

# UNITED NATIONS



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QUESTION OF PALESTINE

SECURITY COUNCIL  
Thirty-third year

Letter dated 22 August 1978 from the Chairman of the Committee  
on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian  
People addressed to the Secretary-General

As Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, I have the honour to bring to your notice certain facts, communicated to me by the Permanent Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization, relating to the treatment by the Israeli authorities of Palestinian prisoners in their custody.

The Palestinian prisoners are subjected to continual assaults and humiliations and, on one occasion, on the orders of the Israeli prison authorities, they were even attacked by 500 soldiers. As a result of that attack, several prisoners were critically injured and 88 other prisoners were forcibly removed to Tulkarim prison, where they are reportedly having to endure the worst kind of torture.

On 19 June 1978, several mayors, representing charitable and social institutions, and families of the prisoners held a sit-in strike in the hall of Al-Bireh municipality. On that occasion, a memorandum was sent to the Israeli Minister of Defence demanding that the assaults on the prisoners by the guards and security personnel be stopped and that the prisoners should be given adequate medical care.

On 15 August 1978, Palestinian prisoners and detainees began a hunger strike to protest against the harsh and inhuman treatment meted out to them by the occupation authorities. However, there has been no improvement in the living conditions of the prisoners.

Such treatment constitutes a violation of the Geneva Convention of 12 August 1949 <sup>1/</sup> relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War and also of

\* A/33/150.

<sup>1/</sup> United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 75, No. 972, p. 135.

Security Council resolution 237 (1967) and of resolution 1 (XXXIV) A adopted by the Commission on Human Rights in Geneva in February 1978.

That resolution explicitly demands that Israel should cease forthwith all acts of torture and ill-treatment of Arab detainees and prisoners and should accord them, pending their release, the protection envisaged in the relevant provisions concerning the treatment of prisoners of war. It is clear that the situation has been aggravated to such an extent that, if no measures are taken to protect the Palestinian prisoners and detainees from the harsh and inhuman treatment that they are now undergoing, an explosive situation could arise and further endanger peace in the area. I should be glad if you would take appropriate action to ensure that the demands made by the prisoners are met.

I have the honour to request that this letter be circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under item 31 of the provisional agenda, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Médoune FALL