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Letter dated 18 December 1990 from the Chairman of the Committee
on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian
People addressed to the Secretary-General

In my capacity as Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, I wish to condemn the resumption by Israel, the occupying Power, of its policy of deporting Palestinians from the occupied Palestinian territory.

According to The New York Times of 16 and 17 December 1990, the Israeli Defence Minister has ordered the deportation of four residents of the Gaza Strip suspected of being middle-ranking leaders of Hamas (the Islamic Resistance Movement). They are Imad al-Almi, 34 years old, of Gaza City; Fadel Zaabut, 36, a teacher at the Islamic College in Gaza City; Mustafa al-Lidani, 25, of Jabaliya refugee camp; and Sheik Mustafa Knuah, 45, also of Jabaliya. The deportations were ordered following the slaying of three Israeli workers in Jaffa on 14 December. No specific charges, however, have been brought against the four Palestinians. In its search for the perpetrators of the killing, the Israeli army is reported to have arrested more than 1,000 Palestinians in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip over the weekend, in the largest sweep since the early days of the intifadah.

The New York Times also reported that the Israeli Defence Minister has pledged to deport more Palestinians from the occupied Palestinian territory in the future. Since the beginning of the intifadah, Israel has deported at least 59 Palestinians, in violation of the relevant provisions of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 12 August 1949 and several resolutions of the Security Council.

The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People is gravely concerned at the escalation of violence in the occupied

Palestinian territory and at the increasing imposition of collective punishment measures against the Palestinians by the Israeli authorities. Following the events in Jerusalem in early October, Israel has repeatedly closed the occupied Palestinian territory, preventing Palestinians from entering Israel and Jerusalem. On 20 November, the Jerusalem Post reported that 10,000 Palestinians previously jailed during the intifadah, would be issued green identity cards barring them permanently from entering Israel. According to the Washington Post of 15 December 1990, thousands of workers have been dismissed, and their jobs taken over by Jewish immigrants from the Soviet Union. Reuters reported on 21 November 1990 that military authorities were again stepping up punitive house demolitions, and that 11 houses had been destroyed and 8 sealed in the West Bank and Gaza Strip in the preceding two weeks. Al Fajr of 3 December 1990 reported that four Palestinian universities in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, closed since the beginning of the intifadah, were ordered closed for another three months in early December. On 12 December 1990, it was reported by Ha'aretz that a new tactic had been adopted of stationing military sharpshooters in hidden places in the West Bank in order to shoot stone-throwers.

These increasingly repressive measures are being taken against a background of total intransigence by the Israeli Government towards efforts to promote a just political settlement. The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People strongly deplores statements made by Mr. Yitzhak Shamir, Prime Minister of Israel, in late November reportedly expressing his Government's commitment to the ideal of an Israeli State from the Mediterranean Sea to the Jordan River and linking the continuation of occupation with the need to absorb Jewish immigrants from the Soviet Union and elsewhere.

In light of these very disturbing developments, the Committee wishes to reaffirm the imperative need to provide effective protection for the Palestinians in the occupied Palestinian territory and to promote a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the question of Palestine, the core of the Middle East conflict, through the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East, as reaffirmed by the General Assembly in its resolution 45/68 of 6 December 1990.

I should be grateful if you would arrange for this letter to be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 23, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Absa Claude DIALLO
Chairman of the
Committee on the Exercise of
the Inalienable Rights of the
Palestinian People

