solution in the Middle East can be envisaged which does not fully take into account the interests of the Palestinian people;

(b) The full implementation of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to return to their homes and property and to achieve self-determination, national independence and sovereignty will contribute decisively to a comprehensive and final settlement of the Middle East crisis;

(c) The participation of the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people, on an equal footing with other parties, on the basis of General Assembly resolutions 3236 (XXIX) and 3375 (XXX) is indispensable in all efforts, deliberations and conferences on the Middle East which are held under the auspices of the United Nations;

(d) The inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force and the consequent obligation for complete and speedy evacuation by Israel of any territory so occupied.

I am sure that you will do all in your power to see that these fundamental principles are applied in any effort to bring about a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-first Session, Supplement No. 35 (A/31/35).

In this connexion, allow me once again to draw your attention to the fact that the Palestine National Council, at its meeting in Cairo, in March 1977, decided to consider the Committee's recommendations, approved by the General Assembly at its thirty-first session, as a positive and progressive step towards the achievement of the aspirations and rights of the Palestinian people, including the right of return and the right to self-determination, independence and national sovereignty, and to declare that any settlement or agreement affecting the rights of the Palestinian people concluded in its absence would be null and void.

The above considerations were reaffirmed by the Permanent Observer of the PLO, on express instructions from the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the PLO, at a meeting of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People on 10 January 1978.

I should be most grateful if this letter were circulated as a Security Council document.

(Signed) Médoune FALL
Chairman of the Committee on the
Exercise of the Inalienable Rights
of the Palestinian People