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Letter dated 21 September 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 most urgent attention to the grave situation and the further escalation of repression by Israel, the occupying Power, against Palestinians in the occupied Palestinian territory.

According to the latest figures published by the Data Base Project on Palestinian Human Rights, the total number of Palestinians killed by Israeli forces since the beginning of the intifadah reached 714 by mid-August. According to the daily Yediot Aharonoth of 9 September, the Israeli Minister of Defence has further liberalized army rules for shooting at suspected Palestinians, and casualties have increased. According to Ha'aretz, 60 Palestinians were shot to death during the months of July and August alone. The same source reported on 27 July that 20 per cent of the Palestinians killed during the intifadah are children under age 16, of them 21 under 12.

Israel has also continued to resort to other draconian measures in its efforts to suppress the intifadah. According to The Washington Post of 11 September, the Ansar III detention camp in the Negev desert is being expanded to accommodate 1,200 more prisoners as the army steps up its arrests of Palestinians. An army spokesman said that the current number of Palestinian detainees is 8,600, including 4,400

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prisoners in Ansar III, a 75 per cent increase since last February. According to The New York Times of 17 September, more than 40,000 Palestinians have been in prison at one time or another. The majority of the detainees are serving terms of "administrative" detention without formal charges or trial. The standard period of detention has just been doubled from six months to a year. According to the same source, during the last 20 months, hundreds of Palestinian homes have been destroyed by the army. On 27 August, the Israeli military, in defiance of Security Council resolutions, deported another four Palestinians from the occupied territory to Lebanon, and one to France.

Deeply alarmed at the extreme gravity of these increasing incidents of oppression and the mounting loss of life, the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People wishes to protest once again in the strongest terms against the repressive policies and practices of Israel, the occupying Power, which are completely contrary to its obligations under the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949, and to numerous resolutions of the Security Council. The Committee considers that the adoption of urgent measures by the Security Council to provide international protection to the Palestinian civilians, as requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 43/233 of 20 April 1989, is imperative. The Committee would also greatly appreciate appropriate action to alleviate the sufferings of the unarmed civilians under occupation, especially women and children, by you and by the organizations of the United Nations system.

The Committee wishes to stress once again the urgent need to advance towards a comprehensive and just settlement of the question of Palestine in accordance with the principles contained in General Assembly resolution 43/176 of 15 December 1988, which have received the near-unanimous support of the United Nations membership, and appeals to you and to all concerned to intensify all efforts to attain this essential objective.

I should be grateful if this letter could be circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under item 39 of the provisional agenda, and of the Security Council.

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