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THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Letter dated 30 September 1976 from the Permanent Representative
of Yemen to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 28 September 1976 from Mr. Zehdi Labib Terzi, Permanent Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization to the United Nations, addressed to Your Excellency and request that it be circulated as an official document of the General Assembly under agenda item 29.

(Signed) Mohamed A. SALLAM
Ambassador Extraordinary
and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative of the Yemen Arab Republic
to the United Nations

ANNEX

Letter dated 28 September 1976 from the Permanent Observer of the
Palestine Liberation Organization to the United Nations addressed
to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions of Mr. Yassir Arafat, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization, I have the honour to convey to you the following information:

On 26 September 1976, at a distance of 12 miles from the port of Sidon, two Israeli warships intercepted the Lebanese-owned Cypriot ship Phoenicia, which was carrying a number of Palestinian citizens en route to Limassol, Cyprus, from Sidon, Lebanon. The Zionist vessels, having approached the ship from either side, proceeded to ram it, causing five holes to open in the ship's hull. From their warships, the Israelis fired at the Phoenicia and damaged its motor. Thereafter, Israeli helicopters flew over the crippled ship as it continued its journey. From these helicopters, the Zionists conveyed by loud-speakers repeated warnings that if the ship returned to the ports of Tyre or Sidon, it would be sunk. The Phoenicia continued its voyage and arrived at Limassol at 8.30 a.m. on 27 September.

It is to be noted that the foregoing is the fourth incident of its kind. The Baraka was sunk in the harbour of Tyre and another vessel, the Mouin, was sunk in Tripoli harbour by Israeli forces.

I am further instructed to request that concrete and immediate steps be taken to put an end to such acts of piracy, which further endanger peace and security in the region.

(Signed) Zehdi Labib TERZI
Permanent Observer
