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REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE ISRAELI
PRACTICES AFFECTING THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE POPULATION
OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

Letter dated 31 January 1979 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 enclose the statement issued by the University of Bir Zeit in the occupied West Bank of Jordan on 1 December 1978. It shows without doubt that the Israeli occupation authorities in the West Bank of Jordan continue to wage their premeditated and organized plan of terrorizing and oppressing the Arab educational community in the West Bank of Jordan, especially the academic life of the University of Bir Zeit. It also shows that the Israeli occupation authorities are carrying out an inquisition-type of campaign against the University's teaching staff, its students and its academic activities.

My Government requests Your Excellency to urge the occupation authorities to desist from and put an end to their oppressive and terrorist practices against the University of Bir Zeit, its teaching staff and students.

My Government kindly requests the circulation of this letter and the enclosed statement of the University of Bir Zeit as a 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".

(Signed) Sami I. GAMMOH
Minister Plenipotentiary
Chargé d'affaires, a.i.

ANNEX

Statement of 1 December 1978 by the University of Beer Zeit

University of Beer Zeit protests renewed harassment by
Israeli military authorities

During the past few weeks, the University of Beer Zeit has been subjected to a new wave of harassment by the Israeli military authorities. Eighteen of the University's students have been arrested or ordered to appear for questioning at the offices of the military authorities throughout the West Bank (for the chronological order of arrests made, see appendix below). So far no charges have been levelled against any of them, although six are still under arrest. Of the 18 students, a substantial number of them were subjected to beating and torture by the authorities.

Hundreds of students are also subjected to harassment on their way to and from the University. At road check-points, their textbooks and collegiate notebooks are inspected and sometimes torn. During "Palestine Week", which the University recently observed, authorities ordered many academic lectures cancelled and prevented one folk singer from coming to the University to participate in the events of the Week.

Israeli authorities are practising a calculated policy designed to make collegiate life at the University of Beer Zeit impossible.

A new approach is being followed by Israeli authorities which has emerged from recent questioning of detained students. Investigators are asking those ordered for questioning to provide them with information on the views of certain persons with regard to the "self-rule plan for the West Bank and the Gaza Strip".

Students who undergo questioning say that investigators tell them that they cannot stay neutral and that they "are either with us or against us". If the students agree to "co-operate", they are asked to provide the authorities with continuous reports on the political and suspected views of any member of the University, for which the promised rewards are funds and "girls".

What is now happening to the University of Beer Zeit is only a part of a greater design of harassment and terror, which the Israeli military authorities are applying throughout Palestine. However, when it comes to the University of Beer Zeit, this trend tends to escalate into an attempt at appropriation and at fighting those who oppose "self-rule". Because the University of Beer Zeit is a national university, it was chosen as an example of the punitive action that can be taken and as a warning to all Palestinians in the occupied territories. No university in the world can survive, let alone fulfil its educational role, so long as it is subjected to such harassment, especially with regard to academic freedom.

We strongly protest the treatment to which the community in our University is being subjected by the Israeli military authorities. We call upon all universities and institutions concerned, as well as all individuals everywhere, to support the struggle of the University of Beer Zeit to maintain its freedom and academic independence.

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APPENDIX

Chronological order of harassments

- 26 October: Sameer Halileh arrested at his house in Ramallah during the night; still under detention.
- 30 October: Dawoud Ahmad Hassan, riding a student's bus on his way to the University, was detained at a check-point on the Ramallah road. Books from the University's library were temporarily expropriated from him. Although released the same day, he is often ordered to appear for questioning.
- 1 November: Adnan Amran was called to the Nablus District military headquarters, where he was detained and questioned for 16 days.
- 2 November: Odeh Ahmad Mustafa was detained at the investigation centre in the Russian compound in Jerusalem.
- 9 November: Hassan Abu Labdeh was detained and questioned in Jenin for 48 hours.
- 19 November: Ismail Al-Bitar was detained and questioned for three days at the Russian compound.
- 20 November: Hassan Abu Labdeh was again called for questioning in Jenin.
- 21 November: Salaam, El-Salihi, President of the University's Student Council, was called by Carmon, Arab Affairs adviser to the military government in Beit El.
- 22 November: Sama'an El-Khoury was arrested at his home in Beereh during the night and is still under arrest in Ramallah.
- 23 November: Hassan Abu Labdeh was again recalled for questioning in Jenin.

Eight students were arrested during the night either at their homes or places of residence in Beer Zeit and Ramallah.

Mahmoud Ahmad Halleh was subjected to intense investigation at the Russian compound despite his serious health situation. He was released on bail on 29 November after painstakingly difficult legal efforts.

Rizk Shuquair is still under arrest in Ramallah.

Hakam Quadra is still under arrest in Ramallah.

Ribhi El-Arouri is still under arrest in Ramallah.

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Mohammad Baransi was arrested on the street and detained for hours before being released at 0100 several kilometres away from his residence.

Shukri Shafer was arrested on the street and detained for hours before being released at 0100 several kilometres away from his home.

Basem Zubaidi was arrested on the street and detained for hours before being released at 0100 several kilometres away from his home.

- 25 November: Several lectures included in the programme entitled "Palestine Week" were cancelled and folk singer Sameer Hafez was prevented from coming to the University.
- 26 November: Abdel Hakim Kama'an was arrested during the night at Rabah Hotel (official residence of University students). He is still under arrest in Ramallah.

The following five students, arrested during the previous academic year, are still in prison:

Farida Murrah; Ibrahim Khaleel; Nazmi El-Zaabeh; Mohammad Mahmoud Abdel-Kader; Ahmad Abu-Gosh.
