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Letter dated 14 April 1989 from the Chairman of the Committee on
the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People
addressed to the Secretary-General

In my capacity as Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, I wish to draw your urgent attention to the extremely serious escalation of violent attacks in the last few days by Israeli troops and settlers against Palestinians in the occupied Palestinian territory.

On 9 April, as it was reported by the New York Times, a 12-year-old boy died in Gaza after he was shot through the heart with a plastic bullet. In the West Bank a 60-year old Palestinian was shot and killed when troops clashed with demonstrators.

On 10 April, also according to the New York Times, an unidentified gunman opened fire with a submachine-gun at an entrance to the Old City of Jerusalem, killing one Palestinian and wounding three others. Witnesses said the assailant, who fled, was wearing an Israeli army uniform. Later the Israeli radio reportedly said it had received an anonymous phone call from a man who claimed responsibility for the attack on behalf of an underground Jewish organization, called the Sikarikim.

On 13 and 14 April, Reuters and the New York Times reported that para-military Israeli border police accompanied by men in civilian clothes believed to be settlers, shot and killed five and possibly as many as seven Palestinians during a pre-dawn raid on the West Bank village of Nahalin, near Bethlehem. At least 25 other Palestinians were reported wounded, two of them critically, in what hospital officials who treated the victims called "a massacre". The shooting took place when the Israeli police encountered unexpected and strong resistance from the

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villagers, who were already up and about at the early hour because of the Ramadan observance. The reports indicated that this was one of the highest casualty tolls in a single incident since the beginning of the intifadah.

The same sources also reported that another Palestinian shot during demonstrations in Bethlehem last week has died of his wounds. With these latest victims, the total number of Palestinians killed by Israeli troops since the beginning of the intifadah has now reached at least 553.

On behalf of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, I wish to strongly protest the escalation of repression by Israel, the occupying Power, against Palestinians in the occupied territory, and particularly the growing involvement in such attacks by armed Israeli settlers. The Committee considers that the international community is duty bound to redouble its efforts to ensure protection of the Palestinians under occupation and the withdrawal of Israel from the occupied Palestinian territory, in accordance with the provisions of the Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 12 August 1949, and United Nations resolutions. The Committee also wishes to reiterate its most pressing appeal to you and to all parties concerned to further intensify all efforts towards the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 43/176 of 15 December 1988, which provides the only comprehensive, practical and overwhelmingly accepted framework for peace.

I should be grateful if you would be so kind as to have the text of this letter circulated as an official document of the forty-third session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 37, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Absa Claude Diallo
Chairman
Committee on the Exercise of
the Inalienable Rights of the
Palestinian People
