

**DRAFT**

**Statement to the Security Council by  
H.E. Ms. Anayansi Rodríguez Camejo, Vice-Chair  
of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights  
of the Palestinian People, on the situation in the  
Middle East, including the question of Palestine**

*(United Nations Headquarters, New York, 18 October 2017)*

Mr. President,

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Seventy years after the General Assembly decided on the partition of Palestine, providing the basis for the creation of the State of Israel, the State of Palestine is yet to achieve its independence and the rights of the Palestinian people continue to be denied. Until the question of Palestine is resolved in all its aspects, the United Nations and its organs, such as this powerful body, have a historical and permanent responsibility to assist the Palestinian people to realize peace and a decent life in dignity through the exercise of their inalienable rights – including the rights to self-determination, national independence and the rights of refugees.

Members of this Council have repeatedly stressed that the *status quo* is unsustainable. Following his visit to Israel and Palestine, the Secretary-General warned that we must not let today's stagnation in the peace process lead to tomorrow's escalation. As a prolonged occupation of fifty years slides into creeping if not outright annexation, it becomes ever more obvious that there is nothing static about the *status quo*. Instead, we are witnessing a steady deterioration of the situation on the ground and systematic dispossession of the Palestinian people, shattering hopes for freedom, equal rights and a just peace.

Just the example of the continuing Israeli settlement campaign, declared illegal by this Council, testify to an accelerating displacement drive. Last month, Israel announced plans to "evacuate" Sussia and Khan al-Ahmer in Area C of the West Bank, communities living on land reportedly earmarked for settlement expansion. Further, in August the Israeli authorities issued a military order establishing a "civil services administration" which further upgraded the status of settlers in Hebron. The Israeli advocacy group *Peace Now* warned that such an order "formalizes the system of apartheid in the city."

The Israeli National Union faction, at its September conference announced a brazen plan envisaging the annexation of the Occupied Territory and the displacement and disenfranchisement of Palestinians unwilling to relinquish their inalienable rights. Such extremist plans

are continuously compounded by the provocative and inflammatory rhetoric of the Israeli Government and military officials, including the Prime Minister himself. The Committee reiterates this Council's repeated calls to both parties to refrain from provocative actions, incitement and inflammatory rhetoric.

Mr. President,

The Council cannot ignore these dangerous developments. And we are not doomed to collective failure; there is a way out of the conundrum. There is a consensus that Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, not only violate international law but also dangerously imperil the viability of the two-State solution. The Security Council resolution 2334 (2016) provides Member States with the tools to reverse the negative trends on the ground, to salvage the two-State solution and to advance the cause of peace and security, as per the Council's Charter mandate.

The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People stands ready to support the Council in efforts to examine practical ways and means to secure full compliance with this resolution and, further to the recommendations contained in its 2017 Annual Report to the General Assembly ([A/72/35](#)), reiterates its request to the Secretary-General to present reports on its implementation in a written format and including proposals on

measures to ensure accountability for settlement activities and other violations of international law.

The Committee welcomes the necessary political will demonstrated by all parties to facilitate Palestinian reconciliation and create conditions favourable for the effective functioning of a Palestinian National Consensus Government. Let me acknowledge the constructive role played by Egypt toward this end. The Committee offers its support to all efforts to advance intra-Palestinian unity and reiterates its demand for ending the unlawful ten-year Israeli blockade on the Gaza Strip. It also welcomes ongoing diplomatic efforts towards the achievement of the two-state solution, including by China, the Russian Federation, the United States and the Arab partners.

To support the Palestinian state-building process, the Committee will continue to expand its capacity-building programme, including, inter alia, sponsorship of a Palestinian official in a training on multilateral environmental negotiations held in France, and three other officials on UN Catalytic Support to South-South & Triangular Cooperation in implementing the 2030 Agenda in Germany.

Mr. President,

Last month, the gathering of world leaders in New York for the annual General Debate testified to faith in multilateralism and a rules-based international order as the only path to address threats to international peace and security.

If we wish to restore hope and make a difference in the lives of ordinary people; if we intend to put conflict prevention and conflict resolution at the centre of UN reform and seek to build sustainable peace in the Middle East, urgent action is required from this Council. In this spirit, the Committee calls on everyone to redouble efforts towards the achievement of the two-state solution based on the 1967 borders and in accordance with the relevant UN resolutions, Madrid principles, Arab Peace Initiative and Quartet Roadmap.

Thank you.