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COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Sub-Commission on Prevention of
Discrimination and Protection
of Minorities
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Agenda item 6

QUESTION OF THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS,
INCLUDING POLICIES OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION AND SEGREGATION AND OF
APARTHEID, IN ALL COUNTRIES, WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO COLONIAL
AND OTHER DEPENDENT COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES

Note Verbale dated 9 August 1988 from the Permanent Mission of Algeria
to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the Sub-Commission
on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities
transmitting a memorandum [and attachments] dated 8 August 1988 from
the Palestine Liberation Organization addressed to the Chairman of
the Sub-Commission.

The Permanent Mission of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria to the United Nations Office at Geneva presents its compliments to the Secretariat of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities and has the honour to transmit herewith a memorandum from the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). It requests that it be circulated as an official document of the fortieth session of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities.

Permanent Mission of Algeria
to the United Nations Office at Geneva

Annex I

Your Excellency,

As you know, Israel has always rejected the resolutions adopted by the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, by the Commission on Human Rights or by the United Nations General Assembly, related to the Israeli violations of Human Rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

Ignoring the principles and provisions of international law, and with the feeling that it is protected by a super-Power, Israel has gone beyond the violations of human rights, and has started to perpetrate crimes against humanity and crimes of war; this is well-known to all the international community and to the international bodies, particularly since the beginning of December 1987.

The Israeli occupation authorities have been perpetrating all sorts of crimes against humanity, by:

- (1) Killing Palestinian civilians by using several ways and means, all with the clear aim of killing;
- (2) Attacking pregnant Palestinian women and provoking miscarriages, with the clear aim of doing so;
- (3) Attacking Palestinian civilians and breaking their bones; etc. ...

The Israeli occupation authorities have also been perpetrating crimes of war by:

- (1) Imposing long-period curfews and sieges;
- (2) Arresting indiscriminately and detaining a large number of Palestinian civilians without charges or trial;
- (3) Imposing inhuman life-conditions inside detention camps and practising torture against detainees;
- (4) Demolishing houses as a measure of collective punishment; etc. ...

All these crimes have been perpetrated by the Israeli occupation authorities in violation of the principles of international law, and in total disregard of the will of the International community and of the resolutions of the General Assembly and of the Security Council, that call upon Israel to stop forthwith such practices against the Palestinian people.

As this distinguished Sub-Commission is well-aware about all these facts, and well-informed by all the international bodies about the Israeli practices, we should like to bring to your attention some examples and figures about the crimes perpetrated by Israel against the Palestinian people since December 1987:

- 354 Palestinian civilians have been killed (by bullet, gas or beatings);
- 12,500 have been injured, 5,000 of them handicapped for life;
- 23,000 administrative detainees;
- 1,800 miscarriages due to gas or beatings;
- 28 Palestinian civilians have been deported;
- 550 Palestinian houses have been demolished as a measure of collective punishment.

We, hereby, request you to distribute the present memorandum together with the attached 15-page compilation of documents-examples of Israeli crimes perpetrated against the Palestinian civilians in the occupied Palestinian territories, as an official document of the fortieth session of the Sub-Commission, to the members of this Sub-Commission, to be discussed for action.

I should like to take this opportunity to renew to you, Your Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Nabil RAMLAWI
Director
Permanent Observer of the PLO to the
United Nations Organization

Annex II

Use of live bullets and rubber bullets

Since the beginning of December 1987, the Israeli occupation forces have been using live ammunition and rubber bullets against unarmed civilians in the occupied Palestinian territories, killing hundreds of people, and injuring thousands of them. Among the killed Palestinian civilians, there is a majority of teenagers and children, but also women, babies and elderly.

The Israeli occupation forces, but also often Israeli civilian settlers, have been indiscriminately shooting at the Palestinian civilians either during demonstrations or at any other moment. These practices have been used on a daily basis since eight months.

The majority of the wounds due to live or rubber bullets are situated in the chest, head or back, which proves that the Israeli occupation forces deliberately shoot with the aim of killing.

Since March 1988, a new kind of weapon has been used by the Israeli occupation forces: grenades thrown by helicopters, that explode once they touch the ground, firing tens of rubber bullets at a time. This new weapon causes especially very bad wounds, according to testimonies of medical teams in the occupied Palestinian territories.

Use of tear-gas and toxic gas

Since the beginning of December 1987, the Israeli occupation forces have been using tear-gas and other sorts of toxic gas indiscriminately against the Palestinian civilian population in the occupied Palestinian territories.

The gas is used not only during demonstrations but also inside houses, clinics, hospitals and mosques, causing a great number of casualties. A great number of deaths have occurred due to the gas; many of the victims are little children and even new-born babies, as the gas bombs are thrown inside houses, hospitals and clinics.

The misuse of this tear-gas and toxic gas has been attested by many international bodies and delegations in several reports, among them UNRWA and Amnesty International.

In a confidential report No. 988405 dated 16 February 1988, UNRWA doctors certified the death of a 4-month-old baby girl, Rana Youssef ODWAN, who died of suffocation when Israeli soldiers shot a gas bomb inside her house. Moreover, in a statement issued on 13 April 1988, Dr. John Hiddlestone, Director of the Health Division of UNRWA, gave a detailed description of the use of tear- and toxic gas and of their murderous effects on the Palestinian civilian population.

Amnesty International issued, on 1 June 1988, a 6-page report on this subject, under reference MDE/15/26/88. The report was followed by a press release issued by Amnesty International on 23 June 1988, on the misuse of tear-gas by the Israeli occupation forces. Both in the report and in the press release, concrete cases of death due to gas are reported.

Among the victims of this practice, many pregnant women who miscarried or gave birth to stillborn babies after having inhaled such gas, thrown inside closed areas.

On many occasions, the use of gas by the Israeli occupation forces have been made in a particular and most cruel way: on Friday, 15 January 1988, the Israeli occupation forces stormed the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem and used live bullets and gas bombs against the worshippers gathered for the Friday prayers. During this attack, about 100 people were injured, many of them seriously, and parts of the mosque were burned. On the bomb cannisters found in the mosque after the attack, one could read the warning: "1. They are incendiary; 2. They can cause death; 3. Their use is prohibited in closed areas."

Moreover, since February 1988, on many occasions, the Israeli occupation forces imposed curfews on refugee camps and villages, obliged the inhabitants to enter their houses by force, then shot gas bombs inside the houses, thus causing a very great number of casualties among defenceless civilians. This happened, among others, in Gaza city, Jabalia camp, Beit-Lahya and Beit-Hanoun.

In addition, on several occasions, the Israeli occupation forces have used unknown "experimental" gas having effects never seen before. According to reports of medical teams in the occupied Palestinian territories, patients have reached the hospitals presenting symptoms unknown so far, after having inhaled such gas.

Beatings, "broken bones policy"

Since January 1988, the Israeli occupation authorities have started to implement their new policy of "might, power and beatings" according to the declaration of Israeli Defence Minister, Yitzhak Rabin. This "broken bones" campaign of terror consists in catching people anywhere in the streets or in their homes, and breaking their bones (arms, legs and skull), savagely beating them with truncheons or rifle butts "to prevent them from throwing stones". This policy has claimed a very large number of victims, sometimes whole families, old people or even handicapped people, suffering multiple fractures. This same policy has resulted in a great number of cases of miscarriage among pregnant women.

The whole world has witnessed the use of these barbaric practices through the CBS news film end of February 1988.

As an example of this policy, one can state the case of a 50-year-old disabled man, who breathed through a tube inserted through his windpipe after a throat cancer operation and who has remained unconscious for two days in Al-Ahli hospital in Gaza, with multiple fractures and wounds after being beaten by Israeli soldiers in Jabalia refugee camp.

Besides, on 19 January, a list of people injured in Jabalia camp, showed 12 members of a single family, aged between 10 and 54, who were treated in a United Nations clinic for severe beatings.

On the same day, the acting head of UNRWA in Gaza, Mrs. Angela Williams, was reporting that two old men, aged 75 and 85, were treated at UNRWA clinics in Jabalia after being beaten on the head. Mrs Williams said: "We are deeply shocked by the evidence of the brutality with which people are evidently being beaten; we are especially shocked by the beatings of old men and women".

Attacks against pregnant women - miscarriages

Since January 1988, the Israeli occupation forces have adopted one more cowardly policy against the Palestinian civilians: they have started to systematically attack pregnant women and beat them up, until many of them miscarry.

Within a few days since the beginning of this policy, tens of pregnant women have miscarried or given birth to stillborn babies as a result of savage beatings, or deliberate use of tear-gas inside their homes.

A number of medical reports of the medical teams working in the hospitals in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip mention these cases.

All the cases of miscarriage due to violence concern women between the third and the ninth month of pregnancy.

So far, 1,800 such cases of miscarriages have been reported.

Attacks against hospitals - attacks against medical teams and ambulances

Since the beginning of their campaign of terror, the Israeli occupation authorities have used a particularly cruel policy consisting of attacking hospitals and clinics, storming them, beating up patients and medical staff. On many occasions, the Israeli occupation forces have raided hospitals in the occupied Palestinian territories and savagely beaten up the staff as well as the wounded patients. Moreover, many times injured persons have been arrested inside the hospitals and taken to detention centres. This happened many times in Shifa hospital (Gaza city), Nasr hospital (Khan Younis), the "Women's Union Hospital" in Nablus and others.

Besides, the Israeli occupation forces often prevent ambulances from driving the injured people to the hospitals, or from entering the villages and refugee camps during curfews. They attack the ambulance crews or even shoot at the ambulances' tyres. On several occasions, the Israeli soldiers have also attacked people gathered in front of the hospitals to give blood.

The Israeli occupation authorities also arrest doctors and medical teams, and close down hospitals; in mid-July 1988, the hospitals of Jenin, Tulkarem and Jericho, the Al-Hussein hospital in Beit-Jalla as well as the National Hospital in Nablus have been closed. This measure aimed at depriving tens of thousands of Palestinians of health services, and one can easily imagine the sufferings resulting from such a measure particularly in the current situation, when every single hospital is needed to assist the huge number of daily victims of the Israeli aggression (injured persons, victims of gas effects, etc.).

Finally, according to reports of witnesses, the Israeli occupation authorities have been using another hideous method consisting of taking injured people, transporting them to Israeli hospitals, prohibiting any visit

or information about them; then they announce their death and give back the bodies to the families, after having removed transplantable organs from them (heart, kidneys, etc.). This practice is mentioned in a report issued by the EAFORD (the International Organization for the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination), after a visit of a delegation in the occupied Palestinian territories in March-April 1988. The EAFORD report also describes all kinds of attacks against hospitals and clinics in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Curfews - Starvation policy

The Israeli occupation authorities have, on many occasions and for long periods, attempted to starve out the Palestinian population of the refugee camps, by imposing total siege and long-period curfews. The Israeli occupation authorities have also cut off water and electricity in many refugee camps and villages, as, for example, in Nuseirat camp, Khan Younis and Bani Suheila (for one week, 26 April to 2 May). They have, moreover, proceeded to the destruction of water supplies in Beit-Tamar and other villages.

Moreover, the Israeli occupation authorities isolated the Palestinian Occupied Territories for more than two months (mid-February to end of April), declaring them closed military areas, thus permitting the military authorities to act as they liked, without any sort of control and without witnesses.

Another policy used by the Israeli occupation authorities against the Palestinian people in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip was the policy of starving out the refugee camps. Not only did the Israeli occupation authorities impose long-period curfews on the refugee camps, but they also prevented food supplies delivery and distribution during the 45-minute lifting of curfews. The Israeli occupation soldiers also caught women who managed to take some food in the camps, confiscated their bags and baskets and destroyed the supplies.

According to UNRWA release dated 21 January 1988, there was serious shortage of food supplies in many camps of the Gaza Strip during that month, and more particularly shortage of milk powder for children in the Jabalia camp (Revolution camp) - where live 56,000 people.

Curfews and sieges have been imposed nearly every week since the beginning of December 1987, in all parts of the occupied Palestinian territories.

Arrests, administrative detention, detention camps, torture

Since December 1987, thousands of Palestinians, among which a great number of teenagers, have been arrested by the Israeli occupation authorities and put under administrative detention (without charges and without trial). Due to the great number of detainees, new detention camps have been opened, where the life conditions reach dangerous and intolerable limits.

One of these camps, Ansar III, was opened in March 1988 in the Negev desert. Three thousand Palestinian detainees, belonging to all classes of the Palestinian society, are kept therein, under unbearable conditions. The detainees suffer from the scorching heat, and there is shortage of water which

causes dehydration and skin diseases. Moreover, the detainees' lives are threatened by the presence of a big number of snakes and poisonous insects found most frequently under their beds.

The conditions in Ansar III and in the other detention camps have been described in many reports, among them the report published in the "Peace Courier" of the World Peace Council, in which the Israeli lawyer Naila Hateia describes the life conditions in Ansar III as "a form of torture". In the same issue is published an appeal from the "Camp of Slow Death"; the appeal was written on toilet paper in May 1988, and signed "The Palestinian detainees at the Camp of Slow Death Ansar Three/The Negev". Copy of the appeal is attached herewith.

Other kinds of torture are used by the Israeli occupation forces, like the one reported in the Israeli daily Al Hamishmar issue of 13 July: the Israeli soldiers in Rafah captured a number of Palestinian youths, took them out of the city, beat them savagely, then tied them up and threw them on prickly pears. The young Palestinians suffered serious sores on their bodies due to the prickles and to insect bites on the bleeding sores.

Besides, all kinds of physical as well as psychological torture are practised against the Palestinian population and against the Palestinian detainees in the detention camps.

APPEAL FROM THE "CAMP OF SLOW DEATH"

The following letter was smuggled out of the Ansar Three camp in May, written on toilet paper.

To all people of conscience:

To all defenders of human rights:

We call upon you to rescue us from the Camp of Slow Death,
Ansar Three, the Negev

We, the thousands of Palestinian prisoners in Ansar Three, have been detained without any judicial formalities whatsoever. We have not even been told the charges which have been levelled against us. We are kept in inhuman desert conditions where the daytime temperature reaches 45°C and drops below zero at night, in an area teeming with lizards, insects and rats.

But this hardship is nothing compared with the cruelty and arbitrary brutality of the soldiers. A physical and mental war is being conducted against us through starvation, thirst, humiliation and physical and psychological torture. Their behaviour breaks all international conventions governing the treatment of prisoners, and reflects a lack of even the most basic moral and human values.

We are forced to keep our tents open from 5 a.m. to midnight, exposed to the searing heat of the sun and the sandstorms of the desert. Two or three times a day we are made to sit outside under the scorching sun, for periods of up to half an hour, under the muzzles of our captors' guns.

Water is scarce, and is cut off for many hours each day. There is barely sufficient for drinking, washing, and twice-monthly baths in this

suffocating heat. We have only one change of clothing, and we are forbidden to receive clothes or other necessities from our families. Neither are we provided with items for washing clothes.

Our health is deteriorating and we are suffering physical deterioration and disease; health care is virtually non-existent.

In addition we are totally isolated; our families are not allowed to visit us, we are not allowed to send or receive letters, and we are forbidden radios, newspapers, magazines, books, writing paper and pencils.

We are being subjected to punitive measures which aim to crush our human spirit and deny our social selves. We are not even given those rights contained in the law of administrative detention.

We call upon you to stand by us, and to call for an end to the organized violence and humiliation which is leading us to a slow death. The peace and justice which the people of the Holy Land long for is being strangled in this evil place.

We urge you to organize humanitarian groups to visit this murderous detention centre; and to work for its closure.

We call upon you to stand on the side of humanity.

May the world hear our voice.

May 1988

The Palestinian detainees at the Camp of
Slow Death Ansar Three/The Negev

Kidnapping - Burying people alive

On Monday morning, 1 February, the Israeli occupation troops entered the Dheisheh refugee camp in the occupied West Bank, stormed a big number of houses and kidnapped 30 Palestinian children. The 30 children were taken by the Israeli soldiers to an unknown destination.

On the evening of Friday, 5 February 1988, Israeli settlers entered the Salem village (near Nablus), kidnapped a number of Palestinian youths and took them to an unknown destination. Later inhabitants of the village saw bulldozers of the Israeli army opening graves near the village. In the early morning, the inhabitants of the village found four of the kidnapped youths buried alive in these graves. They all suffered multiple fractures and were brought to Ariha hospital. The four youths were: Hassan Mohammad Saïd Hamdan (aged 19) - Abdellatif Ahmad Eshtiya (aged 15) - Issam Shafiq Eshtiya (aged 20) and Zakaria Mohammad Saïd Hamdan (aged 20).

On 20 February, two more Palestinian youths were buried alive by the Israeli occupation soldiers in Khan Younis (Gaza Strip): Saleh Mousa Hamad, aged 17, and Adel Mass'oud, aged 18, were found by the inhabitants of Khan Younis and transported to hospital in a very critical condition.

On the evening of Monday, 7 March, a group of Israeli settlers kidnapped four Palestinian youths from the village of Beit-Wasan near Nablus, and took

them to an unknown destination. The four kidnapped youths were: Khaled Ahmed Abu Aeisha, aged 22 - Mahmoud Yusef Abd-El-Haq, aged 28 - Abed Shehadeh Abu Aeisha, aged 22 and Samer Atta Abu Aeisha, aged 18. Another two youths were also kidnapped in Jabalia refugee camp: Amad Issa, aged 18, was kidnapped and later found 3 kilometres away from the camp, with broken limbs. Hossam Musbah, aged 18, was kidnapped and not found.

Demolition of houses

This collective punishment which has been used by the Israeli occupation authorities for a long time, has continued since December 1987, and so far, more than 550 Palestinian houses have been demolished.

The most recent case of demolition of houses occurred in 3 August, when 10 Palestinian houses were demolished by the Israeli occupation forces in Ramallah and Hebron.

Following the incident that happened in Beta village on Wednesday, 6 April 1988, when a group of Israeli settlers provoked a clash with Palestinian youths in the village, and when an Israeli girl of the group and two Palestinian youths were shot and killed by a member of the settlers' group, and despite the clear evidence about the responsibility of the settler, Roman Aldubi, for the death of the girl, despite also the evidence that the inhabitants of the village had saved the other children of the settlers' group, hiding them in their houses, the Israeli occupation authorities demolished 14 Palestinian houses in the village as a measure of collective punishment.

Demolitions of houses also occur when the Israeli occupation authorities accuse a member of a family, even if it is but a small child, of throwing stones at the soldiers. Then the house of the family is destroyed as a measure of collective punishment.

Closure of schools and universities

One more collective punishment implemented by the Israeli occupation authorities in the occupied Palestinian territories is the closure of schools, colleges and universities, thus preventing the Palestinian youth from getting normal and correct education.

All schools and universities have remained closed for very long periods, and some of them were changed into military centres and prisons: the Ibrahimiya college in Jerusalem is now a prison, the Shuweikeh school is a military centre.

Attacks against holy mosques - attacks against worshippers

On Friday, 15 January 1988, the Israeli occupation forces attacked a number of mosques in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. More particularly, the Israeli troops stormed the Al-Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem, and opened fire on the worshippers gathered for the Friday prayers. The Israeli troops used live bullets as well as gas bombs to attack the worshippers. The gas bombs were United States-made bombs, carrying the mention: "They are incendiary; they can cause death; their use is prohibited in closed areas". During the attack, about 100 people were injured and parts of the mosque were burned.

Since, many attacks of the same kind have been perpetrated against mosques throughout the occupied Palestinian territories and worshippers killed or wounded by the Israeli occupation forces.

Deportations

Since December 1987, 28 Palestinian citizens have been deported by the Israeli occupation authorities in total disregard of all the provisions of the international law, the international humanitarian law, the Geneva Conventions and the United Nations resolutions. The 28 deported Palestinians are:

1. Jibril Mahmoud RAJOUB (from Dura - Hebron district)
2. Beshir Ahmad KHAYRI (from Ramallah)
3. Hussam Othman Mohammad KHODR (from Balata refugee camp)
4. Jamal Abdallah JEBARA (from Kalkilya)
5. Freij Ahmad AL-KHAYRI (from Gaza)
6. Hassan ABU SHAKRA (from Khan Younis)
7. Adel Beshir Mahmoud NAFE' (from Kalandia refugee camp)
8. Mohammad ABU SAMRA (from Gaza)
9. Jamal Shabi HINDI (from Jenin)
10. Abdelaziz ODEH (from Gaza)
11. Abdelnasser MOHAMMAD (from Jenin)
12. Khalil Ibrahim KUKA (from Gaza)
13. Omar Mohammad Saïd DAOUD (from Beta)
14. Mahmoud Eid Ibrahim Bani SHAMSI (from Beta)
15. Najeh Jamil Saadeh DWAIKAT (from Beta)
16. Mustafa Mahmoud Hamdan HAMAYEL (from Beta)
17. Sari Hilal Taher HAMAYEL (from Beta)
18. Ibrahim Khodr ALI (from Beta)
19. Ahmad Fawzi Khaled AL-DEEK (from Kfar Al-Deek)
20. Ghassan Ali Izzat MASRI (from Ramallah)
21. Luai Ali Nafa' ABDU (from Nablus)
22. Sami SUBEIHAT (from Jenin)
23. Jamal Diab ABU-LATIFA (from Kalandia refugee camp)

24. Morsi Abdelhadi AWILA (from Kalandia refugee camp)
25. Mohammad AL-LABADI (from El-Bireh)
26. Mahmoud Radwan ZIADEH (from Hebron)
27. Ziad NAHALAH (from Gaza)
28. Jamal ZAQOUT (from Gaza)