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LETTER DATED 19 MARCH 1976 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES
OF THE LIBYAN ARAB REPUBLIC AND PAKISTAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS
ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

Upon instructions of our Governments, we have the honour to request you to call a meeting of the Security Council urgently in order to consider the serious situation arising from recent developments in the occupied Arab territories. On 28 January 1976, an Israeli magistrate in Jerusalem ruled that Jews could not be prevented from praying in the Mosque of Al-Aqsa, revered by Muslims all over the world as one of their holiest shrines. In his letter dated 23 February 1976 (circulated in document S/12000 dated 1 March 1976), the Acting Permanent Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization drew attention to the widespread protests and demonstrations against this decision by Arabs living in East Jerusalem and other major West Bank towns and to the large-scale arrests and other repressive measures ordered by the Israeli authorities to quell the disturbances. Subsequently, in his letter dated 12 March 1976 (document A/31/63-S/12012 dated 15 March 1976) addressed to Your Excellency and to the Secretary-General, the Permanent Representative of Saudi Arabia conveyed a statement by the members of the Islamic Conference concerning these developments in which, inter alia, they requested the President of the Security Council and the Secretary-General to keep under urgent attention the situation in Jerusalem and in the rest of the occupied territory and warned that it might be further aggravated.

The situation has indeed continued to deteriorate in Jerusalem and other parts of the occupied West Bank and is becoming explosive. The magistrate's ruling concerning the Al-Aqsa Mosque can no longer be viewed in isolation but must be seen, along with recent expropriations of Arab-owned lands in Jerusalem and the establishment of Jewish settlements in Arab areas, as part of a policy of absorbing occupied Jerusalem into Israel and changing its cultural and demographic character in calculated defiance of the Security Council and General Assembly resolutions on the subject. The extensiveness, violence and tenacity of the demonstrations reflect the determination of the people of the occupied territories to resist Israel's attempt to annex East Jerusalem. According to press reports, the occupation authorities have fired on demonstrators and are carrying out mass arrests and intimidation of the civilian population with the help of the Israeli armed forces. Such actions will aggravate the situation and jeopardize the prospects for a just and peaceful settlement in the Middle East.

Accordingly, we call on the Security Council to take prompt and effective measures which would halt the deterioration of the situation and put an end to Israeli defiance of its existing decisions on Jerusalem. We also request that representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization be invited to participate in the debate as on previous occasions.

(Signed) Mansur Rashid KIKHIA
Permanent Representative of
Libyan Arab Republic to the
United Nations

(Signed) Iqbal AKHUND
Permanent Representative of
Pakistan to the United Nations
