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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 13 January 2003 from the Permanent Observer for Palestine  
to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the United Nations  
High Commissioner for Human Rights**

In flagrant violation of international law, international humanitarian law, the four Geneva Conventions and all human rights rules, particularly the right to life and the right to live in dignity, the Israeli occupation forces continue to escalate their bloody and criminal aggression against the Palestinian people, killing innocent civilians, conducting large-scale arrest campaigns, demolishing Palestinian homes, imposing severe and harsh collective punishments on innocent Palestinians, levelling agricultural lands, reoccupying and besieging most Palestinian towns, villages and camps, denying access to and from any of them, terrorizing Palestinian children, women and elderly by their everyday incursions with their tanks, helicopters and heavy war machine into densely populated Palestinian areas.

Late in the evening of Monday, 6 January 2003 Israeli combat helicopters launched nine missiles at the al-Zaytoun neighbourhood in Gaza City. Seven missiles hit a workshop manufacturing car parts, totally destroying it. An eighth missile hit part of a store near the workshop, and the ninth missile hit a flat, severely damaging them all.

On the same day, Israeli occupation forces, reinforced with heavy military vehicles, destroyed a factory of electric tools in Gaza, where 40 Palestinians used to work.

Also on the same day, Israeli occupation forces, reinforced with heavy military vehicles and helicopters, took position at the entrances of al-Maghazi refugee camp and al-Zawaida village, raided a three-story uninhabited house on the main road, and transformed it into a military location, from which they fired at the area, killing three Palestinians named hereafter:

- Eyad Mohammed Suleiman Abu Zayed, 25, from al-Zawaida village, shot by two live bullets in the chest and the neck;
- Nassim Hassan Abu Malih, 24, from al-Zawaida village, shot by several live bullets throughout the body; and
- Baker Mohammed Khaddoura, 23, from al-Maghazi refugee camp, shot with a live bullet in the back.

In addition, scores of other Palestinians were wounded by the Israeli gunfire.

By Wednesday, 8 January, in an apparently wilful killing, Israeli occupation forces opened fire at the family of Mowaffaq Ahmed Ajaj in Saida village, north of Tulkarm, killing his son Ahmed, 18, with a live bullet to the head.

In another incident, Israeli occupation forces, reinforced with heavy military vehicles and under the cover of intense shelling, raided Khan Yunis refugee camp. Within five hours Israeli military bulldozers had demolished two Palestinian houses totally and four houses partially. One of the houses was demolished while its residents were still inside. A Palestinian civilian, Aymman Mohammed Ahmed Hunaideq, 30, was killed by two live bullets in the head and the left shoulder, while his brother, Nazhmi, 45, was wounded by four live bullets in the left arm and thigh, as Israeli forces opened heavy fire at the area.

By Thursday 9 January, Israeli occupation forces shelled several neighbourhoods in the Gaza Strip towns of Khan Younis and Rafah, inflicting grave damages to many of them, detained more citizens in raids on al-Jadida village near Jenin and killed 40-year-old Abdallah Ali by shooting him fatally in the head.

By Saturday, 11 January, in Ayda refugee camp near Bethlehem, invading Israeli occupation forces shot dead 15-year-old Tareq Abu Jaber and injured two children aged 10 and 15.

By Sunday, 12 January, in Khan Younis, 75 Israeli tanks, backed by several Apache gunships, rolled into the city from different directions, opened fire at

residents' houses, shooting dead one Palestinian civilian, Abedul Wadi, while more than 15 others were injured. In addition, Israeli occupation forces destroyed at least 10 metal workshops, and two houses owned by Palestinian civilians.

In the northern Gaza Strip town of Biet Hanoun, Ali Nassar, 45, was killed by the Israeli troops, who opened their heavy artillery on Palestinian civilians in Biet Hanoun, causing the death of Nassar by live bullets to his head and left thigh.

Israeli occupation forces invaded Askar refugee camp near the northern West Bank city of Nablus, killing a Palestinian, Basman al-Shannir, 18, with a bullet in his stomach, and injuring at least nine others.

Another Palestinian civilian was killed by an Israeli settler near the southern West Bank city of Hebron. The victim Hazem Zanoun, 27, was killed instantly.

I regret to inform you that, as a result of the increasing number of Palestinians who continue to be killed and injured at the hands of the Israeli occupation forces with every passing day, the toll of Palestinian martyrs, since September 2000, increased to at least 2,030 and at least 21,420 others wounded, most of them sustaining severe and permanent disabilities.

In light of the continued campaign of war, bloodshed and destruction being waged by the Israeli occupation authorities, forces and settlers in all Palestinian towns, villages and camps, we once again reiterate our call to Your Excellency, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, to intervene with the Government of Israel and urge this Government to refrain from all of the above-mentioned serious violations and grave breaches of international law and international humanitarian law and all the atrocities and heinous crimes being committed against the Palestinian people.

We also appeal to the High Commissioner 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 and protect the Palestinian protected persons until Israel has withdrawn its forces from all the Palestinian Territories, occupied since June 1967, including East Jerusalem.

I would be most grateful if you could arrange to have this letter distributed to their Excellencies, members of the Commission on Human Rights, as an official document of the fifty-ninth session of the Commission under its agenda item 8.

Signed: Nabil RAMLAWI  
Ambassador  
Permanent Observer

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