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Agenda item 5
Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem
and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Sixty-ninth year

Identical letters dated 19 December 2014 from the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council

As the situation in Occupied Palestine, including in East Jerusalem, continues to deteriorate and tensions continue to dangerously rise as a result of the illegal actions and provocations being perpetrated by Israel, the occupying Power, and its extremist settlers against the defenceless Palestinian people, the Palestinian leadership continues to appeal to the international community to uphold its responsibility to address this grave injustice and to give hope to the Palestinian people that their suffering under this illegitimate, immoral occupation will soon end, and that they will soon realize their inalienable human rights, including their right to self-determination and freedom.

We continue in particular our appeals to the Security Council to uphold its responsibilities in this regard and urge that action be taken on the draft resolution on this matter that is currently before the Council. The Council must act, on the basis of its duty under the Charter of the United Nations, to maintain international peace and security and, on the basis of its relevant resolutions, to contribute to diffusing this volatile situation, to salvaging the two-State solution on the basis of the pre-1967 borders and the prospects for peace, and to promoting a credible political horizon for the pursuit of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace agreement that will bring an end to the Israeli occupation since 1967, achieve the independence of the State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem as its capital, and ensure a just solution for the Palestine refugee question, in accordance with General Assembly resolution [194 \(III\)](#), and just solutions to all other core final status issues between the two sides. As the Security Council remains paralysed on this issue, the situation on the ground continues to unravel as Israeli violations of human rights law and grave breaches of international humanitarian law, amounting to war crimes, continue unabated. These actions have provoked rising tensions and anger, which have been particularly high following the killing last week by the Israeli occupying forces of Minister Ziad Abu Ein. All of this, combined with the lack of any political horizon, has created an extremely unpredictable and explosive situation, to which we once again urgently draw the international community's attention. Palestinian civilians, including children, continue to be killed and injured by the Israeli occupying forces with impunity. In just the past two weeks, Israel has conducted hundreds of raids in Palestinian cities, towns, villages and refugee camps throughout the West Bank. These violent military raids have often been carried out in the pre-dawn hours, terrorizing families in the dead of night, and have resulted in civilian casualties, the ransacking of homes and hundreds of detentions and arrests. On 16 December, a young Palestinian, Mahmoud Abdullah Adwan, age 21, was shot in the head and killed by occupying forces while standing on the rooftop of his family home during a raid on the Qalandiya refugee camp. Palestinian civilians continue to be assaulted in these raids, as well as during peaceful protests, by the Israeli occupying forces, and to be injured by the excessive use of force, including the reckless use of live ammunition, rubber-coated bullets and tear gas canisters. On 10 December, a 12-year-old Palestinian boy was shot in the head and seriously wounded by occupying forces near the Jalazoun refugee camp. Hundreds of other Palestinians have been injured by the Israeli occupying forces over the past two weeks, including in Occupied East Jerusalem, Ramallah, Bethlehem, Al-Khalil, Nablus, Tulkarem, Qalqilya and surrounding villages, as well as in the Gaza Strip, where occupying forces continue to shoot civilians near the border fence and to terrorize and shoot at Palestinian fishermen. During these raids, the Israeli occupying forces have also detained and arrested hundreds of Palestinian civilians, including children and women. Detentions and arrests have been rising in frequency, in particular in Occupied East Jerusalem, where the occupying forces are intensifying the pressure on the Palestinian civilian population. One example is a recent arrest raid in the Silwan neighbourhood of East Jerusalem, where, on 16 December, Israeli occupying forces raided the home of Mohammad Abderaziq and attempted to arrest two children, ages 3 and 5, which was preceded by the detention of three children, ages 10 to 11, on 15 December, among other such incidents. The arrests perpetrated in the recent period are adding to the ranks of Palestinians suffering Israel's imprisonment and detention, who now number more than 6,000 people, including men, women, children and elected officials, all suffering inhumane conditions, assaults to their person and dignity and ill-treatment in all forms, much of it amounting to torture, by the occupying Power. In addition, Israel, the occupying Power, continues its illegal colonization campaign throughout the occupied Palestinian land, especially in East Jerusalem, constructing and expanding its settlements and the Wall, confiscating more Palestinian land and demolishing Palestinian homes and properties. The Silwan neighbourhood of East Jerusalem also continues to suffer from these illegal and destructive Israeli policies, with several homes receiving demolition orders from the occupying Power on 14 December, in addition to the issuance, on 17 December, of demolition orders for 11 homes in Silwan. Another eight Palestinian families in the Al-Khalil area have been issued so-called "stop construction" orders by the occupying Power, while on 3 December, occupying forces served demolition orders for a group of tents housing several families in Al-Khalil. Further examples include the Israeli designation of hundreds of acres of Palestinian land in the West Bank near Salfit as so-called "nature preserves", a repeated prelude to the confiscation of land. Also, on 9 December, the occupying Power undertook measures to illegally expropriate 321 dunums of Palestinian land in an area west of Ramallah, and declared another 10,000 dunums of Palestinian land in the northern Jordan Valley as a so-called "closed military zone", yet another repeated scheme for the confiscation of Palestinian land. Such ongoing aggressive and illegal behaviour by the Israeli military and Government has only further emboldened the illegal Israeli settlers transferred to the land of the State of Palestine, including East Jerusalem, resulting in the escalation of crimes and terror by extremist settlers against innocent Palestinian civilians on a daily basis and with total impunity and under the protection of the Israeli occupying forces. This period has witnessed the following violent and destructive acts by extremist Israeli settlers: the running over of Palestinian civilians, including children; the stoning of and assaults on Palestinian civilians, especially shepherds and children; the harassment and intimidation of Palestinian families; and the uprooting, burning and destruction of olive trees.

Just yesterday, 18 December, a 6-year-old boy was run over and injured by a settler in his car west of Ramallah, and on the same day, Israeli settlers cut electricity lines and defiled Palestinian homes with racist graffiti in the village of Burin, south of Nablus, where, days earlier, settlers had destroyed olive trees, damaged four electricity poles and smashed several light poles. On 16 December, a Palestinian woman was injured after being hit by a settler's car east of Qalqilya, and on the same day, a Palestinian child was injured after being run over by a settler in Bethlehem. On 15 December, extremist settlers stoned residents and vehicles near the illegal "Beit El" settlement in the Ramallah area. Such intimidation and violence have become a pattern, having been perpetrated days before, as well, in Ramallah and also in Bethlehem, Ein Dweik, Al-Jiflik village and elsewhere in the West Bank. In addition, on 6 December, Israeli settlers uprooted at least 50 olive trees in Aqraba village. Extremist Israeli settlers also continue their provocations and incitement in Occupied East Jerusalem, and continue their hostile incursions into Al-Haram Al-Sharif and their attempts to desecrate the Holy Al-Aqsa Mosque. Undermining the historic status quo at the compound and the recent understandings reached under the supervision of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for respect of this Holy Site, the Israeli occupying forces continue to allow extremist settlers to storm the compound on a near daily basis. One recent incident occurred on 14 December, when 15 extremist Israeli settlers entered the compound, guarded by occupying forces, provoking Palestinian worshippers and trying to climb onto the Dome of the Rock while making provocative gestures. Such actions continue to provoke and to stoke religious tensions, with very dangerous consequences.

At the same time, the grave situation in the Gaza Strip continues to deteriorate as the effects of the humanitarian disaster inflicted by Israel, the occupying Power, in July and August, as well as by its ongoing blockade, remain without remedy, deepening hardships for the Palestinian civilian population, in addition to the suffering they have already endured. Civilian lives continue to be threatened by unexploded ordnance left behind by the Israeli aggression. On 18 December, another Palestinian, a young 20-year-old man, was killed and four others were wounded by the explosion in Rafah, in southern Gaza, of an Israeli missile, one among the thousands of pieces of unexploded ordnance left behind by the occupying Power that continue to endanger lives and obstruct reconstruction.

In this regard, it was recently [reported](#) by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) that more than twice as many refugee family homes in Gaza than had been originally estimated were damaged or destroyed in the Israeli military aggression last summer. Following a comprehensive assessment carried out by UNRWA teams, it has been determined that more than 96,000 homes were damaged or destroyed. Such immense reconstruction needs and the correlating humanitarian needs of the families that have been affected have prompted the Agency to issue a \$414 million emergency appeal to meet the growing needs of refugees as a result of this crisis. We urge that this appeal be met with compassion and generosity by the international community to help alleviate the deep suffering of our people at this extremely difficult time, including widespread displacement and homelessness, medical needs, food insecurity and psychosocial trauma as a result of the recent war in Gaza.

In closing, I reiterate the appeals of the Palestinian people and their Government for the international community, including the Security Council, to act now and exert the necessary efforts to redress this grave and unjust situation. Israel, the occupying Power, cannot be permitted to persist with its violations of international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, without consequence. In this regard, we wish to recognize the Conference of High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention, convened by Switzerland in its capacity as the depositary State of the Geneva Conventions and held on 17 December 2014, and to recall the [declaration](#) adopted by the High Contracting Parties, which called once again on Israel, the occupying Power, "to fully and effectively respect the Fourth Geneva Convention in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem", and emphasized that "all serious violations of international humanitarian law must be investigated and that all those responsible should be brought to justice".

We urge the international community to uphold its political, legal and moral obligations and to transform these words into action to hold Israel accountable for its decades of violations and crimes against the Palestinian people and to bring an end to these violations. Ending these gross violations is imperative for the de-escalation of tensions, for facilitating needed humanitarian access and assistance to the Palestinian people, and for fostering an environment conducive to the pursuit of peace, to which the Palestinian leadership remains fully committed and for which it reiterates its appeal to the Security Council to uphold its responsibilities in this regard.

This letter is in follow-up to our 530 letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which constitutes the State of Palestine. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 ([A/55/432-5/2000/921](#)) to 10 December 2014 ([A/ES-10/667-5/2014/881](#)), constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed against the Palestinian people. Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice. I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) **Riyad Mansour**
Ambassador, Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine
to the United Nations