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22 March 1948

UNITED NATIONS PALESTINE COMMISSION

Communication Received from Jewish Detainees  
at Gilgil, Kenya

The following communication has been addressed to the Secretary  
of the Commission by the Camp Supervisor on behalf of the Jewish  
Detainees at Gilgil, Kenya.

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Palestinian Jews in Exile  
Special Camp, Gilgil, Kenya  
Gilgil, 2nd January, 1948

The Secretary,  
The United Nations Commission  
For Palestine  
U.N.O. Hqs., New York.

Dear Sir,

On behalf of the members of the camp of Jewish Detainees in Kenya, I take the liberty to approach you in a matter of utmost urgency and importance.

As you are probably aware most of the detainees of this camp were deported to Eritrea on the 19th October 1944, when 251 Jews were seized from Detention Camps in Palestine and carried by planes to Asmara. Since then the camp has moved to the Sudan, then back to Eritrea, and then to this camp in Gilgil, Kenya. During this period half of the Deportees were repatriated to Palestine and released there - whilst many others were deported, making up the present number of 288 Detainees.

All the members of this camp were detained on mere suspicions. None was ever brought for trial, neither on arrest nor upon deportation, despite frequent requests to appear before a competent court of justice.

This camp has never agreed to this unjust measure - of deporting Palestinian Citizens and in many cases Palestinian born inhabitants - but our protests and demands were of no avail.

The thirty-eight months of detention in exile have caused great hardship to the Exiles. Conditions were never quite satisfactory. In Asmara we have left behind three graves of our comrades - two of which were shot in the camp by the Sudanese guards. Even worse was the situation of our families - which have lost in many cases their sole supporters, thus being exposed to misery and plight.

This is our history in short - fuller particulars were submitted to the U.N.O. Commission in Palestine.

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In view of the recent decisions regarding the future of Palestine, it was expected that our repatriation would be immediately ordered, but no intimation to this effect has been as yet - a fact causing serious apprehension and anxiety.

We therefore apply to you to include our problem among the first items of your agenda, and to use your authority to bring about a speedy end to this unjust situation.

Awaiting your early reply,

Yours respectfully,

Z. Hadassi (signed)  
Camp Supervisor.

Copy to Mr. T. Lee, UNO Secretary General