



UNITED NATIONS  
SECURITY  
COUNCIL



Distr.  
GENERAL

S/13815  
22 February 1980  
ENGLISH  
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH/FRENCH

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LETTER DATED 22 FEBRUARY 1980 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE  
OF MOROCCO TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF  
THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to transmit to you, herewith, a message from the Secretary-  
General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, His Excellency  
Mr. Habib Chatti.

I request you to have it circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Abdellatif FILALI  
Ambassador, Permanent Representative  
Chairman of the Islamic Group

Annex

Message from the Secretary-General of the Organization  
of the Islamic Conference addressed to the President  
of the Security Council

In connexion with the meeting of the Security Council, I consider it my duty respectfully to draw your attention and the attention of the members of the Council, on behalf of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, which includes more than 40 Moslem countries, to the extremely grave events now taking place in the town of Hebron, the violations of its inhabitants' freedom and the repeated desecration of a Moslem holy place, the Great Mosque known as the Haram Al-Ibrahimi.

Since 31 January 1980 the town of Hebron has been encircled and cut off from the outside world. Hundreds of inhabitants have been arrested and brutally mistreated during interrogations conducted in violation of the most elementary rights of people. They have been the target of continual harassment and acts of humiliation at the hands of the Israeli settlers established on the outskirts of the town. Inhabitants by the hundreds have been taken from their homes by force and subjected to searches lasting for hours, most of the time in the pouring rain.

Resuming the practices begun after the Six-Day War, the settlers have dared to enter the Haram Al-Ibrahimi, desecrated this holy place of Islam and destroyed copies of the Koran.

The acts of desecration committed by the Israelis at the Ibrahimi Mosque since November 1967 are beyond counting: bands of settlers enter at the hour of devotions to disturb the prayers of the believers by their liturgical chants, the holding of weddings and the installation of chapels for every other kind of ceremony.

Israeli demonstrators make incursions from time to time and desecrate Moslem objects of worship, particularly the Koran. Several copies of the Holy Book have been destroyed or torn in the presence of persons responsible for Moslem worship, and most of the time these persons have been molested and humiliated. The believers themselves are not safe from such actions. During their prayers, they are sprayed with gas, and some Israeli demonstrators commit indecent acts or simply shout, thus disturbing the prayers of the faithful.

Moreover, at the request of the Israeli Minister of Agriculture, the Knesset has hastily decided to establish nationals of the Zionist entity at Hebron.

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It is well known that this town, the site of one of Islam's holy places, has remained Arab, even during the British Mandate; although the Crusaders set up a church at Hebron at one time, the Jews never had a religious site belonging to them at Hebron.

For all of these reasons, I request you, Sir, and the members of the Security Council to condemn these anachronistic acts committed by the Israeli occupation authorities, acts contrary to human rights, to the free exercise of religion and to the rights of people to dispose of their heritage, and I request you to take the necessary steps to end a situation which is likely to make more difficult the search for a just and lasting solution of the Palestine problem.

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