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Letter dated 8 August 1985 from the Acting Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People addressed to the Secretary-General

In my capacity as Acting Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, I wish to express the utmost concern at grave recent developments in Israeli policies and practices affecting the rights of the Palestinian people.

According to The New York Times of 5 August 1985, the Israeli Cabinet voted on 4 August to reinstate its policies of administrative detention without trial and deportation of persons who are considered "security risks".

The revived policy has reportedly already been used to detain Mr. Ziad Abu Eain for six months without trial.

According to the same report, the Cabinet also decided to authorize the closing down of newspapers that violate censorship regulations and are considered to have "incited terrorist attacks". The newspaper Al Shaab, for example, was closed for three days for publishing an announcement of a funeral for two Arabs who were found dead in their car, killed by explosive material (Ha'aretz, 2 August 1985).

The Cabinet further decided to expand prisons in the occupied territories.

Of further concern is new legislation submitted to the Knesset, which according to a report in Le Monde of 1 August 1985, seeks to bar any contacts between Israeli citizens and the Palestine Liberation Organization, under penalty of up to three years in gaol and a fine.

In addition to these legislative developments, the Israeli authorities have recently taken several repressive and discriminatory measures against Palestinians. I wish to refer in particular to the recent closing of Al Najah University in Nablus for two months (The New York Times, 3 August 1985); the repeated closing of the Al Hakawati theatre in East Jerusalem (Jerusalem Post, 28 July 1985); and the decision of the Qiryat Arba council to dismiss all Arab workers employed by the town and to accord preference to businesses employing Jews only (The New York Times, 5 August 1985).

It is clear that these measures, which have been accompanied by escalating violence, are designed to stifle all forms of political, economic and cultural activity by the Palestinian people and thus to pressure them into emigrating from their land, with a view to facilitating its eventual annexation by Israel. Such measures can only further exacerbate tensions and conflict in the area, thus posing a growing threat to international peace and security.

The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People has repeatedly expressed its utmost concern at such policies and practices, which constitute a grave violation of the rights of the Palestinian people and of the international obligations of Israel and which pose a serious obstacle to international efforts to achieve a comprehensive, just and lasting solution of the Palestine Question, the core of the Middle East conflict.

In conclusion, I should like to request that this letter be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under item 33 of the provisional agenda, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Oscar ORAMAS-OLIVA
Acting Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the
Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People

