

UNITED NATIONS

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Distr.
GENERAL

A/34/207
S/13264
23 April 1979

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Thirty-fourth session
Item 25 of the preliminary list*
THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

SECURITY COUNCIL
Thirty-fourth year

Letter dated 22 April 1979 from the Permanent Representative of
Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On instructions from my Government, I wish to draw your urgent attention to the terrorist outrage perpetrated in the town of Nahariya early this morning, 22 April 1979, by a criminal gang dispatched by the organization known as the PLO, which resulted in the deaths of four Israeli civilians, including two sisters of three and four years of age, and the wounding of two other civilians.

At 0230 hours (local time), four terrorists landed by means of a rubber dinghy at the town of Nahariya on the Mediterranean coast some six miles from the Lebanese border. The terrorists tried to enter a private home. A police patrol was alerted and in the ensuing exchange of fire a police officer was killed and a volunteer in the civil guard was wounded.

The terrorists headed back in the direction of the shore-line and on the way entered another house and took hostage a man and his four-year-old daughter. The mother hid with her three-year-old daughter in a closet and clasped her hand over the child's mouth to prevent her from making any sounds which might lead to their detection by the terrorists. As a result the child died from suffocation.

Police and army forces caught up with the terrorists on the beach close to the point where they had landed. In the firing which followed, the terrorists murdered their two hostages; a soldier and a civilian were wounded. Two of the terrorists were killed and the two others were captured, one wounded.

Some hours later, the terrorist PLO boasted about this atrocity on its radio in Lebanon.

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Only three weeks ago the Israel Defence Forces foiled a similar attempt by the PLO against Israeli civilians, when the 500-ton cargo ship, Stephanie, belonging to the PLO was intercepted off Israel's Mediterranean coast. In addition to the five-man crew, six heavily armed terrorists were found aboard together with a rubber dinghy in which they planned to reach the shore. They all admitted that they belonged to Fatah, headed by Yasser Arafat.

In an interview broadcast on Israel television and radio on 8 April, the leader of the gang, Haled a-Zafi, disclosed that the six had been dispatched from Lebanon by the head of Fatah operations, Abu Jihad. He described the purpose of the mission as follows:

A-Zafi: "The mission ... was to infiltrate into Israel in order to murder old people and children and every one we came across."

Question: "You mean civilians?"

A-Zafi: "Yes, civilians."

Question: "You mean a mission of mass murder?"

A-Zafi: "Yes, mass murder. Everyone who crossed our path was to have been killed."

These criminal activities reflect the barbaric pattern consistently followed by the terrorist PLO throughout its existence. They are the work of international criminals of the worst kind, bent on the indiscriminate murder of civilians, while masquerading under the banner of a national liberation movement.

More recently, and especially since the signing of the Peace Treaty between Israel and Egypt on 26 March 1979, the PLO has also been acting in conjunction with others both in the Middle East and beyond to subvert the ongoing peace process and all efforts at peace and reconciliation in the region.

The atrocity at Nahariya was perpetrated by the same PLO, which is euphemistically called "armed elements" in United Nations reports about the situation in southern Lebanon. This is the terrorist organization which is directly challenging UNIFIL in the fulfilment of its mandate, by continuing to use southern Lebanon as a launching ground for murderous attacks against Israel, whether by repeated shellings across the northern border from Lebanese territory or by attempts at penetrating the border by land and sea from Lebanon. In recent months, I have brought to your attention repeated incidents of these kinds in my letters of 14 January 1979 (S/13028*), 16 April 1979 (A/34/184-S/13249) and 19 April 1979 (A/34/204-S/13261).

Despite its criminal designs, the PLO has been granted irregular privileges in the United Nations, in violation of the Charter of the United Nations and the rules of procedure of the General Assembly and other organs of the United Nations.

Last year the Headquarters of the United Nations were abused for the housing of an exhibition mounted by the PLO which was reminiscent of Nazi propaganda against the Jewish people (see my letter of 21 December 1978, circulated as document A/33/545). The means and machinery of the United Nations have also been exploited for the dissemination of a series of publications, prepared by the Secretariat and containing little more than thinly disguised PLO propaganda against a Member State (see my letters of 16 November and 20 December 1978, circulated as documents A/33/376 and A/33/543).

People of conscience throughout the world are marking this week to commemorate the six million Jews - including a million and a half children - who were exterminated during the holocaust. It should be recalled that the United Nations has declared 1979 the International Year of the Child. The terrorist PLO has chosen its own murderous way to mark this year - with the slaughter and injury of innocent children.

Since the beginning of this year, 17 children have been casualties of PLO outrages, in addition to those killed in Nahariya today:

On 18 January 1979, a girl of 10 was wounded when a bomb exploded in the Mahane Yehuda market in Jerusalem (see my letter of 18 January 1979 - S/13041);

On 19 January, a boy of 10 in Kfar Giladi on the northern border was wounded by Katyusha rockets fired from Lebanese territory;

On 28 January, an infant aged 10 months and a toddler of 2 years were wounded when a bomb exploded in Netanya (see my letter of 29 January 1979 - S/13058);

On 27 February, a little girl of 3 and a boy of 11 were wounded by an explosive device which went off in the Mahane Yehuda market in Jerusalem (see my letter of 28 February 1979 - A/34/102-S/13127);

On 23 March, a girl of 3 and a boy of 4 were wounded by an explosive device in Zion Square in Jerusalem (see my letter of 25 March 1979 - A/34/131-S/13192);

On 5 April, three children were wounded by a bomb at a bus stop in Jerusalem (see my letter of 10 April 1979 - A/34/175-S/13239);

On 10 April, six children of between 6 and 10 years of age were wounded by an explosive device which exploded in the Carmel market in Tel Aviv (see my letter of 10 April 1979 - A/34/175-S/13239).

The time has surely come for Members of the United Nations to recognize the implications and consequences flowing from any form of co-operation with the terrorist PLO both within and without the framework of the United Nations.

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Meanwhile, given the true character of the PLO and its violent aims, the Government of Israel is duty-bound, as I have indicated in previous letters, to take all measures necessary to protect the lives and safety of its citizens.

I have the honour to request that this letter be circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under item 25 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

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