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Items 37 and 39 of the preliminary list*
THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST
QUESTION OF PALESTINE

SECURITY COUNCIL
Forty-fourth year

Letter dated 11 July 1989 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the
Permanent Mission of Israel to the United Nations addressed to
the Secretary-General

On 6 July 1989, a Palestinian terrorist overpowered an Israeli bus driver on the Jerusalem - Tel Aviv highway, and steered the bus full of passengers over a cliff. The bus burst into flames, immediately killing 14 passengers - most burnt beyond recognition - while a further 27 were injured. The persons killed and injured included foreign nationals. The terrorist had planned this act carefully, having travelled on the bus route a number of times and even planned exactly where to seize control of the bus and force it over the cliff. The Islamic Jihad Organization subsequently took responsibility for the incident in a statement issued at Beirut and urged further attacks.

The PLO, which purportedly renounced all forms of terrorism at Geneva on 14 December 1988, has reacted to this, as to other recent acts of terror, with praise. Arafat's chief spokesman, Bassam Abu-Sharif, stated later that same day (6 July 1989) on Radio Monte-Carlo, that "this is not terrorism", but rather "a human and natural reaction."

This is not an isolated incident. Over the last 19 months, 23 Israeli soldiers were killed defending Israel's borders from 30 PLO infiltration attempts, while at least 42 Israelis and over 60 Palestinians were murdered. The recent

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upsurge in PLO terrorism aimed at the local Palestinian population is continuing. During the last month alone, 22 Palestinians were brutally slain by PLO "Assault Groups". These Palestinians have been eliminated by axe blows, multiple stabbings and automatic gunfire. When asked about the killing of Palestinians in an interview with Al-Ittihad (United Arab Emirates, 11 May 1989) Abu-Iyad, Arafat's deputy, stated the following: "The uprising deals with collaborators in the most cultural manner ... it allows them to come to mosques or churches in order to repent. However, lately, some of those who have repented have harmed Palestine. So the uprising dealt with them with severity."

The PLO deliberately attempts to sustain and encourage an ongoing atmosphere of incitement and violence in the territories, in which senseless and callous acts of terror continue. Furthermore, the PLO neither condemns nor disassociates itself from these brutal acts. All this provides clear evidence that the PLO never had any intention of renouncing terrorism in the first place. This is borne out and exemplified by repeated statements of senior PLO operatives who seek to legitimize terrorist actions involving brutal deaths of Jew and Arab alike and thereby to obstruct any prospect of genuinely furthering the peace process.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under items 37 and 39 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Johanan BEIN
Ambassador
Acting Permanent Representative
