

UNITED NATIONS



GENERAL
ASSEMBLY



SECURITY
COUNCIL

Distr.
GENERAL

A/35/60
S/13732
10 January 1980

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Thirty-fifth session
REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO
INVESTIGATE ISRAELI PRACTICES
AFFECTING THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF
THE POPULATION OF THE OCCUPIED
TERRITORIES

SECURITY COUNCIL
Thirty-fifth year

Letter dated 9 January 1980 from the Chargé d'Affaires a.i.
of the Permanent Mission of Jordan to the United Nations
addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to express my Government's deep concern over the Israeli continuous measures to demolish historical Islamic places and evacuate Arab inhabitants, due to extensive excavations inside the walls of the Old City of Jerusalem as manifested by the following:

On 8 December 1979, Israeli radio announced that an Islamic building, owned by the Al Mu'aqit family had collapsed. The building lies in the Bab Al-Hadid area which lies inside the walls of the Old City of Jerusalem. The reason as stated by the Israeli authorities was the heavy rainfall during that time.

Two days later, on 10 December 1979, the Arabic newspapers, Al-Sha'b and Al-Fajr, issued in Jerusalem, gave a different version of this incident. They revealed that the main reason of the collapse of this building was the excavations carried out by the Israeli authorities underneath it and under the surrounding areas. They also concluded that the collapse of the building will lead to the destruction of all adjacent Waqf properties which amount to 26 buildings and are inhabited by 222 Arab Jerusalamites.

To realize the gravity of this incident, one has to imagine that these Waqf buildings lie in Housh Al-Nasara, known as Housh Al-Dnf, in the centre of Bab Al-Hadid which is about thirty metres from the entrance of Al-Aran Al-Sharif, whereas Bab Al-Hadid itself lies in the middle of four quarters adjacent to Al-Haram Al-Sharif, namely, Bab Al Silsilah, Bab Al Qatineen, Bab Al-Habs and a part of Al-Widi Quarter. The collapse of these quarters will entail the collapse and destruction of nearly 300 historical Waqf buildings. Indeed, it will lead to a historical catastrophe because they represent a unique symbol of Arab and Islamic civilization.

It is the considered judgement of my Government that illegal excavations undertaken by Israel represent a violation of the Geneva Convention of 1949, 1/ and the relevant United Nations resolutions on the protection and preservation of religious and historical landmarks.

It is the earnest hope of my Government that Your Excellency would exert your utmost efforts towards bringing about a cessation of these illegal acts which endanger Islamic Holy Places in the Old City of Jerusalem.

I have the honour to request that this letter be circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under the item entitled "Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories", and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Saleh A. AL-ZUBI
Minister Plenipotentiary
Chargé d'Affaires a.i.

1/ United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 75, No. 973, p. 287.