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THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

SECURITY COUNCIL
Thirty-eighth year

Letter dated 5 May 1983 from the Permanent Representative of Jordan
to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to forward to you the enclosed letter, at the request of Mr. Hatem I. Hussaini, Deputy Permanent Observer, Chargé d'Affaires of the Palestine Liberation Organization, regarding a letter sent to the Chairman of the International Committee of the Red Cross by the Committee to Defend the Rights of Prisoners at Ansar Detention Camp, expressing their appreciation for the humanitarian role played by ICRC.

I request that this letter and the enclosed letters from the Deputy Permanent Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization be circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under item 34 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Abdullah SALAH
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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ANNEX

Letter dated 3 May 1983 from the Chargé d'Affaires of the
Permanent Observer Mission of the Palestine Liberation
Organization to the United Nations addressed to the
President of the Security Council

We wish to bring to your attention the attached copy of a letter sent to the Chairman of the International Committee of the Red Cross at Ansar Detention Center from Salah Tamari of the Committee to Defend the Rights of Prisoners, Ansar Detention Camp.

(Signed) Hatem I. HUSSAINI
Deputy Permanent Observer
Chargé d'Affaires

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APPENDIX

Letter dated 2 May 1983 from Mr. Salah Tamari to the Chairman of the International Committee of the Red Cross at Ansar Detention Center

The Committee to Defend the Rights of Prisoners at Ansar Detention Camp would like to express their appreciation for the humanitarian role played by the ICRC in defending the rights of the prisoners, which has helped alleviate some of the psychological and physical pressures experienced by the prisoners.

We would like, however, to bring the following to your attention.

1. The Geneva Convention on prisoners' rights is violated daily by the Israeli Government at Ansar detention camp.
2. To this time, the ICRC has been unable to assist in the release of the hundreds of ill prisoners held at Ansar who are in desperate need of immediate medical attention.
3. The physical condition of the majority of prisoners at Ansar is deteriorating rapidly.
4. The Israeli Defense Forces have also on many occasions violated the Geneva Convention which prevents the political and propaganda manipulation of prisoners. It is very clear that the continued detention of this large number of prisoners is for political blackmail; the prisoners have become hostages and are treated as such.
5. The establishment of the "Complaints Committee" is a new phenomenon at the camp, and was created to serve the interests of the Israeli Government and for the political and propaganda manipulation of the prisoners. Not only does this violate the Geneva Conventions, but also the most basic human and moral rights of the prisoners. We have brought this to the attention of the ICRC.
6. We have continuously called for the creation of an international committee to safeguard the rights of the prisoners. We have reiterated our demand particularly in light of Detention Camp 20, where three of the prisoners have been murdered. To date, we have not received any answer to our request.
7. Seven months have passed since the detention of Palestinian prisoners began. The Israeli Government is continuing to interrogate prisoners. This practice is contrary to international law. It is creating anger among the prisoners, which could result in a direct confrontation between them and the Israeli Defense Forces. We demand that these brutal interrogations be stopped immediately.

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8. The Israeli Government has also violated the Geneva Conventions by preventing the prisoners' families from visiting them since the beginning of their detention. Such could result in anger among the prisoners. In such case we hold the Israeli Government fully responsible.

9. In violation of the Geneva Conventions, a large number of UNRWA employees are still being detained by the Israeli Government at Ansar. Their continued detention threatens the lives of thousands of civilians remaining in refugee camps, who are completely dependent on their knowledge and experience in running the refugee camps. The International Committee has called for their release, however the Israeli Government has ignored this request.

10. In many cases, whole families are being detained at Ansar detention camp. The majority of the prisoners are mature working people, whose families depend on them for their livelihood. The continued detention of these prisoners will ultimately result in hunger and starvation for their families and dependents.

11. Many prisoners have disappeared from Ansar detention camp. We share the common belief that they have been murdered. We have requested information on the whereabouts of the prisoners, and have received no answer. This is causing other prisoners to worry for their own lives.

12. There are many basic needs for the prisoners that are not available, such as radios, recreation facilities, materials for handicrafts, food stocks and cafeteria.

In conclusion, the general situation at Ansar detention camp is rapidly deteriorating. We hold the Israeli Government and the ICRC fully responsible for the deteriorating condition of the prisoners. We would like to receive a written answer from the ICRC on the aforementioned.

We uphold our right to take any step we feel necessary to defend our rights as prisoners at Ansar detention camp.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) Salah TAMARI
Committee to Defend the Rights of Prisoners
Ansar Detention Camp
16 March 1983
