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**QUESTION OF THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE
OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES, INCLUDING PALESTINE**

**Letter dated 10 December 2001 from the Permanent Observer
for Palestine to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed
to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights**

The Israeli occupation forces persist in their policy of imposing severe collective punishments on innocent civilians in the occupied Palestinian territory, demolishing homes, confiscating Palestinian land to build new Israeli settlements thereon and expand the already existing ones, shelling Palestinian residential buildings through air and ground attacks with tank shells, helicopter missiles and machine guns, conducting military incursions into Palestinian-controlled areas, imposing siege and closures on Palestinian towns and villages, uprooting fruit trees and destroying several acres of farmland, thus causing wide fear and anxiety among the civilians and leaving behind them tens of killed, injured, detained, abducted and homeless and wide destruction of property.

In flagrant violation of international law, international humanitarian law, the Fourth Geneva Convention which seeks to protect the lives of protected persons, and in grave breach of human rights norms that affirm the right to life, Israeli occupation forces committed another crime of extrajudicial execution on 28 November, whereby a Palestinian civilian, 30-year-old Rami Mansour, from Al-Shuja'iyah neighbourhood was shot and left to die, bleeding for a long time while ambulances were prevented from reaching him. They assassinated 35-year-old Mahmoud Abu Hannoud and the two brothers, 28-year-old Ma'moun and 34-year-old Ayman Hashaykeh, in Nablus on 23 November 2001.

Also on 23 November, Israeli occupation troops targeted a Palestinian car near Rafah City, killing 25-year-old Ahmad Al-Hinawi; an Israeli bullet hit him in the head. Fifty-year-old Hadia Salameh and her son Awadh and his wife Ikram were also severely injured in the incident. In another incident in Gaza on the same day, Israeli occupation troops killed 15-year-old Wa'el Radhwan.

In the morning of 12 November, Israeli occupation forces, armed with 20 military jeeps and at least 10 tanks, accompanied by Apache helicopters roaming in the air, invaded the village of Tel, south of Nablus city, raided tens of civilian homes, terrorizing their residents, assassinated a defenceless man, 25-year-old Mohamed Al-Raihan, in a senseless crime of summary execution, arrested at least 40 civilians and demolished a number of homes.

In Khan Yunis on 22 November, five boys, aged 6 to 14, all from the same extended family, were on their way to school near the Khan Yunis refugee camp when a bomb planted by Israeli commandos exploded, killing them instantly. The victims' parents were only able to identify their loved ones from the burnt and torn schoolbooks they left behind. The five boys are: 6-year-old Akram, 13-year-old Mohamed, 9-year-old Anees, 12-year-old Omar and 13-year-old Mohamed, all from the Al-Astal extended family.

Israeli occupation authorities also continue to spread terror in Palestinian cities and towns, blindly targeting civilians and residential areas, where defenceless women and children are murdered in their own homes. Wafaa' Nassif, a young mother, was fatally shot in her own home in Tulkarem on 13 November, when Israeli occupation forces opened unprovoked and indiscriminate fire on homes in Irtah valley. Four other civilians suffered shrapnel wounds during the Israeli offensive.

As for the aggressive Israeli measures taken against civilians at checkpoints, they have not only caused agony to Palestinian civilians who face daily aggression, humiliation and needless delays, they have also cost hundreds of Palestinian lives. Fifty-six-year-old Sami Al-Bassaleh died in the early hours of 21 November after he had been prohibited twice from seeking urgent medical treatment.

Fifty-five-year-old Mohammed Al-Ziben from Kufur Rumman in Tulkarem died on 13 November at one of these many checkpoints. Israeli occupation forces prohibited him from reaching a hospital in Nablus, where he needed to undergo dialysis.

On Friday, 9 November, Israeli troops at Gani Tal settlement seriously wounded Sameer Abu Haleeb in the side and the right leg. The man died later in hospital.

In the Gaza Strip on the same day, Israeli soldiers in Neve Dakalim settlement opened fire on Palestinian children playing near their homes in Khan Yunis. Ahmad Mustafa, 13, was wounded seriously in the head during the unprovoked Israeli assault. He was admitted to hospital where he passed away on Monday, 12 November 2001.

Since the outbreak of the Israeli hostilities on 29 September 2000, at least 80 Palestinian activists have been killed through the illegal assassination policy conducted by Israel, some of whom were bystanders, bringing the total number of martyrs as of the end of November 2001 to nearly 879 and the total wounded to nearly 28,747, about 2,200 of whom sustain permanent handicaps.

In follow-up to the lists of the names of martyrs annexed to some of my previous letters, namely the one dated 5 October 2001, herewith enclosed* is a list with the names of martyrs for the period from 30 September to 29 November 2001.

We once again reiterate our appeal to Your Excellency, and through you to the international community, to call on Israel to withdraw from the occupied Palestinian territory if peace and security are to be restored in the area, to ease the suffocating Israeli restrictions imposed at checkpoints, to ease the siege imposed on Palestinian towns and villages which is leading the Palestinian people to starvation, to bring an end to the Israeli military campaign being waged against the Palestinian people, to demand that Israel stop acting with complete impunity and disregard for international law and to provide immediate international protection to the civilians in the occupied Palestinian territories.

I would be grateful if you would have this letter with its enclosure circulated as an official document of the fifty-eighth session of the Commission on Human Rights under agenda item 8.

(Signed): Nabil RAMLAWI
Ambassador
Permanent Observer

* Reproduced in the annex as received, in the language of submission only.