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THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

SECURITY COUNCIL
Forty-third year

Letter dated 25 May 1988 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the
Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to
the Secretary-General

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to convey to you the following information on the latest grave Israeli practices against Lebanese civilians inside the so-called "security zone" and to request that you take the prompt measures required to deal with them.

On 24 May, the Israeli forces deported 17 citizens from the village of Chabaa (Hasbaiya district) in the southern Bekaa, without them having committed any crime which would justify such deportation other than their refusal to comply with pressure from the occupation forces to establish a local civilian administration which would be subject to and would collaborate with the occupying Power.

The deportees consisted of the imam of the village, its two headmen (mukhtars), three headmasters of public and private schools, a teacher, the official in charge of the Centre for Social Affairs and other civil servants and distinguished individuals.

Apart from constituting a further violation of Lebanon's sovereignty on its own soil and a flagrant infringement of the general law of human rights, the Geneva Conventions and the Constitution of UNESCO, this action reflects a dangerous escalation in Israeli arbitrary practices against civilian citizens and reveals a new aspect of Israel's determination to impose and to strengthen its hegemony over the occupied region of southern Lebanon.

* A/43/50.

Israel has in the past used arguments of security to justify its practices, but this latest action cannot in any way be covered by such arguments. It constitutes a dangerous precedent and must be redressed through the return of those deported citizens - who were practising their civilian, religious, educational and social duties in their own village, and in the service of their own people - in recognition of the difficulties and complications that their deportation may cause for residents who are already suffering from the arbitrary practices and troubles caused by the occupation.

In condemning and deploring this dangerous action, the Government of Lebanon requests that you intervene, rapidly and effectively, for the return of the deportees to their village, in order to prevent the establishment of new precedents for Israeli practices in Lebanese territory, and that you call upon Israel to comply in full with the Geneva Conventions, particularly the fourth Geneva Convention of 1949.

I also request that you have this letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under item 40 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Chawki CHOUERI
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

