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GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
Thirty-ninth session  
Items 36 and 71 of the provisional agenda\*\*  
THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST  
REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO  
INVESTIGATE ISRAELI PRACTICES  
AFFECTING THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE  
POPULATION OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

SECURITY COUNCIL  
Thirty-ninth year

Letter dated 9 August 1984 from the Permanent Representative of Jordan  
to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

In many previous letters, the most recent being that dated 1 June 1984 (document A/39/283-S/16598), I have warned of the existence of a deliberate Israeli plan aimed at the destruction of the Islamic and Christian Holy Places and the ancient historic landmarks in the city of Jerusalem. This plan consists, essentially, of the undertaking of excavation work by the Israeli occupation authorities underneath the western wall of the Haram al-Sharif in occupied Jerusalem. The pretext always cited by the Israeli occupation authorities is the search for the remains of the old Temple. However, the purpose of these excavations is to shake the subterranean foundations of the Islamic religious buildings and the ancient historic monuments in the Holy City until these buildings collapse. Israel resorts to this course in the belief that it will exonerate it from political and moral responsibility in the event of damage to and the collapse of these sacred religious symbols and ancient monuments, in which the history of millions of Moslems and Arabs is represented. If these buildings collapse - which God forbid - Israel will believe that its essential goal has been achieved, namely the removal of the international Islamic and Christian religious stamp of the city and also the erasing of the Arab historic face of the Holy City.

As a fresh example of that, I transmit herewith the information prepared by the Technical Section of the Jordanian Ministry of Islamic Affairs and Sacred

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\*\* A/39/150.

A/39/395  
S/16695  
English  
Page 2

Objects concerning the dangers threatening the Manjakiyah School, one of the ancient Islamic schools in Jerusalem, as a result of excavations undertaken by the apparatus of the occupation authorities underneath the western wall of the Haram al-Sharif.

In this connection, I wish to stress once again that these Israeli actions in the occupied city of Jerusalem are in violation of the international law relating to military occupation. Moreover, they reveal the truth of Israel's intentions regarding the Islamic and Christian religious and historic places in the Holy City. I would draw your attention to the fact that such actions, in addition to their negative political effects on peace and stability in the region, reveal the superficiality of the moral backing of the practices of the occupation authorities.

I have the honour to request that this letter be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under items 36 and 71 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Abdullah SALAH  
Permanent Representative

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ANNEX

Subject: The Manjakiyah School, 741 A.H. to 762 A.H.

Mr. Director of Awkaf,

With regard to your oral commission of 7 April 1984 concerning the real property referred to above, I wish to explain the following:

The Manjakiyah School lies to the right of the wall from the Haram al-Sharif, westward in the direction of the Old City from the Nazir Gate (Habs) and adjacent, on the west, to the Hasaniyah School (837 A.H.). Opposite is the Wafa'iyah Zawiyah, which now forms the premises of the Administration of Public Awkaf; it was formerly the seat of the Higher Islamic Council.

This school was built by one of the Mamelukes, Al-Nasir Muhammad ibn Qalawun, known as Sayf al-Din Manjak, who became viceroy of Syria and led a full life, administratively, politically and scientifically.

The construction of this school dates back to the eighth century A.H., more precisely to between 741 A.H. and the end of 762 A.H. It was endowed with many foundations inside and outside Jerusalem. The religious sciences were taught there by many great learned men and local sheikhs, and the school was of great importance.

With the continuation of the excavations being carried out by the Israeli Ministry of Religious Affairs on the western side of the wall of the Haram al-Sharif, underneath the many Islamic buildings surrounding the Haram al-Sharif, which represent the Islamic face of the city of Jerusalem and civilization through a long history, another disaster is added to the many disasters created by irresponsible excavations, this time affecting the Manjakiyah School, which thus joins the Ultimaniyah School, the Jawhariyah School, the Ribat al-Kurd and others. For more than three years, the Engineering Section of the Administration of Awkaf has been observing very slight longitudinal cracks running parallel to the walls of the Haram. These cracks are increasing with time and have affected all the architectural and structural elements over which they run, namely, vaults and arches. There has also been a direct effect on the walls at right angles to the direction of these cracks. The scientific analysis of this phenomenon is as follows:

Subsidence has occurred in the western part of the building, which lies to the west of the walls of the Haram, because of the removal of the soil and the jolting of the ground on account of the underground excavations. Meanwhile, the eastern part of the building remains steady; this is connected to the part which lies above the porticos surrounding the Haram al-Sharif and the wall of the Haram itself. This was the reason for the appearance of the longitudinal cracks parallel to the walls of the Haram al-Sharif and running from south to north.

The horizontal cracks in the walls at right angles to the wall of the Haram al-Sharif again confirm that subsidence has occurred in the western part of the building, while the eastern part remains stable.

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All the vertical cracks coincide exactly with the end of the wall of the Haram al-Sharif to the west, which means that the subsidence of the western part of the building has affected the structural formation of the connecting arches running west to east and has disrupted the structural balance of the building, resulting in the horizontal cracks.

The fact that the size of the cracks has not increased to the size reached by the cracks in the buildings which suffered as a result of excavations during the same period is due to the repairs made to this building for more than four years, inside and outside. The internal repair work included plastering and pointing, and the external repair work included repair of the facades and roofs and the construction of concrete extensions and reinforcement bridges. Had it not been for all this work, the cracks would have been bigger and a disaster in every sense of the word.

This situation, as it is at present, is a warning of the danger approaching with the passing of time, seasonal changes and other effects of climate. All the regular repair and maintenance work cannot stop the main cause of the cracks resulting from the subsidence of part of the building as a result of the removal of soil beneath the foundations of the building, owing to the continuing excavations being conducted in all directions under the auspices of the Israeli Ministry of Religious Affairs.

A number of letters have been written to the Municipality of Jerusalem condemning the damage occurring to this building as a result of the excavations and calling for a halt to the excavations and the removal of the causes of the damage, as follows:

Letter No. MIQ/411/82/256, dated 10 April 1982, addressed to the Mayor;

Letter No. MIQ/411/82/521, dated 21 July 1983, addressed to the Mayor;

Minutes of the meeting with the representative of the Advisory Office commissioned by the Municipality, which took place on 4 January 1984 at the request of the Municipality;

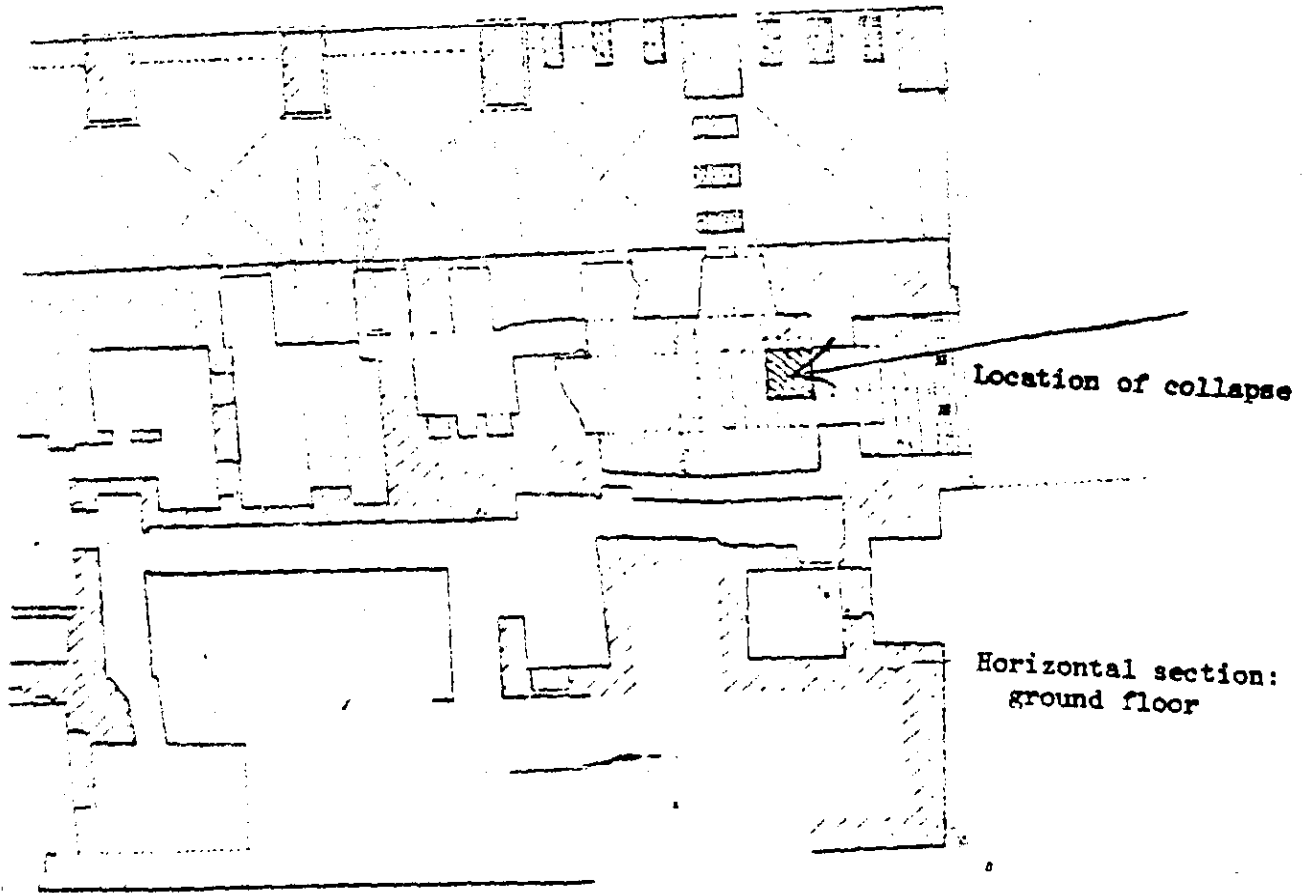
Report of the Engineering Committee, dated 26 January 1984, concerning the reply to the letter of the Mayor's Adviser for East Jerusalem Affairs, dated 15 January 1984;

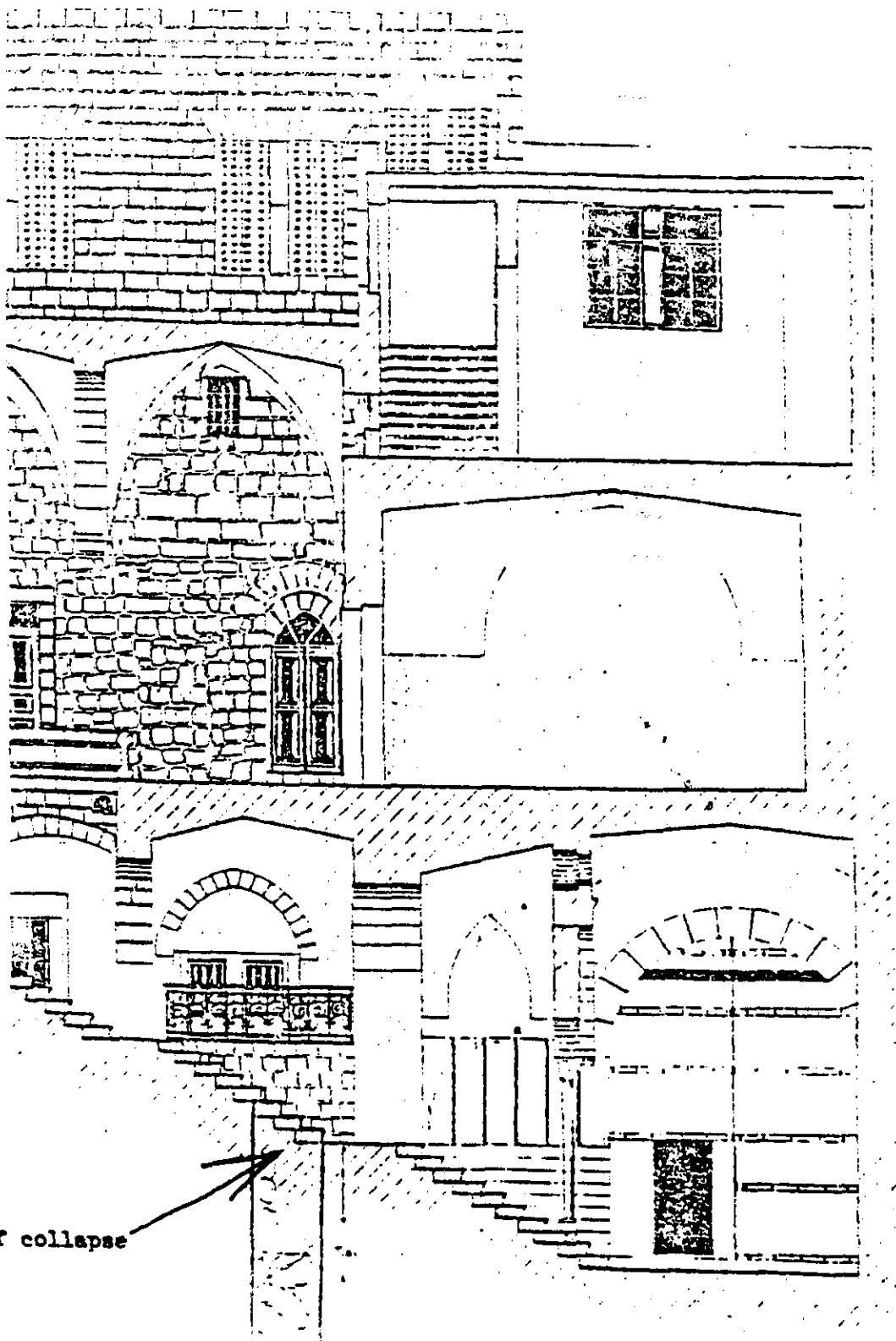
Resolution of the Awqaf Council approving the strengthening of the building by the Municipality; resolution No. 22 of 1 February 1984, adopted at meeting No. 1, informing the Municipality of the letter addressed to the Mayor's Adviser for East Jerusalem Affairs, No. MAQ/411/82/69, dated 24 February 1984.

After the Municipality undertook to strengthen the foundations of the building at the depth to which the excavations by the Ministry of Religious Affairs had penetrated, at precisely 2.30 a.m. on Monday, 26 March 1984, the first three steps of the building collapsed and subsided to a depth of approximately 3 metres, and a gap was left measuring 1.5 metres x 1.5 metres. This gap was directly over the

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site of the subterranean tunnel. A meeting took place of officials in the Municipality, the Ministry of Religious Affairs and the Administration of Awqaf, and the matter was discussed. That was at 7.30 a.m. on 27 March 1984, and it was stressed that a critical stage had been reached and that the matter must be taken more seriously, lest the building collapse.





Location of collapse