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

**Letter dated 1 April 2002 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the
United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the Chairperson of the
fifty-eighth session of the Commission on Human Rights**

Since 29 March 2002, the cities of Palestine have been subjected to Israeli military invasion with the occupation of Ramallah, Al-Bireh, Qalqilya, Bethlehem and Tulkarem, as a prelude to the occupation of all other Palestinian cities as declared by Israeli officials. This new military invasion was accompanied by mass massacres, acts of cold-blooded killing and multiple executions of Palestinians, as witnessed by the discovery in Ramallah on 30 March 2002 of five Palestinians shot in the head and at least 30 more executed bodies found on 31 March 2002 in Ramallah.

In addition, the Israeli occupation forces are:

Opening fire at every moving person or vehicle;

Destroying houses and stores, looting banks and businesses;

Shooting at ambulances and confiscating others;

Targeting medical teams and preventing them from reaching the wounded, many of whom are left in the streets to bleed to death;

Storming hospitals and preventing the burial of martyrs (who numbered 25 in Ramallah hospital alone today);

Arresting, as is the case each time the Israeli occupation army enters a Palestinian area, hundreds of Palestinian youth and imprisoning them in detention centres without any information on their fate.

We fear that the occupation authorities will be intensifying such crimes after they have today declared Ramallah a closed military zone and ordered the press and media to evacuate the city, in an attempt to hide from world public opinion the crimes they are committing.

This Israeli military invasion of the Palestinian territories has entailed the mobilization of 20,000 military reservists, alongside the regular military forces already in action, meaning that the Israeli invasion is planned for a long period of time and that the Israeli violations of human rights are to continue and intensify, subjecting the Palestinian people to the most brutal and bloody violations of human rights.

In addition to all this, the Israeli military forces have tightened their siege of the Headquarters of President Yasser Arafat in Ramallah, cutting off two days ago water, sanitation, electricity and all means of communication, threatening his health and life and those around him.

Mr. Chairman,

We request you, in your capacity as Chairman of the fifty-eighth session of the Commission on Human Rights, to call upon the Government of Israel to cease its military aggression against the Palestinian cities and to withdraw from them in accordance with the provisions of Security Council resolution 1402. We also hope, in view of the persisting escalation of the situation of human rights in the occupied Palestinian territory, that you and representatives of the Bureau of the fifty-eighth session of the Commission on Human Rights can arrange to travel to occupied Palestine as quickly as possible, to inspect the grave violations of human rights committed by the Israeli occupation forces against the Palestinian people and to brief the Commission on your findings.

We further request that you kindly distribute this letter as soon as possible to the distinguished members of the Commission 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

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