

*Permanent Observer Mission
of the State of Palestine
to the United Nations*



البعثة المراقبة الدائمة
لدولة فلسطين
لدى الأمم المتحدة

Ref. SGC.38/17

24 January 2017

Excellency,

I regret to inform you of the continuing grave breaches being perpetrated by Israel, the occupying Power, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, in flagrant contempt for international law and defiance of the international community and with devastating consequences on the two-State solution and the prospect for peace.

In the month since the Security Council's adoption of resolution 2334 (2016), which, inter alia, reaffirmed the illegality of Israeli settlement activities and demanded their complete cessation and respect by the occupying Power for its obligations under international law, the Israeli Government has been unrelenting in its rejectionist and inflammatory rhetoric, provocative decisions, and illegal actions, all in direct violation of the resolution's provisions and the longstanding demand of the international community that Israel cease its illegal settlement campaign in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and that it genuinely commit to the two-State solution on the basis of the 1967 borders, in both word and deed.

On Sunday, 22 January, the occupying Power authorities granted approval for the construction of 566 more units in illegal settlements in Occupied East Jerusalem. The meaning of such a number must be underscored for those units translate into facilitation for the illegal transfer of thousands more Israeli settlers, further altering the demographic composition and character of the Occupied East Jerusalem, all in deliberate violation of international law and the relevant United Nations resolutions, including resolution 2334 (2016), which was patently clear as to the prohibitions and the obligations incumbent upon the occupying Power in this regard.

This illegal, provocative decision was followed today by approval by the Israeli Prime Minister himself of another 2,500 units in illegal settlements throughout the Occupied West Bank. The Prime Minister has, among the things, brazenly declared that "*we are building and will continue to build*". The implementation of such a decision will result in further expansion of illegal Israeli settlement and related infrastructure, including the wall, in Occupied Palestine, including East Jerusalem, and further entrench the occupation, rather than reverse the negative trends in this regard, as clearly called for by the Security Council and by the Quartet in its 1 July 2016 report recommendations and statements thereafter.

These actions, in addition to the crimes enumerated in the annex to this letter, reveal the true unlawful, annexationist intentions of the Israeli Government, its intent to persist with its half-century foreign occupation of the Palestinian people and land, and the deceit of its proclaimed commitment to the two-State solution. While the global consensus is that salvaging the two-State solution based on the 1967 lines is dependent on the full, immediate cessation and reversal of all such illegal activities, the rhetoric, decisions and actions by the Israeli Government are totally to the contrary and constitute grave violations of international law and blatant contempt of the international community.

H.E. Mr. Olof Skoog
The President of the Security Council
The United Nations, New York

As stated in this regard by Dr. Hanan Ashrawi today on behalf of the Palestine Liberation Organization's Executive Committee: *"Once again, the Israeli Government has proved that it is more committed to land theft and colonialism than to the two-State solution and the requirements for peace and stability. Such a deliberate escalation of Israel's illegal settlement enterprise constitutes a war crime and flagrant violation of international law and conventions, in particular United Nations Security Council resolution 2334."*

We urge the international community to unequivocally reject and condemn such illegal Israeli actions and provocations. A clear message must be sent to the occupying Power that such contempt of the law and the international community will not be tolerated and that international law and UN resolutions must be respected by all States. No State should be given the privilege to be the exception to the law.

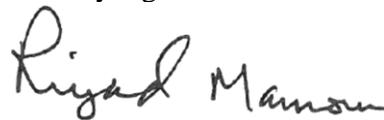
Furthermore, we urge that serious and practical measures be undertaken by the international community aimed at bringing about a complete cessation of Israeli settlement activities and to hold Israel, the occupying Power, accountable for the continuation of this and any other breaches of the law. In this regard, we stress the imperative of the implementation of resolution 2334 (2016) in its entirety. We recall the obligations stipulated in the resolution, both in terms of the obligations of the occupying Power and those of States and the international community as a whole, to bring an end to this illegal situation, to reverse the negative trends on the ground that are destroying the two-State solution, and to advance a just, comprehensive and lasting peace.

The viability of the two-State is dependent on this as is the prospect for Palestinian-Israeli peace. At the same time, it is obvious that the credibility and viability of international law and the international system are at stake. The international community, with the Security Council at the forefront, must answer such defiance by Israel, the occupying Power, with a firm resolve for peace, commitment to the law, support for the two-State solution, and rejection of all such illegal actions and provocations. The key to this is clear: working immediately and faithfully to uphold and implement resolution 2334 (2016) and the international consensus in this regard.

This letter is in follow-up to our 602 previous letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which constitutes the territory of the State of Palestine. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 20 January 2017 (A/ES-10/XXX-S/2017/XXX) constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations being committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter made available to the members of the Security Council for their immediate and valuable consideration.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.



Dr. Riyad Mansour
Ambassador, Permanent Observer
of the State of Palestine to the United Nations

ANNEX

20 January 2017

- A 6-year-old child from Beit Lahiya was seriously injured when she was hit in the stomach by a bullet fired by Israeli occupying forces along the northern borders of the Gaza Strip.

21 January 2017

- Israeli occupying forces opened fire at civilian homes and farms east to the town of Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip.

22 January 2017

- Israeli occupying forces detained seven Palestinians during raids in Bethlehem and Jerusalem.
- The occupying Power approved the construction of another 566 units in the illegal Israeli settlements in Occupied East Jerusalem.

23 January 2017

- Israeli occupying forces opened fire at Palestinian fishing boats near Al-Sudaniya in northern Gaza while sailing within four nautical miles. One fisherman was moderately injured in the head.
- Israeli occupying forces detained 24 Palestinians from across the West Bank, including a woman and seven children.
- Occupying forces notified a Palestinian from Al-Khader village, south of Bethlehem, to leave his land near the village, claiming the land is state property and that no Palestinian should enter it.
- Occupying forces raided the village of Husan, west to Bethlehem, and seized construction materials and tools from a car mechanic shop under the pretext the owners did not have permits.

24 January 2017

- The occupying Power announced approval of plans for the construction of another 2,500 units in illegal settlements throughout the West Bank.