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Agenda item 5

**Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and
the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory****Security Council
Sixty-first year****Identical letters dated 14 March 2006 from the Permanent
Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the
Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council**

Today, the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, has gravely deteriorated to crisis proportions as a result of the Israeli military attack on Al-Muqata in Jericho in the early hours of the morning (Palestine time). Using helicopters, tanks, bulldozers and armoured personnel carriers, Israeli occupying forces invaded Jericho and stormed Al-Muqata, killing two Palestinians, Mohammad Abu Shawish and Ibrahim Abu Ainain, and wounding at least 35 others, five of them critically. In addition to death and injury, Israeli occupying forces also caused vast destruction to most of Al-Muqata.

This latest military escalation against the Palestinian people began moments after the abrupt withdrawal of international monitors from Al-Muqata. Immediately after their withdrawal, Israeli occupying forces imposed a curfew on the city of Jericho and moved in and surrounded Al-Muqata. They demolished its walls with armoured bulldozers and, using megaphones, called on the 200 Palestinian prisoners and guards inside the prison in Al-Muqata to surrender or else they would be killed. Israeli occupying forces proceeded to force over 170 Palestinian prisoners to leave the prison without their clothes on and captured six Palestinian prisoners who are now being illegally transferred to an undisclosed location in Israel.

Israel, the occupying Power, has carried out this act of aggression in grave violation of its obligations under international law, including, in particular, international humanitarian law. It is imperative to recall that, in accordance with the Fourth Geneva Convention, which is applicable to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, "Protected persons accused of offences shall be detained in the occupied country, and if convicted they shall serve their sentences therein ..." (article 76). As such, Israel, the occupying Power, must be compelled to fulfil its obligations under the provisions of the Convention and immediately release the Palestinian prisoners and return them to Palestinian custody. Furthermore, Israel, the occupying Power, must withdraw all of its forces from Jericho and return the situation to that which existed prior to the Israeli military onslaught.

The international community cannot continue to stand idly by while Israel, the occupying Power, continues to commit grave violations of international law, including international humanitarian law. The international community, particularly the United Nations Security Council, must uphold its responsibilities for the maintenance of international peace and security and is thus duty bound to stand up to such Israeli policies and practices and take the necessary measures to bring them to an immediate end.

The present letter is in follow-up to our previous 234 letters to you regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, since 28 September 2000. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 6 March 2006 (A/ES-10/323-S/2006/144) constitute a basic record of the crimes committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, State terrorism and systematic human rights violations committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I would be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the Security Council and of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5.

(Signed) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador

Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations
