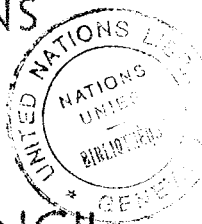


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Thirty-third session
Agenda item 4

QUESTION OF THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE TERRITORIES
OCCUPIED AS A RESULT OF HOSTILITIES IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Letter dated 8 March 1977 from the Permanent Representative
of Egypt to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed
to the Chairman of the Commission on Human Rights

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the text of an official communiqué, issued by the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 26 February 1977, concerning the situation in the occupied Arab territories as a result of Israel's persistence in carrying out changes in those territories and in imposing measures designed to alter their geographic character and their demographic composition.

I should be grateful if you would have this text circulated as a document of the Commission on Human Rights under agenda item 4, Question of the violation of human rights in the territories occupied as a result of hostilities in the Middle East.

Accept, Sir, etc.

(Signed) Omran EL-SHAFEI
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

PERMANENT MISSION
OF THE
ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT

PRESS RELEASE

TEXT OF THE OFFICIAL COMMUNIQUE, ISSUED BY THE EGYPTIAN MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS ON 26 FEBRUARY 1977, CONCERNING THE SITUATION IN THE OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES AS A RESULT OF ISRAEL'S PERSISTENCE IN CARRYING OUT CHANGES IN THOSE TERRITORIES AND IN IMPOSING MEASURES DESIGNED TO ALTER THEIR GEOGRAPHIC CHARACTER AND THEIR DEMOGRAPHIC COMPOSITION

The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs is following with deep concern the reports coming from the occupied territories concerning the persistence of the Israeli occupation authorities in pursuing their practises in violation of the rules of international law, the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the provisions of resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly of the United Nations and of other bodies of the world Organization.

The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs considers that the policy of establishing settlements, as well as the official plans of the Israeli Government and of the world Zionist organization to establish, by the end of 1977, 29 new settlements which would be additional to the 15 settlements already planned in the Egyptian-Palestinian frontier areas, the deportation of more than 1,500 native **families** of the occupied territories and the transfer to those territories of 2,000 Jewish families from abroad for settlement in the occupied Arab territories - that all these practices constitute a policy of very grave intent which will threaten peace efforts in the region and have dangerous consequences for the prospects of achieving peace itself.

It should be noted that more than 70 Israeli settlements have been established in the three occupied territories. More than 45 of these settlements have been established in Palestinian territory (the West Bank and Gaza) more than 20 on the Syrian heights and approximately 15 in Sinai. All this is in addition to the military bases which Israel is continuing to build in the occupied territories.

The establishment of settlements was not the only action taken. At the same time, other measures were taken affecting the status of Jerusalem and the other fundamental rights of the Arab people of the occupied territories, including, for example, the deportation and removal of the inhabitants, the exploitation of natural wealth, the pillage of archaeological assets, the exploitation of Arab workers, and various other measures taken by the occupation authorities which have been confirmed by the international commissions of inquiry and condemned by the international community.

The **communiqué** unanimously adopted by the Security Council on 11 November 1976 and the resolutions adopted during the present session of the Commission on Human Rights are the most recent expression of this position of the international community.

In spite of the unanimous position of the General Assembly of the United Nations, the Security Council and the Commission on Human Rights recognizing the applicability of the Fourth Geneva Convention in the occupied Arab territories, and despite the firmness of this position which is based on the fact that the occupation constitutes a temporary situation and that no measures may be taken that alter the situation or hamper the achievement of a settlement which would put an end to the occupation and restore rights, Israel is pursuing its policy and plans based on the establishment of settlements and aimed at achieving Israeli expansion and domination.

In view of this situation and its consequences, of which the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs has repeatedly warned the international community, most recently in his communiqué issued on 16 February 1977 and circulated as a document of the Security Council, the only course remaining, should Israel persist in carrying out its plans, would be recourse to the Security Council as the principal United Nations organ responsible for the maintenance of peace and international security, with the request that it consider the matter with a view to finding a definitive solution.

The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs has emphasized that it is Israel which will bear the full responsibility for its actions and for their long-term consequences, actions which are essentially designed to hamper efforts to achieve a peaceful settlement.

The persistence of this Israeli policy is proof of the expansionist aims of Israel, its challenge to world public opinion and its refusal to conform to the rules of international law and to assume its obligations under the international Conventions.

Should Israel not put an end to its activities in the field of establishment of settlements and not refrain from insisting on altering the demographic composition of the Arab territories which it is occupying by force, the whole question would again have to be brought before the Security Council, so that the latter might take the necessary enforcement action in order forthwith to prevent Israel from continuing these practices, which have been denounced by world public opinion.