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LETTER DATED 29 JULY 1980 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF  
TUNISIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE  
SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a letter from the Permanent  
Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization to the United Nations.

I would request you to have this letter distributed as a Security Council  
document.

(Signed) M'Hamed ESSAAFI  
Ambassador  
Permanent Representative

Annex

Letter dated 25 July 1980 from the Permanent Observer of the  
Palestine Liberation Organization to the United Nations  
addressed to the President of the Security Council

On instructions of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization I am requested to bring to your immediate attention, vis-à-vis Security Council resolution 446 of 22 March 1979, and article 76 of the Fourth Geneva Convention (August 1949) requiring that prisoners "shall enjoy conditions of food and hygiene which will be sufficient to keep them in good health ... they shall receive the medical attention required by their state of health", Israel's grave violation thereof which has directly resulted in the deaths of two young noble Palestinian detainees that were being held in Israeli prisons.

These deaths, and the tragic events which led to the deaths, are inexcusable and cannot be allowed to continue.

On 14 July, 76 Palestinian detainees launched a hunger strike in protest of the abhorrent, inhumane conditions at the Nafha Prison in the Negev Desert. These imprisoned Palestinians of Nafha Prison were kept in extremely small (3.2 square yards per person), overcrowded cells without proper air ventilation, were forced to sleep and eat on the same floor, were only allotted two hours of daily exercise outside their cells, and were given inadequate food and medical attention.

As a result of their noble hunger strike, 25 detainees fell critically ill and were transferred on 21 July to Ramle prison. Israeli prison officials attempted to break their fast by force-feeding the detainees. This resulted in the sad fact that three of our Palestinian brothers inhaled liquid into their lungs.

On Tuesday, 22 July, Ali Shehade Mohamed Al-Jabari died of pneumonia brought on by the liquid that had entered his lungs during the Israeli force-feeding "medical treatment". Yesterday, 24 July, our dear brother, Kassem Mohamed Al-Helwi, fell to the same fate.

Palestinians in support of our imprisoned people demonstrated in Jerusalem at the headquarters of the International Red Cross. They condemned the cruel practices of the Israeli authorities and asked for the closing of Nafha Prison. The occupation forces arrested 26 demonstrators, among whom was the sister of the martyred detainee and another who is the sister of two of the detainees still on strike.

Until now the Israeli authorities have refused to tell when and where they will bury the martyrs.

Sir, in drawing your attention to this serious situation I am requested to urge you to take immediate and effective measures so that not one more Palestinian will suffer the same ignoble death by the Zionist occupation forces.

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We hold the Zionist occupation forces directly and fully responsible for the vicious murder of our two young comrades, and for the fate of our Palestinian brothers still being held in intolerable and inhumane conditions.

(Signed) Zehdi Labib TERZI  
Permanent Observer

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