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SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIET NAM

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Statement

by H.E. Ambassador Le Luong Minh, Permanent Representative of Viet Nam on Agenda Item "Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory" at the Resumed Tenth Emergency Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly

New York, 15 January 2009

Mr. President,

On behalf of the Delegation of Viet Nam, I would like to thank you for convening this emergency meeting of the General Assembly. I would also like to thank distinguished Ambassador Abelardo Moreno of Cuba for presenting the common position of the Non-Aligned Movement that Viet Nam totally shares and supports.

Mr. President,

The escalation of violence and the losses and sufferings of the Palestinian people in Gaza as a result of the Israeli bombings and military operations has been a cause of the international community's deep concern. We are gravely preoccupied by the loss of so many innocent lives, many of defenseless women, children and humanitarian personnel, and the massive destruction of their homes, properties, Gaza's infrastructure and UN facilities, including schools and hospitals.

In the face of the gravity of the current crisis, my Delegation emphasizes the urgent need to cease all military activities and violence and to provide immediate protection for the Palestinian civilian population in Gaza in accordance with international humanitarian laws. We urge all parties concerned to respond to the repeated appeals of the international community and implement without delay Security Council resolution 1860 adopted a week ago which provides for an immediate, durable and fully respected ceasefire, the unimpeded provision and distribution throughout Gaza of humanitarian assistance and the sustained reopening of the border crossings into Gaza on the basis of the 2005 Agreement on Movement and Access. We urge Israel to stop all military operations, immediately withdraw forces from Gaza, and remove the imposition of blockage and restrictions against the Palestinian population, thus creating fundamental premises for stopping the cycle of violence and resolving the humanitarian crisis in Gaza. Viet Nam supports adoption by the General Assembly of a resolution to these effects.

Mr. President,

The United Nations agencies, including the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), other humanitarian organizations and the international community play a crucial and indispensable role in extending emergency assistance to the Palestinian people in Gaza. We urge the parties concerned to facilitate the safe and unhindered operations of humanitarian personnel on the ground and take measures to assure their safety.

In solidarity with the suffering people of Palestine in Gaza, the Government of Viet Nam has decided to provide emergency assistance to be transmitted to UNRWA for onward distribution.

Mr. President,

Violence and counter-violence will neither advance the mutual peace and security of Palestinians and Israelis nor help them achieve the internationally-recognized and aspired goal of a two-State solution. At this critical juncture, we call upon all parties concerned to exercise utmost restraint, renounce all actions that may cause further bloodshed and immediately return to peaceful negotiations to resolve remaining disputes. Viet Nam stands ready to support and contribute to the intensified and coordinated efforts of the United Nations, regional countries and the international community at large in finding a durable solution which may help end the continuing loss of innocent lives, prevent the present situation from recurrence or further escalation, and bring the peace process back on track.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, I wish to reaffirm Viet Nam's steadfast support for the peaceful settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and for the right of the Palestinian people to exercise self-determination and sovereignty in their independent State of Palestine, living side by side in peace with Israel within secure and recognized borders, based on the Road Map, the Arab Peace Initiative, the Annapolis Joint Understanding, and relevant United Nations resolutions, including relevant Security Council resolutions.

I thank you, Mr. President!