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Department of Political Affairs - Security Council Affairs Division
Security Council Practices and Charter Research Branch

22. The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

Overview

During the period under review, the Security Council held twenty six meetings, including one closed meeting, in connection with the agenda item entitled “The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question” without adopting any resolution or presidential statement. Meetings during 2012 focused mainly on the efforts by the international community to re-start talks between Israel and Palestine that could lead to a resumption of peace negotiations; the Palestinian bid for upgrading their status to non-member observer State status in the United Nations; and the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Gaza. During 2013, the Council considered the escalation of activities that undermined a two-State solution following the General Assembly decision to grant Palestine non-member observer State status; the situation of Palestinian prisoners in Israel; and the resumption of direct negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians in July for a nine-month period. Developments in Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic, Yemen and the overall political situation in the Middle East were also discussed during the period but are featured elsewhere in this part.¹

The table at the end of the section lists the meetings at which this item was considered, and gives information on, inter alia, invitees and speakers.

¹ For more information, see sect. 23 in the present part, concerning the situation in the Middle East.

Debates on the Israel-Palestine peace process and the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories

On 24 January 2012, the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs reported that meetings between Israel and Palestine had started in Amman on 3 January 2012, after having remained suspended since late September 2010. He hoped that those preparatory meetings would lead to serious negotiations. However, he expressed concern over actions on the ground, including settlement activity in the West Bank and related violence. He also reported that the Palestinian Authority had continued to build its institutions, despite concern over its financial situation due to shortfalls in funding and a slowdown in economic growth. Turning to the situation in Gaza, he condemned any indiscriminate firing towards civilian areas and called for the lifting of the closure in the framework of resolution [1860 \(2009\)](#).²

The Permanent Observer of Palestine reaffirmed that recognising the State of Palestine would constitute a genuine investment in the two-State solution for peace. He added that Palestine had fully cooperated with the efforts of the Quartet to advance the two-State solution based on the pre-1967 borders while Israel was acting to entrench the occupation by continuing its settlements activities. On the situation in Gaza, he stated that the humanitarian situation remained critical due to the Israeli blockade by land, air and sea, and that Israel had been using excessive force against peaceful protesters.³

The representative of Israel indicated that resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was important but that, in the context of the Arab Spring, the misallocation of the time and resources of the Council was eroding its credibility. He noted that the primary obstacle to peace was not settlements, but the so-called claim of return, which would mean the destruction of Israel. He also expressed concern about the situation in the Gaza Strip and the rocket attacks by Hamas targeting Israeli cities and civilians.⁴

Many speakers expressed support to the Jordanian and the Quartet efforts for a resumption of negotiations. They also condemned Israeli settlement activities and rocket attacks against Israel launched from Gaza, and urged the Council to step up its efforts in

² [S/PV.6706](#), pp. 2-5.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 6-9.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 9-11.

support of a two-State solution. Concern regarding the situation in Gaza was also raised. Furthermore, a number of speakers expressed support for the application of Palestine for admission to the United Nations submitted on 23 September 2011 to the General Assembly.⁵

On 28 February 2012, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs reported that the talks between the parties, which had started on 3 January 2012 in Amman, had stalled. While the Palestinians had reiterated that direct talks should not resume unless all settlement activity had been halted, the Prime Minister of Israel continued to insist that Israel wanted to continue the talks but without preconditions. He also noted that on 5 February 2012, President Abbas and Hamas leader Khaled Meshaal had agreed to form a transitional Government of technocrats with Mahmoud Abbas as Prime Minister. Regarding the situation in Gaza and the West Bank, he stated that both remained dangerous and unsustainable, and noted increased tensions and violence between Palestinian and Israeli security forces around holy sites during the reporting period.⁶

On 27 March 2012, the Special Coordinator for the Middle East peace process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and the Palestinian Authority informed that the parties had not yet found sufficient common ground to resume direct negotiations and that the prospects remained slim. He also lamented that the agreements to strengthen revenue collection by Israel on behalf of the Palestinian Authority, which provided about 70 per cent of the net Palestinian Authority revenue, had not been finalized. Turning to the situation in the West Bank and in Gaza, he reported on continued and extensive escalation of violence, particularly in Gaza, but welcomed the approval by Israel of key United Nations projects, while calling for the unrestricted import through legal crossings of aggregate iron bar and cement. He also expressed concern over the situation of the approximately 4,400 Palestinian prisoners in Israeli detention centres and reported on continued settlement activity during the reporting period. Lastly, he called on the Quartet to direct efforts

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 6 (Permanent Observer of Palestine); p. 24 (Azerbaijan); and p. 31 (Egypt).

⁶ [S/PV.6725](#), pp. 2-5.

towards overcoming gaps in trust and substance, in order to achieve the goal of a two-State solution.⁷

On 23 April 2012, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs reported on the 11 April 2012 Quartet meeting in Washington, D.C., where the Quartet had underscored the need for continued international support for the Palestinian Authority's institution building efforts and had reiterated its call to avoid actions that undermined trust. He also hoped that the exchange of letters between the Prime Minister of Israel and the President of Palestine could provide an opening for future dialogue. However, he reported that clashes between the parties had continued to occur and that the Government of Israel had announced tenders for more than 1,000 housing units in the occupied Palestinian territories. Turning to the situation in Gaza, he informed that the Quartet had indicated that the situation would remain unsustainable until Gaza was reunited with the West Bank under the legitimate Palestinian Authority, adhering to the commitments of the PLO, and noted the lack of progress in the reconciliation process.⁸

The Permanent Observer of Palestine stated that the Palestinian people remained committed to peace, as confirmed in the 17 April 2012 letter from the President of Palestine to the Prime Minister of Israel, but added that belief in the two-State solution was diminishing as illegal Israeli settlement activity, the main obstacle to the peace process, continued all over the occupied Palestinian territories. He urged the Council to find the political will to act, as well as to make a positive decision regarding the proposed Council mission to the occupied Palestinian territories, including East Jerusalem.⁹

The representative of Israel reiterated that the primary obstacle to peace was the refusal by the Palestinians to recognize the right of Israel to exist. He urged the international community to stand up and to state that the claim of return was a non-starter and asked the Council to plant the seeds for a truly open debate on the Middle East.¹⁰

Many speakers expressed concern over the approval of new Israeli settlements, the incidence of violent clashes and provocative actions between the parties, and the

⁷ [S/PV.6742](#), pp. 2-5.

⁸ [S/PV.6757](#), pp. 2-5.

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 5-7.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 8-11.

economic, political and humanitarian situation in Gaza. They called for further efforts by the international community to help the parties resume negotiations towards a two-State solution, especially by the Quartet and the Security Council. A number of speakers welcomed the initiative of President Abbas for the exchange of letters with the Prime Minister of Israel and urged the latter to respond.

On 29 May 2012, the Special Coordinator for the Middle East peace process reported that the parties had exchanged letters outlining their respective requirements for direct talks to continue and that the Quartet envoys would further encourage both sides to take mutually reinforcing confidence-building measures. He underlined the developments threatening to increase tensions, such as the Palestinian prisoner hunger strike that had started on 17 April 2012 and ended on 15 May 2012 with a prisoner agreement, and the clashes between Palestinian protesters and Israeli forces in East Jerusalem on 20 May 2012. He also reported on significant internal political changes in Israel forming a new governing coalition and in Palestine reshuffling the Cabinet, with Palestinian leaders announcing a new formula for progress on reconciliation achieved with the assistance of Egyptian mediation. He also informed on the continuation of settlement activity and clashes between Israeli settlers and Palestinians in the West Bank. Regarding Gaza, relative calm had prevailed during the reporting period, and the total value of approved United Nations work in the Gaza Strip had exceeded \$365 million, which meant that UN agencies were enabled to play a major role in international efforts for priority recovery and reconstruction in Gaza.¹¹

On 19 June 2012, the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs reported on the 15 June 2012 Quartet meeting in Brussels to intensify efforts to avoid a renewed deadlock, given the fragility of the situation and the announcement by Israel of the construction of approximately 850 settlement units in the West Bank. He further reported the continuation of clashes between Israeli settlers and Palestinians in the West Bank and that two prisoners were reported to not have ended their hunger strikes after the prisoner agreement of May. On Palestinian reconciliation, efforts continued following a 20 May

¹¹ [S/PV.6775](#), pp. 2-5.

2012 reconciliation agreement with meetings between Fatah and Hamas to discuss candidates for a transitional technocratic Government to be headed by President Abbas. Regarding Gaza, he reported that the relative calm since April had been disrupted on 1 June 2012, following the attack by an Islamic Jihad-affiliated militant against a group of Israeli soldiers.¹²

On 25 July 2012, the Special Coordinator for the Middle East peace process reported that in June efforts to restart talks had continued amid worrying developments on the ground. As the Palestinian Authority was facing an acute challenge in maintaining solvency, he called on other donors to make a timely donation and stressed the need for an improved mechanism for the transfer of the value added tax (VAT) revenues Israel collected on behalf of the Palestinian Authority. He also noted that Israel had approved 5,000 permits for Palestinian workers but that settlement announcements as well as violent clashes between the parties had also continued. He reported that efforts to advance Palestinian reconciliation had been delayed due to a decision by the de facto authorities in Gaza to suspend the voter registration process that the Central Elections Commission had planned to take place from 3 to 14 July 2012. Hamas had also rejected the call by the Palestinian Authority to hold municipal elections on 20 October 2012 throughout the occupied territory. Regarding the situation in Gaza, the Special Coordinator condemned indiscriminate rocket attacks from Gaza into Israel and urged Israel to show maximum restraint.¹³

The Permanent Observer of Palestine compelled the international community to take serious and practical action in order to stop Israel from destroying the viability of the two-State solution based on the pre-1967 borders, to revive the prospects for achieving a peaceful settlement, and to condemn and reject illegal Israeli settlement activities.¹⁴ The representative of Israel stated that the crisis in Gaza was for both Israelis and Palestinians alike, and it was called “Hamas”.¹⁵

¹² [S/PV.6788](#), pp. 2-5.

¹³ [S/PV.6816](#), pp. 2-7.

¹⁴ *Ibid*, pp. 7-10

¹⁵ *Ibid*, p.11

Speakers in general called for a resumption of direct negotiations as the only way to achieve a solution to the Middle East Peace Process and expressed support for an enhanced role of the international community, especially the Quartet and the Security Council, to promote talks for the realization of a two-State solution. Many speakers also expressed their opposition to the Israeli settlement activities, arguing that they undermined a two-State solution. A number of speakers also expressed concern over the financial crisis in the Palestinian Authority and articulated their support for Palestinian reconciliation. Several speakers also encouraged the Council to visit the occupied Palestinian territories.

On 22 August 2012, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs reported to the Council that there had not been enough progress for sustained negotiations, but that the parties had been meeting to identify ways to enhance Palestinian Authority revenue capture by reducing illegal trade and tax evasion. He stated that the fiscal crisis of the Palestinian Authority was due in part to a decrease in foreign aid, compounded by a decrease in economic activity and an increase in unemployment. He also added that Palestinian factions remained deadlocked on the way forward towards reconciliation. He further noted continued Israeli settlement construction as well as the projected demolition of Palestinian housing units to be replaced by Israeli settlements. He also indicated that violence persisted among the parties to the conflict, including a terrorist attack in the Sinai on an Egyptian security post on 5 August near Kerem Shalom which had killed 16 Egyptian border guards.¹⁶

On 17 September 2012, the Special Coordinator for the Middle East peace process reported that the parties had not yet engaged in meaningful dialogue and that President Abbas had expressed his intention to pursue an upgrade in the status of Palestine at the United Nations through the General Assembly. He also called on donors to urgently increase their contributions to the Palestinian Authority to ensure its fiscal viability in the short term. On Palestinian reconciliation, he noted that the Palestinian Central Elections Commission had continued preparations for local elections scheduled

¹⁶ [S/PV.6824](#), pp. 2-6.

in the West Bank on 20 October 2012, while Hamas had reiterated that no polling should take place prior to reconciliation. The Special Coordinator stressed that a unified Palestinian polity was central to realizing a two-State solution, and transmitted the hope of the Secretary-General that Quartet partners would look for a new credible political way ahead.¹⁷

On 15 October 2012, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs reported that the rhetorical commitment of both the Israeli and the Palestinian sides was not translating into meaningful actions to renewed dialogue on the core issues. He also reported that President Abbas, citing the absence of a political process, had announced his intention to seek an upgrade of Palestine to non-member observer State status in the United Nations; a move that Israel rejected as an impediment to resuming negotiations. He expressed concern over security in the West Bank involving settler violence and price tag activities. He urged the Government of Israel to curtail such acts and rejected the continuation of settlement activity, while urging all sides to exercise restraint and, more specifically, to safeguard the sanctity of religious sites. He noted that Palestinian local elections, on schedule for 20 October 2012 would only take place in the West Bank, as the de facto authorities in Gaza had not allowed the Central Elections Commission to proceed with voter registration and electoral preparations. Regarding Gaza, he welcomed the approval by the Government of Israel of an additional \$38 million worth of project work.¹⁸

The Permanent Observer of Palestine stated that the political process had remained deadlocked and the situation on the ground had deteriorated. He also drew the attention of the Council to the rising instability and pressure in East Jerusalem following an escalation of attacks on Muslim and Christian holy places by Israeli settlers and other extremist Jewish groups. On the Palestinian application to non-member observer State status, he stressed that the initiative was neither an alternative nor contradictory to the peace process, and that the Palestinian leadership would be ready to proceed with peace

¹⁷ [S/PV.6835](#), pp. 2-6.

¹⁸ [S/PV.6847](#), pp. 2-6.

negotiations with the Government of Israel immediately after the adoption of a General Assembly resolution.¹⁹

The representative of Israel stated that the Palestinians had never responded to Israel's serious proposal in Amman in April. He also stated that the unilateral actions by the Palestinians were a clear breach of every agreement that they had signed with Israel, stressing that a General Assembly resolution would not pave the road to peace. He noted that the Palestinians were a very long way from meeting the basic criteria for statehood as the Palestinian Authority had no authority in the Gaza Strip, and criticized the unrestricted flood of international aid to the Palestinian Authority by saying it would not bring the parties any closer to peace as long as the aid was being used to sponsor terrorists.²⁰

Many speakers continued to condemn the continuation of Israeli settlement activity, rejected the acts of violence between the parties and called for the Council and the Quartet to step up efforts towards a resumption of negotiations. Several speakers also condemned the desecration of Christian and Islamic religious sites. Several speakers endorsed the aspirations of the Palestinian Authority to be granted non-member observer State status by the General Assembly as an interim step. Many speakers stressed their support for a two-State solution as a result of direct negotiations without preconditions between the parties²¹ while the representative of the United States underscored that unilateral actions, including initiatives to grant the Palestinian Authority non-member observer State status at the United Nations, would only jeopardize the peace process and complicate efforts to return the parties to direct negotiations.²²

On 21 November 2012, the Secretary-General briefed the Council on his three-day visit to Egypt, Israel, the occupied Palestinian territories and Jordan. He informed the Council that the situation in Gaza and Israel had escalated the previous week, but

¹⁹ Ibid., pp. 7-9.

²⁰ Ibid., pp. 9-12.

²¹ Ibid., p. 20 (India); p. 22 (South Africa); p. 25 (Pakistan); p. 33 (Lebanon); p. 34 (Egypt on behalf of the Arab Group); and p. 35 (Brazil); [S/PV.6847 \(Resumption 1\)](#), p. 7 (Indonesia); p. 13 (Ecuador); p. 14 (Saudi Arabia); p. 15 (Bangladesh); p. 17 (Iceland); p. 18 (Qatar); p. 20 (Kyrgyzstan); p. 25 (Tunisia); and p. 26 (Turkey).

²² Ibid., p. 13.

welcomed the ceasefire announcement of that day brokered by Egypt, after a week of violence, while stressing that, moving forward, the focus should be to ensure that the ceasefire was held and that all humanitarian need in Gaza was addressed. The Secretary-General also stressed that the ceasefire should be followed immediately by negotiations towards urgently finding a two-State solution.²³

On 27 November 2012, the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Process reported on the cycle of violence in Gaza and Israel that had concluded with the Egyptian-brokered ceasefire agreement of 21 November, where the parties had agreed to stop “all hostilities” and begin discussions on long-standing issues for a durable ceasefire over the long-term. He stated that there would be no progress if the legitimate security concerns of Israel were not addressed, while stressing that lifting of the closure on Gaza would give Palestinians a strong stake in a durable calm. He further stated that although the ceasefire understanding had provided a framework to address the opening of the crossing and facilitate the movement of people and goods, its implementation was not sufficient. Concerning the Palestinian intention to present to the General Assembly a draft resolution on the status of Palestine on 29 November, he stressed that regardless of its outcome, it was important to protect the achievements of the Palestinian Authority in building State institutions. He also reiterated that meaningful negotiations should remain the collective priority to achieve the vision of a two-State solution and the viability of the Palestinian Authority.²⁴

On 19 December 2012, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs reported that following the adoption of General Assembly resolution [67/19](#) granting Palestine non-member observer State status in the United Nations, the Government of Israel had announced plans for settlement construction of 3,000 housing units in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and the decision to expedite the construction on 6,500 previously approved housing units. He further stated that the plans would represent an almost fatal blow to the remaining chances of securing a two-State solution. He also

²³ [S/PV.6869](#), pp. 2-3.

²⁴ [S/PV.6871](#), pp. 2-4.

called on Israel to reconsider its decision to withhold Palestinian revenues and resume the transfer of revenues without delay. He also reported on the Quartet meeting in Brussels on 12 December 2012 to discuss ways to help the parties avoid escalation diplomatically. He reported on the announcement by the Palestinian Cabinet of a second round of local elections, previously postponed due to the outbreak of violence in Gaza, to take place on 22 December 2012. He also informed that the period of calm in Gaza brokered by Egypt on 21 November 2012 had largely held, and called the parties to abide by the understanding of the ceasefire.²⁵

On 23 January 2013, the Special Coordinator of the Middle East Peace Process reported that regional and international partners were questioning the effectiveness of international efforts and had grown increasingly alarmed that the prospects to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict in accordance with resolutions and international law was slipping away. He expressed concern that, despite the Quartet meeting on 10 January 2013 in Amman, a clear and realist path ahead was still lacking. He also stressed that the parties to the conflict must have the requisite will to arrive at a solution and to not engage in actions that would further undermine mutual trust. After the 29 November 2012 General Assembly decision to grant Palestine non-member observer State status in the United Nations, there was a dramatic increase in Israeli settlement announcements, including in the E-1 area. He called on Israel to restore the transfers of tax and customs revenues without further delay, while highlighting that the current budget deficit of the Palestinian Authority was beyond \$1 billion. Regarding Gaza, he reported that the calm brokered by Egypt in November had held, but remained tenuous and that no rockets or mortar shells had landed in Israel during the reporting period. As part of its commitment under the ceasefire, Israel had begun to allow gravel for commercial use through the Kerem Shalom crossing, while a further extension of the fishing limit to at least nine nautical miles was necessary to increase the catch of the fishermen. With regard to Palestinian reconciliation, he informed of the 10 January 2013 meeting between President Abbas and

²⁵ [S/PV.6894](#), pp. 2-6.

Hamas leader Khaled Meshaal and the 17 January 2013 meeting between members of Fatah and Hamas.²⁶

The Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Observer State of Palestine stated that the support of Member States to General Assembly resolution [67/19](#) represented a long-overdue recognition by the Assembly of Palestine's statehood. However, he regretted that the period following the decision of the General Assembly had been characterized by an escalation of Israeli settlements, including in sensitive areas to the east and south of East Jerusalem in the E-1 area, which were illegal and a main obstacle to a two-State solution. He added that a halt to settlement construction was not a precondition, but a legal obligation. He called on the Council to compel Israel to stop its breaches of the law.²⁷

The representative of Israel stated that Israel had not seen a single gesture, statement or indication that Palestinians wanted to return to negotiations, and stressed that any efforts to alter the Palestinian status outside the agreed negotiating framework directly violated the agreements between the parties.²⁸

Most speakers called for the parties to show the political will to restart substantive direct negotiations towards a two-State solution and stressed the need to refrain from counterproductive unilateral provocative actions. Many speakers condemned the escalation of Israeli settlements, and called on Israel to reinstate the transfer of tax revenues to the Palestinian Authority. The representative of the United States noted that the adoption of General Assembly resolution [67/19](#) had not brought the Palestinians any closer to statehood and reiterated that the only way to establish a real Palestinian State was through direct negotiations on final status issues between the parties without preconditions.²⁹ Regarding Gaza, several speakers welcomed the ceasefire mediation efforts brokered by Egypt on 21 November 2013 and expressed that those efforts should be followed by the lifting of the restrictions on Gaza.³⁰ Several speakers condemned

²⁶ [S/PV.6906](#), pp. 2-6.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 6-9.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 10-11.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

³⁰ [S/PV.6906](#), p.14 (Russian Federation); p. 15 (France); p.19 (United Kingdom);p.23 (Australia); pp.24-25 (Morocco); p.30 (Pakistan); [S/PV.6906 \(Resumption 1\)](#), pp. 2-3 (Egypt); p.5 (Brazil); p.8 (Malaysia); p.11 (Japan); p.15 (European Union); p.16 (Pakistan); p.20 (India); pp.21-22 (South Africa); p.24 (Democratic

rocket fire and terrorist attacks on Israeli territories and called for the rejection of violence by all actors. Several speakers also expressed support for Palestinian reconciliation.

On 26 February 2013, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs informed the Council that a rocket attack fired from Gaza into Israel on that same day was evidence that the temperature between Israelis and Palestinians was again rising, and stressed the need for a revitalized and relevant Quartet. On the fiscal situation of the Palestinian Authority, he reported that Israel had decided to release Palestinian revenue clearances for January and reminded Israeli authorities that the full transfer of Palestinian tax and custom revenues in a timely and predictable manner was an obligation that Israel had accepted as part of the Paris Protocol. Regarding the issue of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli custody, he reported on the death in detention of a Palestinian man and the deteriorating health of four prisoners due to an extended hunger strike. He further reported that settlement activities and demolition of Palestinian-owned structures had continued over the reporting period. With regard to Gaza, he continued to condemn rocket attacks into Israel and called for a further extension of the fishing limit from 6 to 12 nautical miles and for the unrestricted entry of all construction materials. On Palestinian reconciliation, the Under-Secretary-General reported that the Palestinian Central Elections Commission had conducted voter registration in February in both the West Bank and Gaza, for the first time since 2007 and stressed that reconciliation under the leadership of President Abbas and adherence to Palestine Liberation Organization principles were essential for achieving a two-State solution.³¹

On 25 March 2013, the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process reported that the visit by the President of the United States to the region the previous week had marked an important opportunity to reinvigorate efforts towards a two-State solution. He also stated that the United Nations and the international community were mandated to bridge the differences between the parties concerning the term and the way to attain the two-State solution. He reported that there had been no new settlement

People's Republic of Korea); p.25 (Iran on behalf of NAM); p.26 (Indonesia); p.28 (Turkey); 30 (Sri Lanka);and p.37 (Nigeria).

³¹ [S/PV.6926](#), pp. 2-6.

announcements, fewer incursions by Israeli security forces in the West Bank, and a decrease in demolitions of Palestinian structures during the reporting period. However, violence levels had remained high, with continued settler violence, clashes and stone throwing between the Israelis and Palestinians. He also expressed concern over the situation of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli custody. With regards to Gaza, the Special Coordinator reported that on 21 March 2013 rockets had been fired from Gaza into Israel for the second time since the ceasefire, which was followed by Israel rescinding the extension of the fishing limit back to three nautical miles, placing restrictions on Palestinian travel in and out of Gaza, and closing the Kerem Shalom crossing. He also reported no progress on Palestinian reconciliation efforts during the reporting period.³²

On 24 April 2013, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs reported on the 13 April 2013 resignation of the Prime Minister of Palestine, which put the statebuilding agenda at serious risk, in the absence of a credible political horizon. He informed on the fragile hope triggered by the renewed United States engagement, including the visit of the President of the United States and the subsequent trips of the Secretary of State of the United States over the previous month, and called on the parties to translate this engagement into serious efforts towards resuming negotiations. He expressed concern over the financial viability of the Palestinian Authority and informed that during the reporting period, there had been a considerable increase in Palestinian casualties, resulting mostly from clashes between Palestinian demonstrators and Israeli security forces. On the issue of Palestinian prisoners, he reported that the Secretary-General had urged for a solution to be reached without delay. He was also concerned over the continued settlement activity and reported on the occurrence of clashes between Israeli settlers and Palestinians as well as continued demolitions and displacements. Regarding Gaza, he stated that the situation had become increasingly fragile and condemned the firing of rockets into Israel. He also reported on the continuation of efforts to achieve Palestinian reconciliation with the resumption of informal working-

³² [S/PV.6940](#), pp. 2-4.

level meetings between Hamas and Fatah, however, with no advancements in the discussions.³³

The Permanent Observer of the Observer State of Palestine reiterated the position concerning the Israeli settlement activities and stressed that a number of actions by Israel were imperative for facilitating a meaningful and successful political process, including: 1) the cessation of Israeli settlement activities and withdrawal from the lands forcibly seized in 1967; 2) the acceptance that only by negotiation the 4 June 1967 borders could be adjusted between the two sides; 3) the release of Palestinian political prisoners and detainees; and 4) the lifting of the blockade of the Gaza Strip. He also reported that efforts to end the political division and achieve reconciliation were ongoing and hoped that elections could take place soon.³⁴

The representative of Israel stated that lasting peace in the region must stand upon three pillars: 1) a foundation of education for tolerance and coexistence; 2) a clear recognition of Israel as the nation-State of the Jewish people; and 3) security. He argued that President Abbas continued to publicly embrace Hamas, which together with its extremist ideology were the enemies of peace.³⁵

Many speakers expressed support for direct negotiations between the parties towards a two-State solution and called for greater support of the international community, in particular the Security Council, the League of Arab States (LAS) and the Quartet, in advancing the peace process. They also expressed concern over the situation of Palestinian prisoners and detainees, and stressed the need to address the economic situation and political stability of the Palestinian Authority. Many speakers condemned the continuation of Israeli settlements, called for the lifting of the blockade of Gaza and condemned rocket fire from Gaza against targeting Israeli territory. On Palestinian reconciliation, many speakers expressed support for Palestinian unity under the PLO platform.

On 22 May 2013, the Special Coordinator considered that it was crucial for both sides to reverse negative trends on the ground and restore confidence in each other. He

³³ [S/PV.6950](#), pp. 2-6.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 7-9.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 9-10.

noted that there had been no new approvals or tenders issued for settlements in the West Bank or in East Jerusalem since March. He also expressed concern over restrictions of access to holy sites in Jerusalem, but noted that despite the increased tensions, events on the ground had been relatively contained. He reported that the United Nations continued to monitor with concern the condition of Palestinian prisoners, and informed that clashes between Palestinians and settlers in the occupied West Bank had intensified. With regard to Gaza, he stressed that the six-month-old ceasefire understanding continued to represent the best opportunity to start changing the negative dynamics in Gaza and called on Israel to allow the unrestricted entry of construction materials. On Palestinian reconciliation, he reported on the meeting between Fatah and Hamas in Cairo on 14 May 2013, where the factions had reportedly recommitted to consultations on the formation of a national consensus Government headed by President Abbas. This was followed by a meeting between President Abbas and the President of Egypt in Cairo on 16 May 2013 to discuss the Middle East peace process and Palestinian reconciliation.³⁶

On 25 June 2013, the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs reported to the Council that there were too few encouraging signs on the prospects of breaking the deadlock towards an Israeli-Palestinian peace and emphasized a need for broader regional and international engagement, including a substantive framework and a credible timeline in support of any peace effort, while the United States engagement was central as well. He added that progress needed serious political commitments by both leaders of Israel and Palestine. He also reiterated the concern of the Secretary-General over reports of increasing new housing units in the West Bank which was a seven-year record. He informed that a new Palestinian Cabinet had been sworn in on 6 June under the leadership of Rami Hamdallah, as an interim measure until a national consensus Government was formed. However, Prime Minister Hamdallah tendered his resignation on 20 June, but stayed as caretaker until a successor would be named, creating renewed uncertainty for a Government that relied considerably on international support. He also reported that the United Nations continued to help address the humanitarian and

³⁶ [S/PV.6969](#), pp. 2-4.

development needs in Area C and noted mounting tensions including continued violence between Palestinians and settlers in the West Bank. On the situation in Gaza, he also reported there had been relative calm until 23 June 2013, when six rockets had been fired from Gaza into Israel, reportedly by Islamic Jihad. He also expressed concern over human rights and freedoms in Gaza, including four death sentences passed by military courts in Gaza, and two executions carried out on 22 June outside of the Palestinian legal framework.³⁷

On 23 July 2013, the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process reported that the Secretary-General welcomed the recent intense diplomatic efforts of the Secretary of State of the United States and his announcement that a basis had been established for the resumption of direct final status negotiations between the Israelis and Palestinians. He stressed that progress could be expected only if a credible political horizon towards a negotiated two-State solution emerged and called on both parties to promote conditions conducive to the resumption of the political process. At the same time, he expressed concern over the situation of Palestinian prisoners and the detention of children and regretted the renewal of Israeli settlement planning in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. He described the situation in Gaza as relatively quiet, but affected by political developments in Egypt, where authorities had taken measures against the tunnels into Gaza, resulting in shortages of fuel and basic building materials. Concerned about further deterioration of the economic and humanitarian situation in Gaza, he called on Israel to liberalize the entry of key construction materials.³⁸

The Permanent Observer of the Observer State of Palestine stated that the Palestinian leadership had never placed conditions on the peace process but called for the respect of international law and the United Nations resolutions that constituted the foundation of the process. He stressed that the two-State solution and the Israeli settlement campaign were completely irreconcilable, expressed the readiness of

³⁷ [S/PV.6986](#), pp. 2-4.

³⁸ [S/PV.7007](#), pp. 2-5.

Palestinians to seriously engage in direct negotiations in good faith, and called on the Council to fulfil its duties.³⁹

The representative of Israel welcomed the opportunity to resume direct negotiations with the Palestinian Authority to realize two States for two peoples –one Arab and one Jewish– living side by side in peace and security. He, however, criticized that the reports on the situation provided at the beginning of the monthly debate, including this meeting, failed to address Israeli security concerns and were one-sided and short-sighted.⁴⁰ The Special Coordinator expressed his determination to provide fair, balanced and factual briefings on a complex situation in the Middle East.⁴¹

Most speakers expressed appreciation for the efforts of the Secretary of State of the United States and LAS, and welcomed the agreement reached by the Israelis and the Palestinians which had established the basis for the resumption of direct final status negotiations. Most speakers called for the lifting of the blockade of Gaza and condemned the continuing Israeli settlement activity with some welcoming the European Commission directive to exclude the settlements from future grants and relations. The issues of the situation of Palestinian prisoners and detainees, Palestinian unity and reconciliation and rocket attacks from Gaza into Israel were also addressed in the meeting.

On 20 August 2013, the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs reported that as a result of the United States-brokered agreement, on 29 and 30 July, the Israelis and the Palestinians had resumed negotiations with the objective of achieving a peaceful and comprehensive settlement on all permanent status issues within a nine-month period. He reported on the 15 and 16 August visit by the Secretary-General to the region to lend his support to the leaders on both sides, and stressed that, moving forward, both sides needed to sustain an environment conducive to the peace process and refrain from actions that would risk undermining prospects during the negotiations. He also reported on the planning by Israeli authorities to further ease restrictions on Palestinian movement and access, while being deeply troubled by the continuing settlement activity and settler

³⁹ Ibid., pp. 7-9.

⁴⁰ Ibid., pp. 9-12.

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 57.

violence in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. On the situation in Gaza, he reported tentative calm, while condemning six projectiles shot at Israel and called on Israel to show maximum restraint. He also hoped that the Hamas de facto authorities would not hamper efforts to achieve the two-State solution. He further reported that access through Rafah had been restricted as a result of political developments in Egypt, limiting access to health care and causing shortages in key medical supplies. In this connection, he highlighted that access through legal crossings had become even more critical.⁴²

On 17 September 2013, the Special Coordinator reported that the Quartet had fully supported the resumption of direct negotiations and informed that the negotiating teams had been engaged in several rounds of talks. He further encouraged both sides to accelerate and intensify their discussions and called on them to refrain from actions that would undermine the prospects of negotiations. He encouraged further steps to increase Palestinian and Israeli economic cooperation, ease restrictions on access and movement of Palestinians and lead to tangible improvements on the ground in the West Bank and Gaza, such as the 8 September 2013 decision by the Government of Israel to increase the number of work permits for West Bank Palestinians. The Special Coordinator deplored the recent losses of life resulting from clashes in the West Bank, including that of an employee of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). He reported on the continued settlement activity in the West Bank and in East Jerusalem as well as continued clashes between Palestinians and settlers, and expressed concern over increased tensions in the Old City of Jerusalem, while stressing that settlement construction was counterproductive and against international law. Regarding Gaza, he stated that the calm had mostly been sustained but expressed concern over the potential humanitarian impact on Gaza of the measures taken by Egypt to counter illegal activities in the Sinai and around Gaza. On the other hand, he welcomed the approval of another package of United Nations construction works.⁴³

⁴² [S/PV.7020](#), pp. 2-4.

⁴³ [S/PV.7032](#), pp. 2-4.

On 22 October 2013, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs reported that on 27 September 2013, for the first time in 17 months, Quartet principals had met in New York with the Israeli and Palestinian chief negotiators who had reiterated their commitment to reaching a comprehensive permanent status agreement. Referring to violent developments on the ground, he called all sides to refrain from violence and incitement. He further stated that the calm in the Gaza Strip had been showing worrying signs of erosion, with three tunnels discovered in a year, and continued rocket fire by Palestinians and Israeli incursions. He reported that following the discovery of the third tunnel on 13 October 2013, Israel had temporarily suspended the transfer of construction materials through the Kerem Shalom crossing into Gaza.⁴⁴

The Permanent Observer of the Observer State of Palestine stated that support for peace negotiations required meaningful action to help the parties overcome the persistent obstacles, including by ensuring respect for the parameters of the solution. He further stated that illegal and provocative Israeli actions, such as the approval of 3,000 additional settlement units, were undermining the spirit and intent of the negotiations, and drew the attention of the Council to the dangers arising from settler related violence, including around holy sites in East Jerusalem. Regarding the situation in Gaza, he noted that the Israeli blockade had been in place for over six years and called on the international community to protect the Palestinian civilian population and for the lifting of the blockade, including the opening of the Gaza Strip crossings.⁴⁵ The representative of Israel welcomed the resumption of the negotiations and called on the Palestinian leadership to condemn violence and terrorism. He said that Israel was not creating a humanitarian crisis in Gaza but that Hamas was using those resources from Israel to build smuggling tunnels into Israel instead of schools and housing, adding that the leadership in Gaza was committed to destroying the State of Israel.⁴⁶

Many speakers welcomed the resumption of negotiations and expressed support for the efforts of the international community in that regard, including the Quartet, the initiative of the United States, and LAS, with some urging the Security Council to play a more active role in ensuring a successful negotiation process. Most speakers also called

⁴⁴ [S/PV.7047](#), pp. 2-4.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 6-8.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.

on Israelis and Palestinians to adopt confidence building measures and to avoid unilateral actions that could undermine the progress of the negotiations. Many speakers expressed concern over the continued Israeli settlement activity, tensions around holy sites of Jerusalem, the situation of Palestinian prisoners and violence and rocket attacks against Israeli civilians. Regarding Gaza, many speakers expressed concern over the humanitarian situation and called for the lifting of the blockade.

On 19 November 2013, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs reported that international engagement in the Middle East peace process remained strong. However, he stated that the process had suffered significant setbacks due to a series of settlement plans announcement in the West Bank, including in the E-1 area, which could not be reconciled with a negotiated two-State solution. Despite the submission of resignations by Palestinian negotiators in protest over the new settlement announcements, President Abbas had made it clear that it did not constitute a Palestinian departure from talks. He also reported on continued violence between settlers and Palestinians throughout the West Bank, and expressed concern over the continued demolition of unlicensed Palestinian infrastructures. He also reported that the situation in Gaza was deteriorating with renewed violence and worsening economic and humanitarian conditions, due to a combined energy and construction crisis.⁴⁷

On 16 December 2013, the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process reported that Quartet envoys had continued consultations with each other and engaged with the parties and with Arab partners. He informed the Council that another important timeline in the negotiations, the third release of prisoners scheduled for 29 December 2013 was approaching and urged both sides to refrain from taking any steps that could undermine the prospect for progress at that time. He stressed that the situation on the ground was fragile and reiterated that the continued settlement activity could not be reconciled with the goal of a two-State solution. He reported that violence between Palestinians and settlers had continued, and that demolitions of unlicensed Palestinian structures in Area C and East Jerusalem had been increasing. He also stated that Palestinians on administrative detention should either be charged or released. On the

⁴⁷[S/PV.7063](#), pp. 2-3.

situation in Gaza, he highlighted the critical energy situation since the Gaza power plant had ceased operations on 1 November 2013, while welcoming the decision of the Government of Israel to resume the transfer of construction materials for United Nations projects in Gaza and calling on Israel to begin allowing imports of said materials for the private sector.⁴⁸

⁴⁸ [S/PV.7084](#), pp. 2-3.

Meetings: the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

<i>Meeting and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decisions and vote (for-against- abstaining)</i>
S/PV.6706 and S/PV.6706 (Resumption 1) 24 January 2012			27 Member States ^a	Permanent Observer of Palestine, Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, Chair of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People	All Council members and all invitees	
S/PV.6725 28 February 2012				Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs	Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs	
S/PV.6742 27 March 2012				Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary General for Palestine	All invitees	
S/PV.6757 and S/PV.6757 (Resumption 1) 23 April 2012		Letter date 19 April 2012 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council S/2012/247	27 Member States ^b	Permanent Observer of Palestine, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Chair of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations	All Council members and all invitees	
S/PV.6775 29 May 2012				Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process	Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process	

<i>Meeting and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decisions and vote (for-against- abstaining)</i>
S/PV.6788 19 June 2012				Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs	Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs	
S/PV.6816 and S/PV.6816 (Resumption 1) 25 July 2012			23 Member States ^c	Permanent Observer of Palestine, Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, Chair of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People	All Council members and all invitees	
S/PV.6824 22 August 2012				Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs	Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs	
S/PV.6835 17 September 2012				Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process	Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process	
S/PV.6847 and S/PV.6847 (Resumption 1) 15 October 2012		Letter dated 12 October 2012 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2012/762)	28 Member States ^d	Permanent Observer of Palestine, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Chair of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations	All Council members and all invitees	
S/PV.6863 (closed)		Letter dated 12 October 2012 from the	45 Member States ^e	Permanent Observer of Palestine, Under-Secretary-	Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs,	

<i>Meeting and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decisions and vote (for-against- abstaining)</i>
14 November 2012		Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2012/841)		General for Political Affairs, Palestine, Israel, and all the representative of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, the Permanent Observer of the League of Arab States to the United Nations	Palestine, Israel, and all Council members	
S/PV.6869 21 November 2012					Secretary-General	
S/PV.6871 27 November 2012				Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process	Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process	
S/PV.6894 19 December 2012				Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs	Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs	
S/PV.6906 and S/PV.6906 (Resumption 1) 23 January 2013			28 Member States ^f	Permanent Observer of Palestine (Minister for Foreign Affairs), Special Coordinator of the Middle East Peace Process, Holy See, Deputy Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, Chair of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People	All Council members and all invitees	
S/PV.6926 26 February 2013				Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs	Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs	

<i>Meeting and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decisions and vote (for-against- abstaining)</i>
S/PV.6940 25 March 2013				Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process	Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process	
S/PV.6950 and S/PV.6950 (Resumption 1) 24 April 2013			27 Member States ^g	Permanent Observer of Palestine, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Permanent Observer of LAS, Chair of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations	All Council members and all invitees	
S/PV.6969 22 May 2013				Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process	Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process	
S/PV.6986 25 June 2013				Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs	Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs	
S/PV.7007 23 July 2013			23 Member States ^h	Permanent Observer of Palestine, Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General, Holy See, Observer of the delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, Chair of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People	All Council members and all invitees	

<i>Meeting and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decisions and vote (for-against- abstaining)</i>
S/PV.7020 20 August 2013				Assistant Secretary- General for Political Affairs	Assistant Secretary- General for Political Affairs	
S/PV.7032 17 September 2013				Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process	Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process	
S/PV.7047 22 October 2013			29 Member States ⁱ	Permanent Observer of Palestine, Under-Secretary- General for Political Affairs, Chair of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, First Counsellor of the delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, Holy See	All Council members and all invitees	
S/PV.7063 19 November 2013				Under- Secretary-General for Political Affairs	Under- Secretary-General for Political Affairs	
S/PV.7084 16 December 2013				United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process	United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process	

^a Australia, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Benin, Brazil, Cuba, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Egypt (on behalf of NAM), Iceland, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Israel, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan (on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation), Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya (on behalf of the Arab Group), Malaysia, Norway, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, Turkey and Venezuela (the Bolivarian Republic of).

^b Australia, Bangladesh, Brazil, Canada, Cuba, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Ecuador, Egypt (on behalf of NAM), Iceland, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Israel, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan (on behalf of OIC), Lebanon, Malaysia, Nicaragua, Norway, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates (on behalf of the Arab Group) and Venezuela (the Bolivarian Republic of).

^c Australia, Brazil, Canada, Cuba, Egypt (on behalf of NAM), Iceland, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Israel, Japan, Kazakhstan (on behalf of OIC), Lebanon, Malaysia, Maldives, Norway, Qatar, Saudi Arabia (on behalf of the Arab Group), Sri Lanka, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, Turkey and Venezuela (the Bolivarian Republic of).

^d Australia, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Brazil, Canada, Ecuador, Egypt (on behalf of the Group of Arab States), Iceland, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran (on behalf of NAM), Israel, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan (on behalf of OIC), Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Malaysia, the Maldives, Norway, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, Venezuela (the Bolivarian Republic of) and Viet Nam.

^e Algeria, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Egypt, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Indonesia, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Mexico, Mozambique, the Netherlands, Norway, Oman, Poland, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Spain, the Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, Turkey and United Arab Emirates

^f Bangladesh, Botswana, Brazil, Canada, Cuba, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti (on behalf of OIC), Egypt, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iraq (on behalf of the Arab Group), the Islamic Republic of Iran (on behalf of NAM), Israel, Japan, Jordan, Lebanon, Malaysia, Namibia, Nigeria, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, Turkey and Venezuela (the Bolivarian Republic of).

^g Bahrain, Botswana, Brazil, Cuba, Djibouti (on behalf of OIC), Ecuador, Egypt, Iceland, India, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran (on behalf of NAM), Israel, Japan, Lebanon, Malaysia, Nicaragua, Norway, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, the United Arab Emirates and Venezuela (the Bolivarian Republic of).

^h Bangladesh, Brazil, Costa Rica, Cuba, Djibouti (on behalf of OIC), Ecuador, Egypt, Iceland, India, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran (on behalf of NAM), Israel, Japan, Lebanon, Malaysia, Peru, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, the Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey and Venezuela (the Bolivarian Republic of).

ⁱ Bangladesh, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Cuba, Djibouti (on behalf of OIC), Ecuador, Egypt, Iceland, India, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran (on behalf of NAM), Israel, Japan, Jordan, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Malaysia, Namibia, Nicaragua, Norway, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, Turkey and Venezuela (the Bolivarian Republic of).