



Distr.
GENERAL

E/CN.4/2003/G/12
28 October 2002

Original: ENGLISH

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 28 October 2002 from the Permanent Observer for Palestine
to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the United Nations
High Commissioner for Human Rights**

The Israeli occupation forces continue to escalate their campaign of terror, State sponsored terrorism, wilful killings, shelling of and incursion into Palestinian areas, razing of agricultural land and all other forms of human rights violations against the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory.

On Friday, 25 October, Israeli occupation forces reoccupied the northern West Bank City of Jenin and its refugee camp, terrorizing some 250,000 people on whom a tight curfew was imposed. At least 40 tanks, jeeps and armoured personnel vehicles rumbled into Jenin and its refugee camp, in an invasion, code-named "Operation Vanguard".

Israeli machine-gun fire crackled in the air after hundreds of Israeli soldiers and tanks rumbled into the city just before dawn. Israeli occupation soldiers were shooting at anyone they saw on the streets, as they carried out a house-to-house search, with the Israeli army enforcing the curfew.

In the city centre electric poles were uprooted, cars smashed by tanks and trenches dug on Jenin's main access roads. The top floors of more than 40 homes were seized by Israeli troops, and inhabitants were forced to take refuge in the lower storeys or in the open air. Men were rounded up for questioning at gunpoint, and some of them were taken away by the army to unknown destinations.

In the meantime, Israeli bulldozers rolled into the town and camp guarded by tanks, demolishing houses belonging to Palestinian civilians and damaging several others. Most of the Jenin refugee camp was almost totally levelled.

Acting in violation of international law and humanitarian law, both of which prohibit collective punishment, Israeli forces demolished 15 more Palestinian houses in Al-Jiftlek area near the West Bank City of Jericho, claiming that they were built without licenses.

On Thursday, 24 October, a 13-year-old Palestinian child from Jenin was killed by machine-gun fire from an Israeli tank. Ahmad Jafar died after being hit in the chest, as around 20 Israeli vehicles invaded the town.

The incursion of the Israeli occupation forces into Jenin and its refugee camp is a continuation of the crimes perpetrated by the occupation army and Jewish settlers against the Palestinian people and their infrastructure, in defiance of all United Nations pertinent resolutions and in flagrant violation of international law, international humanitarian law and the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War.

Furthermore, Israeli forces had maintained the total siege imposed on the occupied Palestinian territory, collectively punishing the Palestinian population. They partitioned Palestinian areas, transforming them into cantons, and violated the economic, social and cultural rights of the Palestinian population. Recently, three Palestinian patients died at Israeli military checkpoints and border crossings while on their way to hospitals to receive medical treatment.

In an attempt to destroy the Palestinian economy as the olive picking season starts, Israeli settlers, in utter impunity and under the full protection of the Israeli armed forces, continue to attack farmers harvesting their olive crops, damaging and burning olive trees.

On 21 October, Israeli forces issued a military order prohibiting Palestinian farmers from olive-picking. They also razed large areas of Palestinian agricultural land in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

In a new racist decision, the Israeli authorities imposed a ban on digging new wells in Palestinian areas, in an apparent attempt to damage the Palestinian agricultural sector.

We reiterate our appeal to your Excellency to call on the Government of Israel to put an end to its aggression and attacks against innocent Palestinian civilians, to halt the destruction of Palestinian infrastructure and to live up to its obligations under international humanitarian law, and also to use your good offices in order to provide international protection for the defenceless Palestinian civilian population until Israel withdraws from all the occupied Palestinian territories.

I would be most grateful if you could arrange to have this letter and the annex thereto* circulated to the distinguished members of the

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

(Signed) Nabil RAMLAWI
Ambassador
Permanent Observer

* Reproduced as received, in the language of submission only.

