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QUESTION OF PALESTINE

SECURITY COUNCIL
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Letter dated 4 November 1983 from the Chairman of the
Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the
Palestinian People addressed to the Secretary-General

As Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, I wish to express the profound concern caused to the Committee by the decision of the Israeli authorities to close down Bethlehem University in the occupied Palestinian Arab territory of the West Bank. On 3 November 1983, The New York Times reported that Bethlehem University had been shut down for two months with the approval of the Israeli Minister of Defence, Moshe Arens. The closing was based partly on an exhibition entitled "Palestinian Heritage", held recently in the University, which contained material considered inflammatory by the authorities. Student council members responsible for the exhibition were arrested and a demonstration was held last Tuesday to protest this arrest.

It was further reported that in announcing the closing the co-ordinator of Israeli activities in the West Bank had added that Israel intended to respond with extreme severity in the future to any manifestation of breaches of order" in the occupied territories.

The repressive policy pursued by Israel can only aggravate the already extremely tense situation in the occupied Palestinian Arab territories and thereby increase the threat to international peace and security in the region.

It is therefore urgent that the strictest respect for the relevant resolutions of the United Nations should be ensured, in particular those aimed at enabling the Palestinian people to exercise their inalienable rights.

I should be grateful if you would arrange for this letter to be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 33, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Massamba SARRE
Chairman of the Committee on the
Exercise of the Inalienable Rights
of the Palestinian People