

Statement by H.E Moussa Faki Mahamat at The International Solidarity Day with the Palestinian People

28 NOVEMBER 2018

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today, the African People celebrate with their brothers and sisters in Palestine the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. The occasion marks the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 181 (II) on 29 November 1947 partitioning the territory of Palestine into two States.

The African Union follows closely the developments in Palestine and the Middle East region. The African Union's support to the Palestinian cause is intrinsically linked with the Africa-Arab partnership. More fundamentally, it is premised on the values of freedom, justice and humanitarian principles that Africa defends in international fora alongside all those striving to ensure that Palestine regains its right to exist as a key State in a region considered the cradle of humanity, religions and prophets, a region that the world has the obligation to preserve.

The African Union has consistently expressed concerns at the consequences of unilateral policies, actions and provocations, including the illegal construction of settlements and the blockade and isolation of the Gaza Strip from the rest of the Palestinian Territories. These practices represent a real threat to international peace and security in the region and undermine the spirit of the 1982 Arab Peace Initiative, for a just and lasting solution to this long-standing conflict.

The African Union continues to call on the international community to assume its full responsibilities vis-à-vis the question of Palestine and the implementation of the UN resolutions adopted from 1948 to date, to compel Israel to comply with the international law.

Today more than ever before, there is need for urgent and renewed efforts to find a just and lasting solution to the conflict, "based on the existence of two States, Israel and Palestine, living side-by-side in peace and harmony, within the framework of the relevant African Union and United Nations pronouncements." The current situation calls for urgent action towards ending the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian land.

The Palestinian leadership, led by President Mahmoud Abbas, has always emphasized that it will continue to explore political and diplomatic efforts at all levels in order to maintain the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. Therefore, the international community, the "Quartet" Committee, the UN Security Council and all regional and international organizations are called upon to request Israel to implement decisions and declarations taken thus far to promote peace and stability based on the two-state solution. Israel must also stop all violations of international human rights and humanitarian laws and adhere to them.

The occupied Palestinian territories witnessed Israeli escalation in the political, economic and social spheres, as Israel hastened to announce the start of the implementation of a broader and heightened settlement in the occupied West Bank targeting occupied East Jerusalem and its suburbs in particular.

The Israeli government continues to violate international norms and standards by increasing the pace of illegal settlements. Israel's policy of building settlements in occupied territory is one of the core issues in the conflict. Illegal under international law, settlements built on confiscated or stolen Palestinian land are one of the core justifications for the building of the wall and the restriction of Palestinian movement within the West Bank. This contributes to forced displacement, severely limits Palestinian access to basic resources, including land and water, and perpetuates a system of segregation and structural inequality between Palestinians and Israelis. The African Union reiterates its commitment to support all efforts aiming at achieving a final solution for the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict based on the international legitimacy and reject any incomplete and frag mental solutions such as temporary borders or the Jewishness of Israel. The African Union Commission will work tirelessly with the International Community to ensure the establishment of an independent Palestinian State on the borders of June 1967 with East Jerusalem as its capital.
I thank you.