

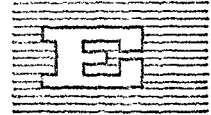
UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC
AND
SOCIAL COUNCIL



Distr.
GENERAL

E/CN.4/1339
9 February 1979

ENGLISH
Original: FRENCH



COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Thirty-fifth session
Item 4 of the provisional agenda

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

Letter dated 9 February 1979 to the Chairman of the Commission on
Human Rights from the Minister for Foreign Affairs ad interim
of the Republic of Egypt

GE.79-10568

The seriousness of the situation in the occupied Arab territories compels me to draw your attention and that of the honourable members of the Commission on Human Rights at its present session to the numerous reports indicating a grave deterioration in conditions in those territories due to the Israeli occupation authorities' persistence in oppressing the Palestinian people and gravely violating human rights in those territories, with the aim of altering the juridical status, population and geographic structure of the occupied Arab territories; this constitutes a serious violation of international agreements, especially the fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, which deals with their rights under occupation.

I should like to draw attention to recently published reports describing tortures inflicted on Arab detainees in Israeli prisons. These inhuman practices, which are one aspect of the brutality of the Israeli occupation regime and bear witness to the sufferings of the Palestinian people, should not be passed over in silence. The latest of these reports is one submitted to Congress by the State Department of the United States.

I should like to draw attention particularly to the obstinancy with which the occupation authorities pursue their policy of establishing new settlements in the occupied Arab territories, especially in Cisjordania and Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip. That policy has been condemned by the international community, as represented by the United Nations, in a series of resolutions adopted since the occupation of the territories in 1967, as illegal, unlawful, null and void. If Israel intends by these measures to pursue the expansion condemned by the whole world and to sow terror among the Palestinian people, a new objective has been added to the many already pursued by Israel in that context as part of its obstinate efforts to evade the commitments it made in the interests of peace in the Middle East in September of last year.

The Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt is gravely concerned about these practices and violations and the motives behind them. It considers that they seriously affect the progress towards peace and constitute a major obstacle to that progress, especially as they involve serious violations of the principles of the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and also the principles of justice and equity.

In view of the urgent nature and seriousness of the situation, the Egyptian Government believes that the Commission on Human Rights would be doing its duty in that regard if it took immediate effective action, on behalf of all mankind and in accordance with the principles of human rights, in order to consolidate the progress already made towards a just and general peace in the Middle East.

Dr. Boutros B. GHALI
Egyptian Minister for Foreign Affairs
ad interim