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THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

SECURITY COUNCIL  
Thirty-sixth year

Letter dated 24 September 1981 from the Permanent Representative of  
Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to refer to the letter of 8 September 1981 to you from the Permanent Representative of Jordan (A/36/489-S/14684), which can only be regarded as yet another attempt to fan the flames of religious incitement for the purpose of political warfare against my country.

With respect to the groundless and spurious allegations contained in that letter, the actual facts are as follows:

1. The access leading in Jerusalem from the Western Wall to the Temple Mount is an ancient passage which, during the Ottoman period, was blocked and used as a water cistern. This passage is described in the report of a British archaeologist, Sir C. Warren, who surveyed the area 114 years ago.
2. Seepage of water from the cistern through the masonry of the Western Wall led the Israel authorities for religious affairs responsible for the site to open the Ottoman blockage to pump out the water and to begin cleaning the passage. The access has since been reblocked and restored to the status quo ante and there are no further plans to reopen it.
3. The entire work was done with the full co-operation of the Muslim Waqf authorities who subsequently constructed a second thick wall in the passage itself underneath the Temple Mount.

It is thus obvious that the allegations made by the Permanent Representative of Jordan are once again at variance with the true facts. Hence his letter will no doubt be seen and treated for what it is - yet another extraordinary example of how little compunction that Representative has about injecting religious hatred into the Arab-Israel conflict and about abusing religious sentiment for his own partisan purposes. In doing so, he not only displays a reckless disregard of the facts but also of the possible consequences of his ill-considered statements.

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I have the honour to request that this letter be circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 33, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Yehuda Z. BLUM  
Ambassador  
Permanent Representative of Israel  
to the United Nations

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