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GENERAL ASSEMBLY
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REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO
INVESTIGATE ISRAELI PRACTICES AFFECTING
THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE POPULATION OF
THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

SECURITY COUNCIL
Thirty-fifth year

Letter dated 29 October 1980 from the Permanent
Representative of Jordan to the United Nations
addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to convey to you the statement by the official Jordanian spokesman concerning the criminal attempt to burn the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. This criminal act, which took place on Tuesday, 14 October 1980, can only be seen as the result of Israeli policy to destroy Christian and Islamic Holy Places and transform the city of Jerusalem into an exclusive Jewish city.

I respectfully request Your Excellency to use your good offices in calling upon the Government of Israel to abide by the fourth Geneva Convention of 1949^{1/} and relevant General Assembly and Security Council resolutions on the protection of holy shrines and cultural institutions in occupied areas.

I kindly request that this letter and the enclosed statement be circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 57, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Hazem NUSEIBEH
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

^{1/} United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 75, No. 973, p. 287.

ANNEX

Statement by the official Jordanian spokesman concerning the fire
at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem

16 October 1980

1. It was reported by the news agencies from occupied Arab Jerusalem that a fire broke out last Tuesday night in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in the Holy City and that the fire destroyed some of the precious relics in the Church.
2. The official spokesman said that this act of aggression against the Christian Holy Places was not just another fortuitous incident but was a

premeditated act constituting yet another episode in the policy of Zionist religious fanaticism directed against the Holy Places of the Islamic and Christian faiths.

3. The spokesman added that this was not the first time since 1967 that the Church of the Holy Sepulchre had been the victim of acts of pillage and theft of its valuable historical and religious property and that the years of Zionist occupation were filled with incidents involving aggression against other Christian sites and precious historical property in Jerusalem, not to mention the profanation and desecration of Christian and Islamic Holy Places through the commission of acts of indecency within their precincts under the very eyes of the occupation authorities.

4. The official spokesman emphasized that this phenomenon was regarded as extremely serious since it recalls to mind the fire at the blessed Al Aqsa Mosque, the profanation of the Ibrahimi Mosque at Hebron, the theft of the Crown of the Virgin from the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the aggression against the property of the Coptic Monastery, the burning of a number of Christian cultural centres in the Holy City and the excavations within the precincts of the Al Aqsa Mosque the structure of which is now threatened with subsidence and collapse..... provides confirmation that the recent incident at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre is simply the implementation of an Israeli policy designed to destroy both the Islamic and the Christian Holy Places and to endow the Arab Holy City with a Jewish character.

5. The official spokesman appealed to all civilized States and, in particular, the Christian World to regard this incident as extremely grave and serious and to consider putting a rapid and definite end to the occupation practices which are endangering both the existence and the future of the Christian and Islamic Holy Places.

6. The Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, while condemning the attempt to burn down the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, holds the Israeli Government and the occupation authorities responsible for this premeditated criminal act which exposes the serious and hostile nature of Israeli policies towards the Holy Places in occupied Arab territory.
