

PORTUGAL

United Nations General Assembly Tenth emergency special session

Illegal Israel actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the
Occupied Palestinian Territory

Speech delivered by
H.E. Mr. José Filipe Moraes Cabral, Ambassador, Permanent Representative
of Portugal to the United Nations

New York, 16 January 2009

(Check against delivery)

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Mr. President,

I would like to add some comments on my national capacity to the statement delivered by the Czech Republic on behalf of the European Union.

It is with the deepest concern that we continue to follow the violence, human rights violations, civilian deaths, including women and children and the worsening humanitarian situation in and around Gaza. We join our voice to others in the International Community calling for an immediate ceasefire and for the withdrawal of the Israeli forces from Gaza, in accordance with the UNSC resolution 1860.

Portugal deeply regrets the acts of violence that caused such a high number of civilian casualties. We condemn both the rocket attacks by Hamas and the Israeli military operation. Both must cease immediately.

We invite all parties to do everything in their power to enable the alleviation of the current dramatic humanitarian situation. To this sense we encourage Israel to create the necessary security conditions to allow for the distribution of humanitarian assistance, including medical treatment to the affected population. We also urge the Parties to fully respect their obligations under international humanitarian law.

In view of the seriousness of the humanitarian crisis, Portugal decided to make an extraordinary contribution of 400.000 dollars to the Emergency Appeal launched by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency in the Middle East.

Mr. President,

There is no military solution for the conflict in the Middle East. Portugal, along with its European Union partners, continues to support the ongoing diplomatic initiatives aimed at stopping the current crisis and underlines the risks of radicalisation emerging from the continuing hostilities.

We appeal to all parties to resume the principles and objectives of the Annapolis Conference in order to achieve a lasting peace in the Middle East, based on a two State solution with the establishment of an independent, viable and democratic Palestinian State living side by side in peace and security with Israel and its other neighbours.

Thank you, Mr. President.