

**General Assembly    Security Council****Distr.  
GENERAL****A/43/477 /  
S/20052  
22 July 1988  
ENGLISH  
ORIGINAL: FRENCH****GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
Forty third session  
Item 37 of the provisional agenda\*  
QUESTION OF PALESTINE****SECURITY COUNCIL  
Forty-third year**

**Letter dated 22 July 1988 from the Chairman of the Committee  
on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian  
People addressed to the Secretary-General**

In my capacity as Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, I wish to express the Committee's most serious concern at the continued grave situation in the occupied Palestinian territories and the intensification of policies of repression by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people. Live ammunition, rubber bullets and severe beatings continue to be used widely in an effort to suppress the uprising. The number of Palestinians killed by Israeli gunfire since the beginning of the uprising in early December has now reached at least 230. According to the Israeli Defence Minister, the number of Palestinians detained by Israel at the end of June was 9,000. Reports on the inhuman conditions under which they are held have aroused widespread international protest.

Despite growing condemnation of the use of live ammunition by Israeli troops, the Israeli Defence Minister, Yitzhak Rabin, told the Cabinet on 12 June 1988, according to Ha'aretz, that Israeli civilians were "free to shoot Palestinians seen with firebombs". The increasing involvement of Israeli settlers in violent attacks against Palestinians is a cause of great concern. Moreover, measures of collective punishment continue to be imposed. On 4 July 1988, Brig. General Gabi Ofir told Reuters that the army would continue its harsh collective punishment measures of demolishing houses. It is to be noted that in the months of May and June, more

\* A/43/150.

than 40 Palestinian houses were demolished by the Israeli army. On 5 July 1988, according to a Reuters dispatch, all 1,200 schools in the West Bank were again closed. Extended curfews continued to be imposed, and telephone lines to be cut in many areas.

According to The New York Times of 9 July 1988, the Israeli authorities also announced that they would expel 10 Palestinians accused of being "active in various terrorist organizations which played a central role in planning and implementing" the Palestinian uprising. Six of the ten Palestinians are from the West Bank and four from Gaza, and include two doctors and two journalists.

Several new measures have also been announced designed to tighten control by the occupation authorities over the Palestinian population, in further efforts to quell the uprising. According to Ha'aretz of 13 July 1988, Israeli security authorities have decided to step up "supervision and surveillance" of the activities of the Supreme Moslem Council on the Haram al-Sharif in Jerusalem, including the heads of the waqf (Islamic trust). This followed a mass protest, on 4 July 1988, by Palestinians against Israeli archaeological digging near the Via Dolorosa, feared by waqf officials to be undermining the stability of historic Moslem buildings. Twenty-five Palestinians and an Israeli policeman were injured in the protest and, although the excavation was suspended, Israeli officials have stated that the work will eventually be completed.

On 14 July 1988, Al-Fajr reported that the Military Commander of the Central Region announced that the establishment of Palestinian popular committees in the occupied territories "is against the law". The popular committees were formed during the first week of the uprising in order to cope with the economic, educational, security, relief and other needs of the Palestinian community. This followed the closing, at the end of June, of In'ash El-Usra, a self-help women's organization serving the needs of some 15,000 Palestinian women and children.

In addition, according to Al-Fajr of 26 June 1988, the Israeli authorities have started new aggressive measures of collecting taxes and have introduced new tax laws in an effort to counter boycotts by Palestinians. Similarly, Agence France Presse reported on 19 July 1988 that military authorities had begun changing the licence plates on all automobiles owned by Palestinians in Gaza.

In view of the gravity of these developments, the Committee wishes to express its serious concern at these repressive policies and practices of Israel, the occupying Power, which are in contravention of the fourth Geneva Convention, international human rights instruments and United Nations resolutions. These repressive policies and practices are aimed at preventing the Palestinian people from exercising its inalienable rights in accordance with internationally recognized principles and United Nations resolutions, and pose grave obstacles to the attainment of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

The Committee reiterates its appeal to you to take all possible measures to ensure the safety and protection of the Palestinian civilians under occupation and

to intensify your efforts towards the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East in accordance with General Assembly resolution 38/58 C.

I should be grateful if you would arrange for the text of this letter to be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under item 37 of the provisional agenda, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Massamba SARRE  
Chairman of the Committee on the  
Exercise of the Inalienable Rights  
of the Palestinian People

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