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## رسالة حولة أزمة سكن الفلسطينيين

باسم لجنة الطوارئ لسكن مادة مطبوعة باللغة الإنجليزية وهي رسالة مروسة  
الفلسطيني، تناقش الفلسطينيين التابعة لاتحاد لجان العمل النسائي  
حدث من تغير على قضية اللاجئين الفلسطينيين في الداخل والشتات وما  
واقع اللجوء الفلسطيني بسبب الترحيل.

EMERGENCY COMMITTEE FOR PALESTINIAN RESIDENCE  
PALESTINIAN FEDERATION OF WOMEN'S ACTION COMMITTEES  
APPEAL

**THE NATURE OF THE EMERGENCY:**

Within the past year conditions for Palestinians living in the occupied territories without resident status have sharply deteriorated. Hundreds, if not thousands, of families have been forcibly separated through the administrative deportation of husbands, wives and children. Hundreds of others remain in the territories by virtue of temporary restraining orders from the Israeli High Court, waiting for their cases to be judged.

Since September 1991, it has been extremely difficult, if not impossible, for Palestinians to obtain visit permits to enter the occupied territories, even for emergency reasons. Newly married women have remained stranded in hotel rooms in Amman; seriously ill and destitute older people have been unable to reach their relatives in the territories; extremely elderly people have remained isolated in their villages; parents and other close relatives have died without members outside being able to reach them or attend their funerals. Civil administrations throughout the territories have told people that visit permits will become available once again in June 1992, if at all, during the 'visit permit season.'

New difficulties surround visit permits when they are available. All visit permits now carry a NIS5000 (US\$2300) 'guarantee' that the person who enters the territories will leave at the end of the period specified by the permit. The obtaining of permits has also been restricted to what are called 'first-degree' relatives: parents, spouses, siblings and children.

The June 1990 agreement reached in the Israeli High Court to provide some measure of secure status for young women married to residents of the territories and their children has been under attack, especially with regard to women married and entering the territories after that date. Renewal of visit permits has been denied these women. Hundreds of young women have been deported and over 150 others remain at home by means of High Court orders.

The security of women married and resident before the June 1990 agreement is also being undermined. Although these women are supposed to be entitled to remain at home without disruption, by means of six-month, automatically renewable, reduced-rate visit permits, many of them are being forced to leave the territories under a variety of pretexts. Once outside, their return may be extremely difficult. For those who return, their new visit permits carry the NIS5000 guarantee.

Husbands have no security whatsoever: non-resident men who have returned to live with their families in their villages of origin have been deported. Several dozen of them remain at home by means of High Court orders. These are families in which the wives and large numbers of children have resident status.

Children are especially vulnerable. Since Military Order 1208 was issued September 13, 1987, thousands of children are born stateless in the occupied territories each year. Although they are supposedly protected by the June 1990 agreement there has been at least one case in which a four-year-old girl was



deported. Other children have been threatened.

There are also a small number of families who have lived in the territories, without resident status, often for more than 10 years. Children of such families have difficulty attending school or travelling outside their villages. One such family was deported this year; others remain threatened.

Unless there are immediate changes in Israeli policy, the coming 'visit permit season' will provide no more--at best--than a brief respite for forcibly separated and dismembered Palestinian families.

#### **WHAT CAN BE DONE:**

Although the current emergency for families in the occupied territories has to be understood within the larger context of negotiations over Palestinian citizenship, the return of refugees and the control of borders the emergency problems facing Palestinian families can not wait for the larger issues to be resolved. Nor can they wait for 'interim arrangements', although such arrangements may provide genuine security within the framework of resident rather than citizenship status (for example, through family reunification). With the exception of Military Order 1208 regarding children all the problems under discussion have arisen within the past year. Their continuation not only creates severe hardship for Palestinian families but also threatens to pre-empt any just resolution of the issue of Palestinian residence, leaving nothing to be negotiated.

We call for the following actions:

1. An immediate halt to all forced departures from the occupied territories;
2. The interpretation of the June 1990 High Court agreement to include all wives of residents, whatever the date of marriage, and its extension to include all spouses;
3. The restoration of an open visit permit policy, including the cancellation of the NIS5000 'guarantee' and the issuing of visit permits to all relatives of residents;
4. The cancellation of Military Order 1208 and the immediate registration of all children of residents;
5. The immediate return of all spouses and children administratively deported or forced to leave the territories.

We call upon all consulates and embassies to forcefully raise this issue with the Israeli government. We call upon all Palestinian, Israeli and international non-governmental, humanitarian and human rights organizations to use every means at their disposal to ensure that this emergency be addressed. We call upon all participants in and sponsors of the current peace negotiations to raise and resolve this issue as a special emergency issue in the forthcoming April meetings.

April 22, 1992