



DIVISION FOR PALESTINIAN RIGHTS

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I. ACTION TAKEN BY THE COMMITTEE ON THE EXERCISE OF THE
INALIENABLE RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

On 3 March 1989, in a letter addressed to the Secretary-General (see A/43/999-S/20505), the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People drew urgent attention to the continuous and increasingly harsh measures taken by Israel to suppress the intifadah. The full text of the letter is as follows:

"In my capacity as Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, I wish to draw your urgent attention to the persistence of the grave situation in the occupied Palestinian territory caused by the continuous and increasingly harsh measures taken by Israel, the occupying Power, to suppress the Palestinian intifadah.

"Since my letter to you on 25 January 1989 (A/43/994-S/20424) more Palestinians, particularly children and youth, have been killed and injured and collective punishment has been widely used. According to the Ha'aretz, Al-Fajr and Al-Bayader, during the month from 28 January to 28 February, 22 Palestinians were killed by Israeli troops, including 8 children under the age of 15, and more than 250 were wounded; 55 houses were demolished or sealed; and more than 180 persons were placed under administrative detention for six months. The Data Base Project on Palestinian Human Rights has reported that the total number of Palestinian casualties since the beginning of the intifadah has reached 339 persons killed by gunfire and another 163 persons killed by tear-gas, beatings and other actions of the Israeli occupying forces.

"The Washington Post reported on 9 February that on the previous day military guards of the Megiddo prison had fired tear-gas, plastic and regular bullets at Palestinian detainees resulting in at least one dead and 18 wounded, several of them seriously. Army officials said that the incident occurred when visiting relatives, angered by the long wait before being allowed to see prisoners, began a demonstration. The guards opened fire when the military suspended visiting hours and the inmates began protesting inside the compound.

"On 16 February, The New York Times reported that the Israeli army had begun an investigation to identify mysterious exploding devices that had killed and wounded several West Bank Palestinian children in the previous two weeks. A member of the Israeli Parliament, Dedi Zucker, said that so far eight Palestinian children had been wounded or killed by "something that blew up into tiny shrapnel unlike regular hand grenades". It was reported that the Palestinians rejected the army's first explanation that the injuries might have been caused by unexploded shells in firing ranges. They said that the children were wounded in open grazing fields. In one incident, according to Al-Fajr of 13 February, two brothers aged 12 and 10 and their 4-year-old sister were injured in an explosion which took place near their home in the village of Tayaseer. Two days later the girl died of her wounds. Relatives said that an Israeli military helicopter had been seen flying over the village when the explosion took place.

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"The Washington-based Jerusalem Press Service reported on 28 February that Nablus, the largest city in the West Bank, has been under full curfew for the fifth consecutive day. The report indicates that the city suffers serious shortages of food, water and medical supplies, and that hundreds of residents have been detained, many of whom were beaten by the army. The city was placed under curfew following an incident in which an Israeli soldier was killed by a block of cement dropped on him in the Old City.

"In view of the gravity of these events, the Committee wishes once again to protest vigorously against the continued repression in the Palestinian territory occupied by Israel, the occupying Power, which is in violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention, international human rights instruments and United Nations resolutions. Such policies and practices continue to deny the Palestinian people the exercise of its inalienable national rights in accordance with the principles of the Charter and the resolutions of the United Nations, and pose grave obstacles to international efforts for negotiating a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

"The Committee once again reiterates its appeal to you to take all possible measures to ensure the safety and protection of the Palestinian civilians under occupation and to intensify your efforts towards the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East in accordance with General Assembly resolution 43/176 of 15 December 1988. "

II. COMMUNIQUE ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE ISSUED
ON 15 MARCH 1989 BY THE CO-ORDINATING BUREAU
OF THE MOVEMENT OF NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES

"The Co-ordinating Bureau of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries met in New York on 15 March 1989. On that occasion, the Bureau heard a statement by the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations on developments related to the question of Palestine.

"The Bureau expressed grave concern at the continuing alarming situation in the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied by Israel, including Jerusalem, resulting from the persistent "iron fist" policies and practices of Israel. In this regard, the Bureau condemned Israel for continuing policies and practices that violate the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, and the relevant resolutions of the United Nations Security Council. The Bureau once again called upon the Security Council to consider implementing the recommendations aimed at protecting the safety of Palestinians in the occupied territories, contained in the report of the Secretary-General (S/19443) submitted in accordance with Security Council resolution 605 (1987).

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"The Co-ordinating Bureau was deeply concerned at the continuing deadlock in the efforts to initiate the Middle East peace process. It expressed regret that the Security Council had been prevented from taking positive action on the situation in the occupied territories as well as on initiating the Middle East peace process due to the negative positions taken by some of the Council Members. The Bureau called upon the Security Council, working together with the Secretary-General, to make a contribution by initiating concrete steps towards the launching of the peace process in the Middle East in accordance with the relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions.

"The Bureau further called upon Israel to respond positively to the significant initiatives taken by Palestine at the "intifadah session" of the Palestine National Council (PNC) held at Algiers in November 1988 and by the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization, Mr. Yasser Arafat at Geneva, as well as elsewhere. The Bureau was convinced that if Israel reciprocated the goodwill demonstrated by Palestine since the Algiers meeting of PNC, which the rest of the international community has already welcomed, the important confidence-building measures initiated by Palestine would yield positive results for the peace process in the Middle East.

"The Co-ordinating Bureau once again saluted the heroic uprising of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories, the intifadah, which represents a further step in their struggle against occupation. The Bureau reaffirmed the will of non-aligned countries to extend their full solidarity and support to the Palestinian people, under the leadership of the PLO, so as to enable them to pursue the struggle to end Israeli occupation and achieve their inalienable rights.

"The co-ordinating Bureau also saluted the heroic resistance of the Arab population in the Syrian Arab Golan and in South Lebanon against Israeli occupation." (see A/43/1000-S/20533)

III. UNITED NATIONS SPONSORS JOURNALISTS' ENCOUNTERS ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE

In accordance with General Assembly resolution 43/175 C of 15 December 1988, an Asian regional journalists' encounter on the question of Palestine was held at Singapore from 31 January to 1 February 1989. The regional encounter was preceded by a series of national encounters held at London on 16 January; at Berlin (West) and Berlin, German Democratic Republic on 18 and 19 January, respectively; at New Delhi on 24 January; at Bangkok on 26 January; at Sydney on 3 February; at Canberra on 7 February; at Wellington on 9 February; and at Tokyo on 13 February.

The objective of the encounters was to promote a better understanding of the question of Palestine among leaders of the media by bringing them together with experts on the subject for brief, in-depth, informal and candid discussion.

Asian regional encounter

The following panelists were invited to address the participants: Ambassador Chirmaya Rajaninath Gharekhan, Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations; Mr. Gordon Bilney, Member of the Lower House, Australian Parliament, Chairman, Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence Trade, Canberra, Australia; Mr. William Buffum, former Under-Secretary-General for Political and General Assembly Affairs, the United Nations; Mr. Zuhdi Labib Terzi, Permanent Observer Mission of Palestine to the United Nations; and Mr. Amos Kenan, columnist, Yediot Aharonot, member, Joint Israeli-Palestinian Writers Association.

A total of 20 journalists representing the press, radio and television media of 14 nations participated in the encounter. The following topics were addressed: historical review of the origins of the Palestinian question; the United Nations and the question of Palestine; the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people; and the prospects for a peaceful settlement of the Palestinian problem.

The opening session, covered widely by the local media, was attended by representatives of non-governmental organizations, foreign embassy officials and staff of the Foreign Office of Singapore. During the course of the encounter, panelists had the opportunity to give interviews to the Singapore media.

Local encounters

In Europe, the panel comprised Mr. Zuhdi Labib Terzi and Mr. David Shaham, Executive Director of the International Centre for Peace in the Middle East; Mr. Terzi and Mr. Amos Kenan acted as panelists at the Asian events.

Each encounter was attended by 30 to 50 journalists and observers as well as local media in all nine cities.

Debates at all events, whether regional or local, were lively, frank and objective. Journalists were of the view that the encounters had gone far in promoting understanding of the background and current status of the question of Palestine. It was explained to participants that the Department of Public Information had always invited the Israeli Government to nominate a panelist to present the Israeli position at such events. No reply, however, had ever been received.

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IV. NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS: ACTIVITIES AND INFORMATION

In the course of March, the following information describing recent activities was received by the Division for Palestinian Rights:

1. "TANMIYA", quarterly newsletter issued by the Welfare Association. The March 1989 leading article focuses on the children of the intifadah. Informations may be obtained from the Welfare Association, 7, Ave. Pictet-de-Rochemont, POB 602, CH-1211 Geneva 6, Switzerland.
2. "CPJ Update", bimonthly newsletter published by the Committee to Protect Journalists, 36 West 44th Street, Suite 911, New York, N.Y. 10036, U.S.A.
3. "AJME News", Volume XIV, No. 4, concentrating on the internal dimensions of the intifadah, Newsletter of Americans for Justice in the Middle East, P.O. Box 113-5581 Beirut, Lebanon.
4. "International Centre for Information on Palestine and Lebanese Prisoners, Deportees and Missing Persons", notes nos. 1 and 2 concerning detention, deportation and repression in the Palestinian territories occupied by Israel. Copies may be obtained from the Centre, 14, Rue de Nanteuil, 75015 Paris, France.
5. "JERUSALEM", monthly publication of the Palestine Committee for NGOs, B.P. 554, Tunis Cedex 1080, Tunis, Tunisia.
6. "THE NECEF REPORT", published by the Near East Cultural Educational Foundation of Canada, 106 Duplex Avenue, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M5P 2A7.
7. "PALESTINE HUMAN RIGHTS NEWSLETTER", published by Palestine Human Rights Campaign, 220 S. State St., # 1308, 1 Quincy Court, Chicago, Illinois 60604.
8. "Palestine Solidarity Committee", information on current and forthcoming events available from the Committee at P.O. Box 372, Peck Slip Station, New York, N.Y. 10272, U.S.A.
9. "El Arabe", bimonthly publication of la Union Arabe de Cuba, Paseo de Marti (Prado) Nos. 256-258 y 260, entre Animas y Trocadero, Centro Havana, Cuba.
10. "Parliamentary Association for Euro-Arab Cooperation", report of 1988 activities available from PAEAC, Avenue d'Anderghem 33-35, B-1040, Brussels, Belgium.

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11. "Beita: Lidice Revisited", booklet published by ROOTS/Friends of Palestinian Prisoners, 703 G Street S.E. Washington, D.C. 20003, U.S.A.
12. "More than tear-gas: Harassing agents and their use in the Israeli occupied territories", booklet published by the Dutch Palestine Committee, Human Rights Project, P.O. Box 10520, 1001 EM Amsterdam, Netherlands.
13. "Palestine Committee for Peace and Afro-Asia Solidarity", monthly newsletter, January issue contains report about the use of gas by Israeli forces in the occupied territories. Available from the Committee at B.P. 468 Tunis Cedex 1080, Tunis, Tunisia.
14. "SOLIDARITE AFRO-ASIATIQUE", quarterly magazine containing articles on the question of Palestine published by l'Organisation de la Solidarité des Peuples Afro-Asiatiques (OSPAA), 89, Rue Abdel Aziz al Séoud, Manial, Le Caire, R.A.E.
15. "DISCLOSE", facts about violations of Palestinian human rights, monthly publication of the International Centre for Information on Palestinian and Lebanese Prisoners, Deportees and Missing Persons, available from C.I.I., 14 Rue de Nanteuil, 75015 Paris, France.
16. "Appeal from Palestinian Women Protesting Israeli Measures in the Occupied Territories". Information on hunger-strikes, sit-ins and the appeal, available from the Society of In'ash El-Usra P.O. Box 3549 Amman, Jordan.
17. "TRICONTINENTAL", no. 120/6-1988 contains article on "Palestine: History, Rights and Struggle", available from OSPAAAL, Calle C No. 668e/27 y 29, Vedado, Havana, Cuba.
18. "Journal of the All India Indo-Arab Friendship Association", Parwana Villa, MIG 38-B, Pocket C, Ashok Vihar Phase-1, Delhi 110052, India.
19. "North American Co-ordinating Committee for Non-Governmental Organizations on the Question of Palestine", quarterly newsletter available from NACC Chairperson, Jeanne Butterfield, P.O. Box 576, Cambridge, MA 02140.
20. "Land and Water", background paper number 1/1989, published by the International Co-ordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine, P.O. Box 2100, 1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland.
21. International Co-ordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine, information notes. For inclusion on mailing list, write to Committee at Case Postale No. 127, 5 Rue des Morillons, CH-1211, Geneva 20, Switzerland.

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22. "America-Israel Council for Israeli-Palestinian Peace", monthly newsletter, 4816 Cornell Avenue, Downers Grove, IL 60515, U.S.A.
23. British Refugee Council, press releases available containing statement drawn up by a group of voluntary agencies and presented to a British Foreign Office Minister, expressing deep concern at obstacles to the right to development in the West Bank and Gaza. Copies may be obtained from the Council at Bondway House, 3/9 Bondway, London SW 15, United Kingdom.
24. "Rassegna palestinese", Italian review of matters relating to the Palestinian question. Fondazione Internazionale helio Basso per il Diritto e la Liberazione dei Popoli, V. della Dogana Vecchia, 5-00186 Roma, Italy.
25. "Association of Arab-American University Graduates, Inc.", information on publications and seminars available from the Association at 556 Tuapelo Road, Belmont, MA 02178, U.S.A.
26. "Palestine Focus", newspaper of Palestine Solidarity Committee, P.O. Box 27462, San Francisco, CA 94127, U.S.A.
27. "Middle East Peace Network Bulletin", available from the Network, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, N.Y. 10115, U.S.A.
28. "Detention of Human Rights Workers and Lawyers from the West Bank and Gaza: Conditions of Detention at Ketziot", paperback available from Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, 330 Seventh Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10001.
29. "Israel and Palestine Political Report", newsletter published by MAGELAN, 5 Rue Cardinal Mercier, 75009 Paris, France.
30. "Palestine Perspectives", bimonthly magazine on Palestinian affairs, 9522 A Lee Highway, Fairfax, VA 22031, U.S.A.
31. "Newsletter", published by the Capital District Committee for Palestinian Rights, bimonthly publication, 33 Central Ave., Albany, N.Y. 12210, U.S.A.
32. "The Return", an international Palestinian monthly magazine, published by the Jerusalem Press Service, 865 National Press Building, Washington, D.C. 20045, U.S.A.

