



General Assembly Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

A/45/283
S/21308
22 May 1990

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MAY 24 1990

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GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Forty-fifth session
Items 23, 35 and 77 of the preliminary list*
QUESTION OF PALESTINE
THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST
REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE
ISRAELI PRACTICES AFFECTING THE HUMAN RIGHTS
OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AND OTHER ARABS OF
THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

SECURITY COUNCIL
Forty-fifth year

Letter dated 21 May 1990 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine
to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I am instructed by the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization, which has the powers and responsibilities of the Provisional Government of Palestine, to bring the following to your immediate attention:

On Sunday, 20 May 1990, at 6.00 a.m., seven Palestinian workers from the Gaza Strip were lined up against a wall and shot dead by an Israeli soldier at Rishon Letzion, just outside Tel Aviv. Several more workers were critically wounded in the attack. As Palestinians throughout the occupied Palestinian territory of the West Bank and Gaza Strip poured into the streets to protest against these brutal and cold-blooded killings, at least 7 more were massacred and more than 800 wounded by Israeli troops.

This appalling crime of genocide comes at a time when Israeli extremism is on the rise and when the Shamir Government has demonstrated its intransigence and unwillingness to participate in any peaceful resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Far from being an isolated incidence of violence on the part of one disturbed individual, as the Israeli Government has tried to portray it, the attack is a direct result of the atmosphere of racism and violence fanned not only by extremist elements but by the Israeli

* A/45/50.

leadership itself. These crimes are a stark example of the extreme vulnerability of unarmed Palestinian civilians who continue to live under a vicious military occupation without any form of international protection.

Eight prominent individuals in the West Bank and Gaza - Faisal Husseini, Hanan Ashrawi, Riyad Malki, Ziad Abu Zayyad, Sa'eb Erekat, Sari Nusseibi, Asiah Habash and Simone Kuttab - have started an open-ended hunger strike, calling for the immediate convening of an emergency session of the United Nations Security Council, the immediate dispatching of an international team of inquiry to investigate today's incidents and immediate international protection for the camps, villages and towns of occupied Palestine. (A statement by Palestinian national institutions and personalities is attached.)

I am instructed to request Your Excellency to take immediate action and concrete measures to ensure respect for the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention and the security and safety of our people.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter, together with the attached statement, circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under items 23, 35 and 77 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Zuhdi L. TERZI
Permanent Observer of
Palestine to the United Nations

ANNEX

A leaflet issued on 20 May 1990 by Palestinian personalities
and institutions in occupied Palestine

The outrageous massacre of Palestinian workers committed by an Israeli soldier this morning is abhorrent and repulsive. It proves once more that Israeli extremism is on the rampage, whereby Palestinian lives have become targets for murder and the life of an Arab Palestinian is legitimate prey for deliberate killing at any time and place for no other reason than his/her national identity.

The Israeli military occupation authorities are no longer satisfied with their policy of daily repression and with the murder of innocent Palestinian civilians in occupied Palestine; Palestinians have also become targets for Israeli extremism and terrorism, regardless of the fact that the victims in this case were labourers seeking sustenance for their families already suffering from the cruelty of Israeli occupation.

The full responsibility for this massacre must not be attributed solely to a soldier firing indiscriminately and motivated by hatred and racism, but the full culpability must be squarely shouldered by the Israeli political leadership headed by Yitzhak Shamir. This leadership has incessantly spread the venom of hatred, racism and unbridled loathing against the Palestinian people and has done its utmost to destroy any possibilities for the launching of the peace process. These ruling circles alone bear the responsibility for this latest in a series of massacres committed against the defenceless civilian population.

The fact that this is an episode in an ongoing policy of crimes against the Palestinian people is augmented by such incidents as the burning alive of Palestinian workers in Ur Yehuda more than a year ago and a short while later the indiscriminate killing by Jewish settlers of Palestinian workers returning from their work places in Israel - all this in addition to numerous other crimes.

This series of ugly crimes against our unarmed civilian population comes as a natural conclusion for the total disregard for Palestinian human lives and as a consequence of this Israeli Government's policy of rejectionism, extremism and terrorism. It also comes as an inevitable and implicit result of the official Israeli policy of leniency towards Israeli murderers whenever the victim is a Palestinian Arab.

We, national personalities and institutions from the occupied State of Palestine, affirm the following:

1. The life of the Palestinian individual is exposed to real danger at every moment and in every place. We therefore reiterate yet one more time our demand for immediate international protection for the camps, villages and towns of occupied Palestine.

2. We demand the total withdrawal of the Israeli occupation forces from Palestine and their immediate replacement with United Nations forces in order to preserve the lives of our innocent people.
3. We request the immediate convening of a United Nations Security Council session, and of sessions of international human rights organizations to put an immediate end to these massacres.
4. We ask the international labour movement in the democratic countries of the world to intervene immediately and effectively and to express its condemnation of this crime against its fellow workers.
5. We ask the Arab leaders who are to participate in a summit meeting towards the end of this month to bear fully and clearly their responsibilities towards our people who are being subject to blatant, collective extermination.
6. The United States Administration, which constantly pays lip service to human rights all over the world while at the same time consistently ignoring the human rights of Palestinians, bears a large portion of responsibility for the deterioration of conditions in the occupied Palestinian territories owing to its continuous policy of appeasement and unqualified support of Israel and of Israel's flagrant disregard for all international attempts at establishing peace in the region based on the principles of international legitimacy.
7. The abandonment of martyrs and the wounded without extending any assistance to them and the various cruel measures of repression and murder implemented by the occupation authorities in confronting Palestinian popular protest and denunciation of this massacre all clearly indicate the increasing fascist and racist trends in Israeli society.
8. We appeal to the members of the Socialist International who are meeting at Cairo in the next few days and relay to them the crucial necessity of taking immediate action, of fulfilling their responsibility and of ending the Israeli occupation of the State of Palestine.

Glory and Immortality to our Martyrs!
Long Live the PLO!

Palestinian national institutions
and personalities in the occupied
State of Palestine
