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COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
Fifty-ninth session
Item 8 of the provisional agenda**QUESTION OF THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE OCCUPIED
ARAB TERRITORIES, INCLUDING PALESTINE****Letter dated 25 November 2002 from the Permanent Observer for Palestine
to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the United Nations
High Commissioner for Human Rights**

Israel, the Occupying Power, continues to wage its military war throughout the occupied Palestinian territory, as well as its military aggressions, war crimes and State-sponsored terrorism, in violation of human rights rules and standards, international law, international humanitarian law, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the right to life and the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War.

On Friday afternoon, 22 November 2002, Israeli occupation forces opened fire in Jenin refugee camp, randomly shooting at civilians and killing a British United Nations employee, Ian John Hawk, and a 13-year-old boy. Mr. Hawk was killed instantly while at work as the Director of Reconstruction at UNRWA's office in Jenin camp. He was shot twice in the abdomen with Israeli high-velocity bullets.

The brutal unjustified execution of Mr. Hawk, a United Nations employee, in a United Nations refugee camp, is yet another crime in the long list of war crimes committed by the Israeli military occupation in the Palestinian territories, not only against Palestinians but also against internationals undertaking their humanitarian mission in the field.

On Wednesday, 20 November, Amer Salman al-Qudsi, 13, was shot to death in the chest by Israeli soldiers while returning home from school.

On Tuesday, 19 November, the Israeli occupation forces committed another crime of extrajudicial execution in south-eastern Tulkarem, in violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention, which seeks to protect the lives of the protected persons. This operation killed at least seven Palestinian civilians, including three teenage children, and wounded a dozen more. Among those killed were Tareq Zaghal (in his twenties), a security guard Ziyad Mashaqi (in his thirties), Sha'aban Shaker Ibdeer, a 36-year-old taxi driver who happened to be driving in the area, and Ahmad Mohammed al-Jayousi, 33, shot in the chest and head while desperately trying to get home.

At least 179 Palestinians have so far been killed in extrajudicial executions committed by Israel, including 68 Palestinian bystanders.

In addition, attacks against Palestinians, campaigns of beating and sweeps of arrest, attacks against journalists, acts which consist of humiliating and harassing Palestinians at Israeli checkpoints, destroying Palestinians' homes, properties and infrastructure, razing roads, digging trenches in and around several Palestinian cities in an effort to obstruct movement into and out of them and effectively isolate them, harassment and violent attacks by illegal Israeli settlers, damaging and burning Palestinian farmers' groups, uprooting their trees, bulldozing their agricultural lands and destroying their water networks, all are also acts which continue to be perpetrated daily at the hands of the Israeli occupation forces all over the occupied Palestinian territory, in flagrant violation of the human rights of the Palestinian people, at the forefront of which is the right to life, and in grave violation of all the provisions and principles of international law, international humanitarian law and the Fourth Geneva Convention.

Furthermore, Israel continues to impose its military siege, imposing severe restrictions on the movement of persons and goods throughout the occupied Palestinian territory, thus driving a whole people to starvation and to a humanitarian catastrophe due to the lack of drinkable water, food, medicine and the appropriate medical treatment for the hundreds of Palestinian sick and wounded trapped inside their besieged towns, villages and camps.

For further illustration of the daily human rights aggressions and violations at the hands of the Israeli occupation forces against Palestinian civilians, please find enclosed memorandums issued by the Palestinian National Authority for the period from Sunday, 17 to Sunday, 24 November 2002.

In the light of the escalation of the already drastic situation in the occupied Palestinian territory, we once again appeal to Your Excellency and through you to the international community to directly intervene with the Government of Israel and urge this Government to refrain from its savage aggression waged by its occupation forces against our people and national institutions in most Palestinian towns, villages and camps, to stop its terror and State-sponsored terrorism against our innocent civilian people, to stop shooting to death our children, to abide by international legitimacy and to live up to its obligations under international humanitarian law.

We also appeal to Your Excellency to use all your offices to provide for an international protection force and presence in Palestine to monitor these Israeli daily aggressions, massacres and crimes perpetrated by the Israeli occupation forces not only against Palestinians, but also against internationals based in Palestine. It is unconscionable that these internationals should put their lives at risk while they are undertaking their noble humanitarian duty, as was the case of Mr. Hawk.

I would be most grateful if you could arrange to have this letter and its enclosure distributed to the members of the Commission on Human Rights, as

an official document of the fifty-ninth session of the Commission on Human Rights under its agenda item 8.

(Signed): Nabil RAMLAWI
Ambassador
Permanent Observer
