

PUBLIC

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Fear for Safety

26 October 2000

**ISRAEL/  
PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY/  
OCCUPIED TERRITORIES      Civilians**

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As the crisis in Israel and the Occupied Territories deepens, Amnesty International renews its appeals to the Israeli authorities to end the use of excessive force by the Israeli security forces, which has resulted in unlawful killings of Palestinians. Both Israeli settlers and armed Palestinian groups have fired on civilian targets.

Since 29 September more than 130 Palestinians have been killed by the Israeli security forces, nearly 40 of them children, during riots and demonstrations in Israel and the Occupied Territories. Among them were medical personnel carrying out their duties. More than 4,000 have been injured. The Israeli security forces have persistently used excessive force, including lethal force, in response to the riots. There have also been instances of medical personnel being impeded as they tried to provide assistance.

Amnesty International sent two delegations to the area. The first included a riot policing specialist, Dr Stephen Males. Most protests involved demonstrators throwing stones at Israeli security forces or guardhouses. In the Occupied Territories, including areas under the Palestinian Authority, demonstrators also used Molotov cocktails and firearms on several occasions. However, Amnesty International has concluded that the security forces' response - which included the widespread use of high-velocity rounds and rubber-coated metal bullets, which can be lethal - was not consistent with Israeli guidelines and international standards on the use of force. These allow law enforcement officers to use lethal force only as a last resort when life is in imminent danger. Demonstrators including young children have been killed when they posed no such threat.

Israeli Defence Force (IDF) spokespeople told Amnesty International delegates in Israel this week that although Israeli guidelines on the use of force have not changed, the situation had moved beyond law enforcement and close to armed conflict. As a consequence, the IDF, as a matter of policy, was no longer carrying out investigations into killings by the security forces. The Palestinian Authority also told delegates that they were not carrying out investigations into killings of Palestinians by the Israeli security services.

There have also been reports of apparent random firing at Palestinian villages from Israeli settlements and vice-versa.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in English/Arabic or your own language:**

**To the Israeli Prime minister, Minister of Justice, Chief of General Staff and Minister of Public Security:**

- expressing your fears for the safety of both Palestinian and Israeli civilians;
- reminding them that the security forces have a duty to protect and respect life, particularly the lives of children;
- urging the Israeli government to take immediate action to ensure that the Israeli security forces comply with international standards governing the use of force and firearms, which require that lethal force may only be used as a last resort and only if life is in imminent danger;
- reminding the Israeli government of their responsibility to investigate every killing, to bring to justice anyone suspected of unlawful killings, and to try them in accordance with international standards;
- urging them to prevent any attacks on civilians from Israeli settlements, to investigate any such attacks and bring the perpetrators to justice;
- asking the Israeli government to initiate a review of its guidelines on policing of riots and demonstrations without delay, to ensure that its security forces comply with international human rights standards.

**To the Israeli Minister of Health:**

- urging him to investigate immediately the incidents in which the security forces have opened fire on medical personnel, resulting in the killing of an ambulance driver in the Gaza strip, and to do everything in his power to ensure that those responsible are brought to justice;
- urging him to make sure that medical personnel are not delayed or hindered in carrying out their duties by the Israeli security forces or by any one else;

**To the Palestinian Authority**

- expressing your fears for the safety of both Palestinian and Israeli civilians;
- reminding the authorities that the security forces have a duty to protect and respect life, particularly the lives of children.
- urging them to prevent any attacks on civilians from the territories under their jurisdiction, to investigate any such attacks and bring the perpetrators to justice.

**APPEALS TO:**

**Israeli Authorities:**

Lieutenant-General Shaul Mufaz  
Chief of General Staff  
c/o Ministry of Defence  
7 'A' Street  
Hakiryia  
Tel Aviv

**Fax: + 972 3 691 6940**

**Salutation: Dear Lieutenant-General**

Major-General Yomtov Samia  
Israeli Defence Forces  
Gaza Strip  
Military Pot 01105  
Erez check Point

**Fax: + 972 76741650/79902655**

**Salutation: Dear Major-General**

Major-General Yitzah Eitan  
Israeli Defence Forces  
West Bank  
Central area Command  
64 Israeli Defence Forces  
Military Post 01149

**Fax: + 972 25305741**

**Salutation: Dear Major-General**

Roni Milo  
Minister of Health  
Ministry of Health  
2 Ben Taibai Street  
PO Box 1176  
Jerusalem 91010

**Fax: + 972 26796491**

**Salutation: Dear Minister**

**The Palestinian Authority:**

Yasser Arafat  
President, Minister of the Interior,  
Palestinian National Authority  
Office of the President  
The Beach Forum  
Gaza City  
Palestinian Authority

**Fax: +972 7 282 2366**

**Salutation: Dear President**

**COPIES TO:** diplomatic representatives of Israel and the Palestinian authority accredited to your country.

**COPIES OF APPEALS TO ISRAELI AUTHORITIES TO:**

Ehud Barak

Prime Minister and Minister of Defence

Office of the Prime Minister

3 Kaplan Street

Hakirya, Jerusalem 910071

**Telegrams: Prime Minister, Jerusalem**

**Fax: + 972 2 566 4838**

**Salutation: Dear Prime Minister**

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 6 December 2000.