

بِسْمِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



STATEMENT OF THE STATE OF QATAR

BY

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PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE STATE OF**

QATAR

TO THE UNITED NATIONS

AT

**THE (RESUMED) TENTH EMERGENCY SPECIAL
SESSION**

OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

ON

**THE ILLEGAL ISRAELI ACTIONS IN OCCUPIED EAST
JERUSALEM AND THE REST OF THE OCCUPIED
PALESTINIAN TERRITORY**

NEW YORK, 15 JANUARY 2009

In the name of God the Merciful the Compassionate

Mr. President,

I would like at the outset to thank you very much for your valuable efforts to convene this special session under the critical and tragic circumstances experienced by the Palestinian population in Gaza Strip that is still covered by the thick clouds billowing from the fiercest-yet bombardment and destruction since the beginning of the military campaign on Gaza by Israel, the occupying Power. The Israeli occupying forces have killed more than 1000 civilian Palestinians, including at least 350 infants and children and 180 women, and seriously wounded more than 4850 civilian Palestinians, including more than 100 infants and children.

Those horrifying figures of those fallen victims highlight the seriousness of the situation endured by the Palestinian civilian population in Gaza Strip, particularly by the children and their families. Entire families have been killed and buried alive under the rubble of their homes that collapsed over their heads after being hit with rockets and artillery. The Palestinian people in Gaza live in a state of constant fear that will have a large-scale impact on the short and long terms in view of the worsening critical humanitarian situation, as stated by the reports of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and UNICEF.

Mr. President,

The vicious Israeli aggression on Gaza Strip has entered its 20th day. The Israeli forces continue their intensive onslaught on civilian targets in the most densely populated areas of the world, using prohibited substances, including the substance of white phosphorus, which has caused deep burns and resulted in the death of many victims among the Palestinians, started fires that could not be put out, and caused long-term environmental damages. This whole behavior constitutes a flagrant violation of the international humanitarian law and the international human rights laws. Furthermore, Israel has officially ignored the implementation of Security Council resolution 1860 which called on Israel, *inter alia*, to order an immediate cease-fire. It has also ignored the resolution of the Human Rights Council adopted during its ninth special session, which called on Israel to stop its direct targeting of civilians and civilian targets, including educational, health and cultural buildings protected under the international law.

Mr. President,

Similarly to other peoples of the region and the world, it feels painful for us, in the State of Qatar, to see the pictures of the Palestinian victims captured by the cameras from Gaza. Such pictures will not fade from our memory. How can we, Mr. President, forget the image of that little girl who was buried under the rubble, with only her head showing from under the soil like a puppet of flesh and bones? Such pictures embody a tragedy that reflects the unimaginable reality in which the Palestinians of Gaza Strip currently live. Could somebody tell us what action is being taken by virtue of the United Nations legal mechanisms related to children, women and persons with disabilities? What is being done about the crimes being committed against those groups in Gaza Strip? Each and every massacre committed constitute war crimes that warrant an independent international investigation to punish the perpetrators for their actions. In this context, we welcome the decision of the Human Rights Council of 12 January, which calls on the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the special rapporteurs of the United Nations, including the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict, to submit reports on human rights violations by the Israeli aggression against the Palestinians in Gaza Strip. The same resolution has called for establishing an independent fact-finding mission to investigate the crimes committed against the Palestinians in Gaza Strip during this aggression. The same resolution has also requested the Secretary-General of the United Nations to conduct an independent investigation on the attacks against UNRWA schools that claimed the lives of young and elderly civilians.

Mr. President,

The recent tragic events have prompted His Highness Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani, the Emir of the State of Qatar, to address a second speech to the international community on the evening of 14 January in which he called for acting to hold Israel accountable before national and international tribunals for the war crimes against humanity it has been and still is committing. His Highness has also launched an initiative to establish a fund for the reconstruction of Gaza, and announced a 250 million dollar contribution by the State of Qatar in support of the yet-to-be-created fund. His Highness called further to set up a seahift, in which all the Arab countries would participate, in order to transport humanitarian assistance to the Gaza Strip as soon as possible.

Mr. President,

In the context of this tragedy, it is truly regrettable that some equate between the criminal and the victim and justify the massacres committed against the Palestinian people in Gaza Strip, under the pretext of Israel's right to self-defense, thus turning a blind eye on all the war crimes committed by Israel in Gaza Strip, while they themselves call for the implementation of the international humanitarian law and human rights laws and for the fight against impunity in other settings and situations. What about the right of the Palestinians to be protected, to live in peace and safety, and to get rid of the occupation? And what about their right to self-determination, to equity and to justice and to punish those who committed crimes against their sons and daughters?

Last but not least, we have come to this forum to appeal to the international community to act immediately to put an end to the Israeli crimes being committed in Gaza Strip and to hold Israel accountable for its criminal acts against the Palestinian people in Gaza Strip. We support a resolution that binds Israel to implement the resolutions of the United Nations and the Security Council, starting with the immediate implementation of resolution 1860 (2009) that was most recently adopted by the Security Council. The credibility of this United Nations body is at stake, so let us act by taking the path towards restoring credibility to this entity among our peoples before it is too late.

I thank you Mr. President.