

*The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Rwanda to the United Nations*



STATEMENT

BY

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PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF  
RWANDA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

ON BEHALF OF THE AFRICAN GROUP

BEFORE THE

GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESUMED 10<sup>th</sup> EMERGENCY SPECIAL  
SESSION ON ILLEGAL ISRAELI ACTIONS IN THE OCCUPIED  
PALESTINIAN TERRITORY

NEW YORK, 16<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY, 2009.

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Mr. President,

I have the honour to deliver the following statement on behalf of the African group. Allow me at the outset to thank you for convening the resumed Tenth Emergency Special Session on the Israeli Illegal Actions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, particularly the Gaza Strip. The African Group appreciates the high level of priority that you have devoted to this issue and to the continued suffering of the Palestinian people.

Mr. President,

We are 21 days into the present conflict in the Gaza Strip which has claimed close to 1,000 lives and resulted in over 4,000 injuries and still we see little if any sign of abatement. The already fragile humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip has deteriorated dramatically since Israel began its military offensive, with innocent civilians, particularly women and children bearing the brunt of the suffering. The African Group strongly condemns the loss of life on both sides and urges for an immediate cessation of hostilities.

Mr. President,

The African Group notes with regret that 8 days since the adoption of Security Council Resolution 1860 scant progress has been realised in its implementation. The African Group urges this emergency session to ensure that Security Council resolution 1860, which among other important provisions calls for “an immediate, durable and fully respected ceasefire and “the unimpeded provision and distribution throughout Gaza of humanitarian assistance, including food, fuel and medical treatment”, is implemented without further delay or preconditions.

We urge Israel to comply fully with the UN Security Council Resolution, to cease its massive attacks against the civilian population in the Gaza Strip and respect the provisions of international humanitarian law, by lifting the siege and ending the wanton destruction of life and property. We call upon both parties to cease all military activities and pursue the path of lasting peace guided by the current diplomatic efforts, including the Egyptian initiative.

Mr. President,

The African Group welcomes the ongoing efforts by the Secretary-General and other members of the international community that have mobilized to ensure a lasting solution to the present conflict is arrived at. The African Group wishes to pay special tribute to UNRWA and all other organizations that are actively engaged in alleviating the plight of the citizens of Gaza under the most of difficult of conditions. It is imperative that the International community remains actively seized of the situation in the Gaza Strip.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, I wish to reiterate that the African Group will continue to support all initiatives aimed at achieving a two-state-solution for the two peoples, the fighting has gone on for too long, the suffering of people has to stop.

I thank you.