



DIVISION FOR
PALESTINIAN RIGHTS

Bulletin

on action by the United Nations system and
intergovernmental organizations
relevant to the question of Palestine

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I. EU SPOKESPERSON CALLS FOR HALTING THE FIRING OF ROCKETS AGAINST CIVILIANS IN GAZA

On 3 November, Ms. Maja Kocijancic, the EU Spokesperson for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/European Neighbourhood Policy, issued the below [statement](#):

The last few days have seen the firing of more than a dozen rockets from Gaza into Southern Israel by Palestinian armed groups.

The firing of rockets against civilian populations is unacceptable and must stop immediately and unconditionally. The priority should be to work on immediate de-escalation to protect civilian lives.

Israelis and Palestinians both have the right to live in peace, security and dignity. Only a political solution can put an end to the violence.

II. UN SECRETARY-GENERAL APPOINTS CHRISTIAN SAUNDERS AS THE OFFICER-IN-CHARGE OF UNRWA

On 6 November, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) issued a [statement](#) as below:

The UN Secretary-General's office has announced that the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) has completed a part of the ongoing inquiry into UNRWA management-related matters.

The findings of OIOS revealed management issues which relate specifically to the Commissioner-General. The Commissioner-General has stepped aside until the completion of the process. The UN Secretary-General has appointed Mr. Christian Saunders as the Officer-In-Charge for the interim period.

Over the last few months, UNRWA has initiated an internal review of its governance, management and accountability functions, so as to ensure it practices the highest standards of professionalism, transparency and efficiency.

The review revealed a number of areas which required strengthening, and the agency has already commenced corrective action and will be pursuing further initiatives and improvements over the coming months. UNRWA is grateful for the critical support of UN Member States and other partners around the world and is committed to ensuring donor funds are utilized in the most efficient and effective manner in support of the Agency's critical mission. The Secretary-General calls upon donors and partners to commit to the transfer critical funding payments to enable UNRWA to bridge its significant financial deficit and ensure it is able to carry out its unique and vital role in serving over 5.5 million Palestine refugees.

III. SPECIAL RAPPORTEURS CONDEMN ISRAELI DECISION TO EXPEL DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH

On 8 November, Mr. Michael Lynk, Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, Mr. David Kaye, Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, and Mr. Michel Forst, Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, issued a [statement](#) reflected in the press release below:

UN human rights experts today criticised a decision by the Israeli Supreme Court upholding the government's decision to revoke the work visa of Omar Shakir, the Israel and Palestine director of Human Rights Watch.

The decision means Mr. Shakir will be required to leave the country by 25 November if the government stands by its decision to deport him.

“The Supreme Court’s ruling is a body blow to the protection of human rights defenders, and to the fundamental right to freedom of expression,” said the experts. “All countries must defend and encourage the work of human rights organisations as part of their solemn duty to respect human rights, even when – and indeed especially when – those organisations are critical of the human rights practices of that country.

“We call on the Government of Israel to reverse its decision, and allow Mr. Shakir to remain and to continue with his research work for Human Rights Watch.” The three UN Special Rapporteurs said the government ruling was part of a disturbing trend of restrictions on the work of human rights organisations.

The experts further point out that the freedom of expression and association protects expressing support for, or opposition to, movements such as the BDS (boycott, divestment and sanctions), which do not incite discrimination, violence or hostility.

The revocation of Mr. Shakir’s work visa is based on a 2017 amendment to the Entry to Israel Law, which allows the denial of entry to Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory (OPT) to anyone who calls for a boycott of Israel as defined in the Prevention of Damage to the State of Israel through Boycott Law of 2011. Israel annulled Mr. Shakir’s visa on the grounds that he had supported the BDS in the past, and over allegations that he continued to do so through his work with Human Rights Watch.

The Supreme Court ruling on 5 November stated that the activities covered by the law included “a call to boycott Israel (...) even if its reasoning is founded on the protection of human rights or on the norms of international law”.

“This Supreme Court ruling is incompatible with the principles guaranteed in the International Bill of Rights, and it marks a significant departure from the protection of democratic liberties,” the experts said.

“We note that this is the first time that the 2017 amendment has been used to expel someone from Israel, although it has been applied to ban people – including two United States congresswomen and several human rights defenders – from visiting Israel and the OPT.

“We urge the Government of Israel to withdraw the 2017 amendment to the Entry to Israel Law, and to allow peaceful critics of its policies to enter the country on the same basis as anyone else.”

IV. EU COURT ISSUES A RULING ON LABELING OF FOODSTUFFS FROM SETTLEMENTS

On 12 November, the Court of Justice of the European Union issues a judgement on the labeling of foodstuffs originating in the territories occupied by the State of Israel and in Israeli settlements within that territory, summarized in the [press release](#) below.

In the judgment *Organisation juive européenne and Vignoble Psagot (C-363/18)*, delivered on 12 November 2019, concerning the interpretation of Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011,¹ the Grand Chamber of the Court ruled that foodstuffs originating in territories occupied by the State of Israel must bear the indication of their territory of origin, accompanied, where those foodstuffs come from a locality or a group of localities constituting an Israeli settlement within that territory, by the indication of that provenance.

The main proceedings concerned a dispute between, on the one hand, *Organisation juive européenne and Vignoble Psagot Ltd* and, on the other hand, the *ministre de l'Économie et des Finances* (the French Minister for the Economy and Finance) in relation to the legality of a notice concerning the indication of origin of goods originating in the territories occupied by the State of Israel since June 1967 and requiring that those foodstuffs bear the indications in question. That notice followed the publication by the European Commission of an interpretative notice on indication of origin of goods from those territories.²

First, the Court observed that the country of origin or the place of provenance of a foodstuff must, in accordance with Articles 9 and 26 of Regulation No 1169/2011, be indicated where failure to indicate this might mislead consumers into believing that that foodstuff has a country of origin or a place of provenance different from its true country of origin or place of provenance. In addition, it noted that, where the origin or provenance is indicated on a foodstuff, it must not be deceptive.

Secondly, the Court clarified both the interpretation of the concept of ‘country of origin’³ and that of the terms ‘country’ and ‘territory’ within the meaning of Regulation No 1169/2011. In that respect, it noted that that concept is defined in Article 2(3) of that regulation, by reference to the

¹ Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2011 on the provision of food information to consumers, amending Regulations (EC) No 1924/2006 and (EC) No 1925/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council, and repealing Commission Directive 87/250/EEC, Council Directive 90/496/EEC, Commission Directive 1999/10/EC, Directive 2000/13/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, Commission Directives 2002/67/EC and 2008/5/EC and Commission Regulation (EC) No 608/2004 (OJ 2011 L 304, p. 18).

² Interpretative Notice on indication of origin of goods from the territories occupied by Israel since June 1967 (OJ 2015 C 375, p. 4).

³ Article 9(1)(i) and Article 26(2)(a) of Regulation No 1169/2011.

Union Customs Code,⁴ according to which goods which have either been wholly obtained in a particular ‘country’ or ‘territory’ or have undergone their last substantial processing or working in that country or territory are to be regarded as having their origin in that country or territory.⁵

As regards the term ‘country’, which is used numerous times in the TEU and the TFEU as a synonym for the term ‘State’, the Court noted that, in order to ensure the consistent interpretation of EU law, the same meaning should be given to that term in the Union Customs Code and, consequently, in Regulation No 1169/2011. ‘State’ refers to a sovereign entity exercising, within its geographical boundaries, the full range of powers recognised by international law. As regards the term ‘territory’, the Court noted that it follows from the very wording of the Union Customs Code that that term refers to entities other than ‘countries’ and, therefore, other than ‘States’. In that context, the Court stated that displaying, on foodstuffs, the indication that the State of Israel is their ‘country of origin’, when those foodstuffs actually originate in one of the territories which – while each has its own international status distinct from the State of Israel – are occupied by that State and subject to a limited jurisdiction of the latter, as an occupying power within the meaning of international humanitarian law, would be liable to mislead consumers. Consequently, the Court held that the indication of the territory of origin of the foodstuffs in question is mandatory, within the meaning of Regulation No 1169/2011, in order to prevent consumers from being misled as to the fact that the State of Israel is present in the territories concerned as an occupying power and not as a sovereign entity.

Thirdly and lastly, the Court stated that the concept of ‘place of provenance’⁶ must be understood as referring to any specific geographical area within the country or territory of origin of a foodstuff, with the exception of a producer’s address. Thus, the indication that a foodstuff comes from an ‘Israeli settlement’ located in one of the ‘territories occupied by the State of Israel’ may be regarded as an indication of the ‘place of provenance’, provided that the term ‘settlement’ refers to a specific geographical area. In addition, as regards the issue whether the indication ‘Israeli settlement’ is mandatory, the Court first of all underlined that the settlements established in some of the territories occupied by the State of Israel are characterised by the fact that they give concrete expression to a policy of population transfer conducted by that State outside its territory, in violation of the rules of general international humanitarian law.⁷ The Court then held that the omission of that indication, with the result that only the territory of origin is indicated, might mislead consumers. Consumers have no way of knowing, in the absence of any information capable of enlightening them in that respect, that a foodstuff comes from a locality or a set of localities constituting a settlement established in one of those territories in breach of the rules of international humanitarian law. The Court noted that, under Regulation No 1169/2011⁸ the provision of information to consumers must enable them to make informed choices, with regard not only to health, economic, environmental and social considerations, but also to ethical considerations and considerations relating to the observance of international law. The Court

⁴ Regulation (EU) No 952/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 October 2013 laying down the EU Customs Code (OJ 2013, L 269, p. 1). ⁵ Article 60 of Regulation No 952/2013.

⁵ Article 60 of Regulation No 952/2013.

⁶ Article 9(1)(i) and Article 26(2)(a) of Regulation No 1169/2011.

⁷ Sixth paragraph of Article 49 of the Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, signed in Geneva on 12 August 1949.

⁸ Recitals 3 and 4 and Article 3(1) of Regulation No 1169/2011.

underlined in that respect that such considerations could influence consumers' purchasing decisions.

V. UN SPECIAL COORDINATOR WORKING TO DEESCALATE SITUATION BETWEEN GAZA AND ISRAEL

On 13 November, Mr. Nikolay Mladenov, United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, issued a [statement](#) on the situation in Gaza and Israel as below:

“I am very concerned about the ongoing and serious escalation between Palestinian Islamic Jihad and Israel, following the targeted killing of one of the group's leaders inside Gaza yesterday.

The indiscriminate launching of rockets and mortars against population centres is absolutely unacceptable and must stop immediately.

There can be no justification for any attacks against civilians.

The continuing escalation is very dangerous. It is yet another attempt to undermine the efforts to improve the dire socio-economic conditions in Gaza and prevent another devastating conflict.

The UN is working to urgently de-escalate the situation.”

VI. UN SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR WELCOMES RULING ON LABELING OF ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS PRODUCTS BY EUROPEAN COURT OF JUSTICE

On 15 November, Mr. Michael Lynk, the Special Rapporteur for the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, issued a statement reflected in the [press release](#) as below:

A UN expert has applauded the 12 November 2019 ruling by the European Court of Justice which held that food products produced by Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory must indicate that they originate from a settlement, and not as a “product of Israel”.

“This judgement is principled, and an important first step to building a legal culture of accountability when it comes to Israel's settlements,” said Michael Lynk, the Special Rapporteur for the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967.

“These settlements are illegal under international law. They are a purported war crime under the Statute of Rome. So, at the very least, European consumers must have accurate information before them when they make purchasing choices.”

The ruling by the Court accepted that consumers' choices can be influenced by a range of factors, including health, environmental, social and ethical considerations. It observed that food law in Europe prohibits any practices which may mislead the consumer.

“Importantly, the Court pointed out that the European Union has committed itself to the strict observance of international law,” said the Special Rapporteur. “According to international law, the

Israeli settlements violate the Fourth Geneva Convention’s prohibition against civilian settlements in occupied territory, and they obstruct the right of the Palestinian people to enjoy self-determination.”

The ruling by the European Court of Justice follows a similar judgement in *Kattenburg v. Canada* by the Federal Court of Canada in June 2019. The Government of Canada is appealing the decision to the Federal Court of Canada.

The Special Rapporteur noted that a study released earlier this week by the European Middle East Project concluded that the European Union has largely failed to enforce its 2015 decision to require the accurate labeling of products from the Israeli settlements.

The study – which examined wines produced in Israeli settlements in the Syrian Golan Heights and the West Bank – found that only 10 percent of these wines on sale in the EU had correct or partially correct origin labeling in line with EU rules: “Product of West Bank/Golan Heights (Israeli settlement).”

“This is a disappointing finding regarding the enforcement efforts of the European Union,” said Lynk. “If the Green Line (Israel’s pre-1967 border) is supposed to be a red line, why does the European Union not take its own rules seriously?”

The Special Rapporteur stated that the international community, including the European Union, must now turn its attention to prohibiting all Israeli settlement goods and services from entering domestic markets.

“The United Nations Security Council, almost 40 years ago – in resolution 465 – called upon all UN members: ‘not to provide Israel with any assistance to be used specifically in connection with the settlements in the occupied territories.’ Anything short of ending trade with, and investment in, the Israeli settlements provides them with the economic oxygen to continue to grow,” he said. “The international community cannot call these settlements illegal and an obstacle to peace, and yet provide them with the economic means to thrive.”

VII. UNRWA RECEIVES OVERWHELMING VOTE TO EXTEND ITS MANDATE UNTIL 2023

On 15 November, the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) of the General Assembly voted for extending the mandate of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) until 2023 [by 170 votes in favour to 2 against, with 7 abstentions](#). UNRWA issued a [press release](#) as seen below:

The Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) of the United Nations General Assembly voted yesterday to extend the mandate of the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) until 2023. The UN General Assembly will vote in plenary session next month on the resolution adopted by the Fourth Committee.

UNRWA was established 70 years ago and provides essential services to Palestine refugees based on a mandate given to it by the General Assembly which is renewed every three years.

UNRWA is experiencing the worst financial deficit in its 70 year history and is seeking to overcome a financial gap of nearly US\$ 89 million before the end of the year.

“The fact that 170 UN Member-States reaffirmed their trust in UNRWA and expressed support for it to continue providing its essential assistance for the next three years is a confirmation of the vital role that the Agency plays in supporting the needs of Palestine refugees,” said Acting Commissioner- General, Christian Saunders.

UNRWA currently supports 5.5 million Palestine refugees in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, Gaza, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. The agency provides services in the fields of health, education, microfinance, protection and relief and social services, with over half a million girls and boys attending its 709 schools and some 8.5 million patient visits provided in 2018 alone in 22 health centers across the five fields of operations.

The resolution approved on Friday affirms that Palestine refugees continue to have essential needs – that in the absence of a just and lasting solution to their plight – UNRWA continues to meet through its programmes and service delivery.

The vote is also seen as a confirmation of the strong support Member States have for the robust measures being undertaken by the Agency to address the issues identified by the recent investigation, as well as for the broader reforms underway to enhance the Agency’s ability to respond to the needs of Palestine refugees.

“We are extremely grateful to UN Member States, donors and partners for this overwhelming vote of confidence in the Agency” said Mr. Saunders. “We will ensure that their trust and continued support are well placed.”

VIII. EU HIGH REPRESENTATIVE REAFFIRMS THAT EU POSITION ON ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS REMAINS UNCHANGED

On 18 November, Ms. Federica Mogherini, EU High Representative and Vice-President, issued a [statement](#) on Israeli settlement policy as below:

The European Union's position on Israeli settlement policy in the occupied Palestinian territory is clear and remains unchanged: all settlement activity is illegal under international law and it erodes the viability of the two-state solution and the prospects for a lasting peace, as reaffirmed by UN Security Council Resolution 2334.

The EU calls on Israel to end all settlement activity, in line with its obligations as an occupying power.

The EU will continue to support a resumption of a meaningful process towards a negotiated two-state solution, the only realistic and viable way to fulfil the legitimate aspirations of both parties.

IX. OHCHR SPOKESPERSON REITERATES THE UN POSITION ON ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS FOLLOWING US ANNOUNCEMENT

On 19 November, Mr. Rupert Colville, spokesperson for the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, issued a [press briefing note](#) as below:

As part of the UN Secretariat, we continue to follow the longstanding position of the United Nations that the Israeli settlements are in breach of international law.

A change in the [policy position](#) of one State does not modify existing international law, nor its interpretation by the International Court of Justice and the Security Council.

X. UN SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR CONDEMNS THE US SETTLEMENTS DECISION

On 19 November, Mr. Michael Lynk, the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, issued a [press release](#) condemning the US decision on Israeli settlements, as seen below:

The [announcement](#) by the US Secretary of State that Israeli settlements do not violate international law is a decisive break with international consensus, and will only further entrench the perpetual Israeli occupation, a UN human rights expert said today.

“This is not a step towards peace or justice in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict,” said Michael Lynk, the Special Rapporteur for the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967. “The American Government’s decision to jettison international law and to legitimise the illegal Israeli settlements is probably the very last nail in the coffin of the two-state solution.

“This effectively grants permission to the Israeli government to formally annex large parts of the occupied West Bank, as it has already done with East Jerusalem,” he said. “This will only confirm a one state reality characterised by a rigid two-tier system of legal and political rights, based on ethnicity and religion. This would meet the international definition of apartheid.”

Presently, there are approximately 240 Israeli settlements and around 650,000 Israeli settlers in East Jerusalem and the West Bank. The international community has long held that these settlements are a flagrant violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 (Article 49, para. 6). The Convention strictly prohibits an occupying power from settling its own civilian population in territory that it occupies.

“The Israeli settlements are a major source of human rights violations, and they are the engine of Israel’s occupation,” said Lynk. “They are built on confiscated Palestinian property; they rely upon the illegal appropriation of Palestinian natural resources, including water, land and minerals; and they have forced Palestinians into smaller and more constricted space on their own territory.

“Most importantly, the incessant expansion of the Israeli settlements has robbed the Palestinians of hope for a future based on freedom.”

The illegality of the Israeli settlements has been affirmed by virtually every member state of the United Nations. This is also the position of the International Court of Justice, the United

Nations Security Council, the UN General Assembly, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the UN Human Rights Council, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and by Palestinian and Israeli human rights organisations.

“Monday’s announcement by the US Secretary of State is the latest in a series of recent moves that has undermined the rules-based international order. Its earlier decisions to recognise Israel’s illegal annexation of the Syrian Golan Heights and to move its embassy to Jerusalem have pushed the chances of a shared future by Israeli Jews and Palestinians based on equality even further away.”

The Special Rapporteur called upon the international community to reaffirm the illegality of the settlements. He also asked the international community to take further steps to put international law into action by prohibiting the importation of settlement goods and services into the international marketplace.

XI. OIC REJECTS THE US ANNOUNCEMENT ON ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS

On 19 November, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) issued the following [statement](#):

The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) announced its rejection and condemnation of the [declarations](#) made by the US Foreign Secretary to the effect that “the Israeli colonial settlement does not conflict with international law”. The OIC considers it a glaring violation of international legality and UN resolutions, and more particularly UN Security Council resolutions 446, 452, 465, 476, 478 and 2334, all of which clearly affirm that Israeli settlements are illegal and represent an aggression against the Palestinian people’s rights.

The OIC stressed that the American administration’s biased stand in favor of the Israeli occupation represents a defiance to the world community and does not impart any right or legitimacy, but could rather undermine the sovereignty of international law and international efforts to establish a peace based on the vision of the Two-State solution.

The OIC further called on the international community and particularly on the UN Security Council to rise up to their responsibility and take the necessary concrete steps to put a complete end to the Israeli settlement policy, all across the occupied Palestinian territories, including the Holy City of Al Quds/Jerusalem, such as to facilitate a peace based on the Two-State solution and contribute to the spread of security and stability in the region and worldwide.

XII. PALESTINIAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS FOUR DRAFT RESOLUTIONS FOR ADOPTION BY THE GA

On 20 November, the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People recommended four draft resolutions ([A/74/L.14](#), [A/74/L.15](#), [A/74/L.16](#) and [A/74/L.17](#)) for adoption by the General Assembly, as per below:

Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People ([A/74/L.14](#))

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions [181 \(II\)](#) of 29 November 1947, [194 \(III\)](#) of 11 December 1948, [3236 \(XXIX\)](#) of 22 November 1974, [3375 \(XXX\)](#) and [3376 \(XXX\)](#) of 10 November 1975, [31/20](#) of 24 November 1976 and all its subsequent relevant resolutions, including those adopted at its emergency special sessions and its resolution [73/18](#) of 30 November 2018,

Recalling also its resolution [58/292](#) of 6 May 2004,

Having considered the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People,

Recalling the mutual recognition between the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people, as well as the existing agreements between the two sides and the need for full compliance with those agreements,

Affirming its support for a comprehensive, just, lasting and peaceful settlement to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on the basis of the relevant United Nations resolutions, the terms of reference of the Madrid Conference, including the principle of land for peace, the Arab Peace Initiative adopted by the Council of the League of Arab States at its fourteenth session¹ and the Quartet road map to a permanent two-State solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict,² endorsed by the Security Council in resolution [1515 \(2003\)](#) of 19 November 2003,

Recalling the relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolution [2334 \(2016\)](#) of 23 December 2016, and underscoring in this regard, inter alia, the call upon all parties to continue, in the interest of the promotion of peace and security, to exert collective efforts to launch credible negotiations on all final status issues in the Middle East peace process and within the time frame specified by the Quartet in its statement of 21 September 2010,

Recalling also the advisory opinion rendered on 9 July 2004 by the International Court of Justice on the legal consequences of the construction of a wall in the Occupied Palestinian

¹ [A/56/1026-S/2002/932](#), annex II, resolution 14/221.

² [S/2003/529](#), annex.

Territory,³ and recalling further its resolutions [ES-10/15](#) of 20 July 2004 and [ES-10/17](#) of 15 December 2006,

Taking note of the application of Palestine for admission to membership in the United Nations, submitted on 23 September 2011,⁴

Recalling its resolution [67/19](#) of 29 November 2012, by which, inter alia, Palestine was accorded non-member observer State status in the United Nations, and taking note of the follow-up report of the Secretary-General,⁵

Taking note of the accession by Palestine to several human rights treaties and the core humanitarian law conventions, as well as other international treaties,

Noting with deep regret the passage of 52 years since the onset of the Israeli occupation and over 72 years since the adoption of resolution [181 \(II\)](#) on 29 November 1947 and the Nakba without tangible progress towards a peaceful solution, and stressing the urgent need for efforts to reverse the negative trends on the ground and to restore a political horizon for advancing and accelerating meaningful negotiations aimed at the achievement of a peace agreement that will bring a complete end to the Israeli occupation that began in 1967 and the resolution of all core final status issues, without exception, leading to a peaceful, just, lasting and comprehensive solution to the question of Palestine,

Reaffirming that the United Nations has a permanent responsibility towards the question of Palestine until the question is resolved in all its aspects in a satisfactory manner in accordance with international legitimacy,

1. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People for its efforts in performing the tasks assigned to it by the General Assembly, and takes note of its annual report,¹ including the conclusions and valuable recommendations contained in chapter VII thereof, inter alia, the recommendations for the redoubling of international efforts aimed at achieving a peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine, for an expanded multilateral framework for the revitalization of peace efforts and for efforts to ensure fullest accountability and implementation of the long-standing parameters for peace in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions;

2. *Requests* the Committee to continue to exert all efforts to promote the realization of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to self-determination, to support the achievement without delay of an end to the Israeli occupation that began in 1967 and of the two-State solution on the basis of the pre-1967 borders and the just resolution of all final status issues and to mobilize international support for and assistance to the Palestinian people, and in this regard authorizes the Committee to make such adjustments in its approved programme of work as it may consider appropriate and necessary in the light of developments and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session and thereafter;

³ See [A/ES-10/273](#) and [A/ES-10/273/Corr.1](#).

⁴ [A/66/371-S/2011/592](#), annex I.

⁵ [A/67/738](#).

3. *Also requests* the Committee to continue to keep under review the situation relating to the question of Palestine and to report and make suggestions to the General Assembly, the Security Council or the Secretary-General, as appropriate;

4. *Further requests* the Committee to continue to extend its cooperation and support to Palestinian and other civil society organizations and to continue to involve additional civil society organizations and parliamentarians in its work in order to mobilize international solidarity and support for the Palestinian people, particularly during this critical period of political instability, humanitarian hardship and financial crisis, with the overall aim of promoting the achievement by the Palestinian people of their inalienable rights and a just, lasting and peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine, the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict, on the basis of the relevant United Nations resolutions, the terms of reference of the Madrid Conference, including the principle of land for peace, the Arab Peace Initiative² and the Quartet road map;³

5. *Commends* the Committee on its efforts and activities in upholding its mandate, including through cooperative initiatives with Governments, relevant organizations of the United Nations system, intergovernmental organizations and civil society organizations;

6. *Commends* the Working Group of the Committee on its efforts in coordinating the efforts of international and regional civil society organizations regarding the question of Palestine;

7. *Requests* the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine, established under General Assembly resolution [194 \(III\)](#), and other United Nations bodies associated with the question of Palestine to continue to cooperate fully with the Committee and to make available to it, at its request, the relevant information and documentation that they have at their disposal;

8. *Invites* all Governments and organizations to extend their cooperation and support to the Committee in the performance of its tasks, recalling its repeated call for all States and the specialized agencies and organizations of the United Nations system to continue to support and assist the Palestinian people in the early realization of their right to self-determination, including the right to their independent State of Palestine;

9. *Requests* the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development to continue to report to the General Assembly on the economic costs of the Israeli occupation for the Palestinian people, and, while drawing attention to the alarming findings, as reflected in the recent reports⁶ in this regard, calls for the exertion of all efforts for the provision of the resources necessary to expedite the completion and publication of the report, including the facilitation and coordination of pertinent inputs from the relevant organs, bodies and agencies of the United Nations system;

⁶ [A/73/201](#) and [A/74/272](#).

10. *Requests* the Secretary-General to circulate the report of the Committee to all the competent bodies of the United Nations, and urges them to take the necessary action, as appropriate;

11. *Requests* the Committee, bearing in mind the regrettable absence of tangible progress towards a peaceful solution, to continue to focus its activities throughout 2020 on efforts and initiatives to end the Israeli occupation that began in 1967 and to organize activities in this regard, within existing resources and in cooperation with Governments, relevant organizations of the United Nations system, intergovernmental organizations and civil society organizations, aimed at raising international awareness and mobilizing diplomatic efforts to launch credible negotiations aimed at achieving without delay a just, lasting, comprehensive and peaceful solution to the question of Palestine in all its aspects;

12. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to provide the Committee with all the facilities necessary for the performance of its tasks.

Peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine ([A/74/L.15](#))

The General Assembly,

Recalling its relevant resolutions, including those adopted at its tenth emergency special session,

Recalling also its resolution [73/89](#) of 6 December 2018, entitled “Comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East”,

Recalling further relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#) of 22 November 1967, [338 \(1973\)](#) of 22 October 1973, [478 \(1980\)](#) of 20 August 1980, [1397 \(2002\)](#) of 12 March 2002, [1515 \(2003\)](#) of 19 November 2003, [1544 \(2004\)](#) of 19 May 2004, [1850 \(2008\)](#) of 16 December 2008 and [2334 \(2016\)](#) of 23 December 2016,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General submitted pursuant to the request made in its resolution [73/19](#) of 30 November 2018,

Recalling its resolution [58/292](#) of 6 May 2004,

Reaffirming the permanent responsibility of the United Nations with regard to the question of Palestine until it is resolved in all its aspects in accordance with international law and relevant resolutions,

Convinced that achieving a just, lasting and comprehensive settlement of the question of Palestine, the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict, is imperative for the attainment of comprehensive and lasting peace and stability in the Middle East,

Stressing that the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples is among the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations,

Reaffirming the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force,

Recalling its resolution [2625 \(XXV\)](#) of 24 October 1970, and reiterating the importance of maintaining and strengthening international peace founded upon freedom, equality, justice and respect for fundamental human rights and of developing friendly relations among nations irrespective of their political, economic and social systems or the level of their development,

Emphasizing the need for respect for, and the preservation of, the territorial integrity and unity of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Recalling the advisory opinion rendered on 9 July 2004 by the International Court of Justice on the legal consequences of the construction of a wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory,¹ and recalling also its resolutions [ES-10/15](#) of 20 July 2004 and [ES-10/17](#) of 15 December 2006,

Reaffirming the illegality of Israeli settlement activities and all other unilateral measures aimed at altering the demographic composition, character and status of the City of Jerusalem and of the Occupied Palestinian Territory as a whole, including the wall and its associated regime, and demanding their immediate cessation,

Emphasizing the importance of the safety, protection and well-being of all civilians in the whole Middle East region, and condemning all acts of violence and terror against civilians on all sides,

Calling for full respect for international law, including for the protection of civilian life, as well as for the promotion of human security, the de-escalation of the situation, the exercise of restraint, including from provocative actions and rhetoric, and the establishment of a stable environment conducive to the pursuit of peace,

Stressing the need for measures to be taken to guarantee the safety and protection of the Palestinian civilian population throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, consistent with the provisions and obligations of international humanitarian law, and taking note of the report of the Secretary-General on the protection of the Palestinian civilian population,²

Stressing also the need to ensure accountability for all violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law in order to end impunity, ensure justice, deter further violations, protect civilians and promote peace,

Recalling the mutual recognition 26 years ago between the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,³ and stressing the urgent need for efforts to ensure full compliance with the agreements concluded between the two sides,

Stressing the need, in particular, for an immediate halt to all actions contrary to international law that undermine trust and prejudice final status issues,

¹ See [A/ES-10/273](#) and [A/ES-10/273/Corr.1](#).

² [A/ES-10/794](#).

³ See [A/48/486-S/26560](#), annex.

Urging renewed and coordinated efforts by the international community aimed at restoring a political horizon and advancing and accelerating the conclusion of a peace treaty to achieve without delay an end to the Israeli occupation that began in 1967 by resolving all outstanding issues, including all final status issues, without exception, for a just, lasting and peaceful settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, in accordance with the internationally recognized basis of the two-State solution, and of the Arab-Israeli conflict, for the realization of a comprehensive peace in the Middle East,

Recognizing the efforts being undertaken by the Palestinian Government, with international support, to reform, develop, strengthen and preserve its institutions and infrastructure, despite the obstacles presented by the ongoing Israeli occupation, commending in this regard the ongoing efforts to develop the institutions of an independent Palestinian State, and stressing the need to promote intra-Palestinian reconciliation,

Expressing concern about the risks posed to the significant achievements made, as confirmed by the positive assessments by the international institutions regarding readiness for statehood, owing to the negative impact of the current instability and financial crisis being faced by the Palestinian Government and the continued absence of a credible political horizon,

Welcoming the ongoing efforts of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians, chaired by Norway, and noting its recent meeting at United Nations Headquarters, on 26 September 2019,

Recognizing the positive contribution of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, which is aimed, inter alia, at enhancing development support and assistance to the Palestinian people and strengthening institutional capacity in line with Palestinian national priorities,

Welcoming the holding of the meeting of the Conference on Cooperation among East Asian Countries for Palestinian Development in Ramallah and Jericho in July 2019 to support Palestinian efforts towards an independent Palestinian State through the sharing of the experience of East Asian countries in economic development and exploring effective means of cooperation, aimed at contributing to the promotion of Palestinian development, the Middle East peace process and regional stability,

Taking note of the application of Palestine for admission to membership in the United Nations, submitted on 23 September 2011,⁴

Taking note also of its resolution [67/19](#) of 29 November 2012, by which, inter alia, Palestine was accorded non-member observer State status in the United Nations, and taking note further of the follow-up report of the Secretary-General,⁵

Acknowledging the efforts being undertaken by civil society to promote a peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine,

⁴ [A/66/371-S/2011/592](#), annex I.

⁵ [A/67/738](#).

Stressing the urgency of achieving without delay an end to the Israeli occupation that began in 1967,

Affirming once again the right of all States in the region to live in peace within secure and internationally recognized borders,

Recalling the Arab Peace Initiative, adopted by the Council of the League of Arab States at its fourteenth session, held in Beirut on 27 and 28 March 2002,⁶ and stressing its importance in the efforts to achieve a just, lasting and comprehensive peace,

1. *Reiterates its call for* the achievement, without delay, of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East on the basis of the relevant United Nations resolutions, including Security Council resolution [2334 \(2016\)](#), the Madrid terms of reference, including the principle of land for peace, the Arab Peace Initiative⁷ and the Quartet road map,⁷ and an end to the Israeli occupation that began in 1967, including of East Jerusalem, and reaffirms in this regard its unwavering support, in accordance with international law, for the two-State solution of Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security within recognized borders, based on the pre-1967 borders;

2. *Stresses* the need to urgently exert collective efforts to launch credible negotiations on all final status issues in the Middle East peace process based on the long-standing terms of reference and clear parameters and within the time frame specified by the Quartet in its statement of 21 September 2010, and calls once more for the intensification of efforts by the parties, including through meaningful negotiations, with the support of the international community, towards the conclusion of a final just, lasting and comprehensive peace settlement;

3. *Calls for* the timely convening of an international conference in Moscow, as envisioned by the Security Council in its resolution [1850 \(2008\)](#), for the advancement and acceleration of the achievement of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace settlement;

4. *Stresses* that compliance with and respect for the Charter of the United Nations and international law, including international humanitarian law and international human rights law, is a cornerstone of peace and security in the region;

5. *Calls upon* both parties to act responsibly and in compliance with international law and their previous agreements and obligations, in both their policies and actions, in order to, with the support of the Quartet and other interested parties, urgently reverse negative trends, including all measures taken on the ground that are contrary to international law, and create the conditions necessary for a credible political horizon and the advancement of peace efforts;

6. *Calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to comply strictly with its obligations under international law, and to cease all of its measures that are contrary to international law, including all unilateral actions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, that are aimed at altering the demographic composition, character and status of

⁶ [A/56/1026-S/2002/932](#), annex II, resolution 14/221.

⁷ [S/2003/529](#), annex.

the Territory, and thus at prejudging the final outcome of peace negotiations, and recalls in this regard the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of land by force and therefore the illegality of the annexation of any part of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which constitutes a breach of international law, undermines the viability of the two-State solution and challenges the prospects for the achievement of a peaceful settlement and of just, lasting and comprehensive peace;

7. *Stresses* the need, in particular, for an immediate halt to all settlement activities, land confiscation and home demolitions, for the pursuit of measures to ensure accountability and for the release of prisoners and an end to arbitrary arrests and detentions;

8. *Also stresses* the need for respect for and preservation of the territorial unity, contiguity and integrity of all the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem;

9. *Further stresses* the need for an immediate and complete cessation of all acts of violence, including military attacks, destruction and acts of terror, as well as all acts of provocation and incitement;

10. *Reaffirms its commitment*, in accordance with international law, to the two-State solution of Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security within recognized borders, based on the pre-1967 borders;

11. *Underscores* in this regard the affirmation by the Security Council in its resolution [2334 \(2016\)](#) of its determination to examine practical ways and means to secure the full implementation of its relevant resolutions;

12. *Calls for*:

(a) The withdrawal of Israel from the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, including East Jerusalem;

(b) The realization of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, primarily the right to self-determination and the right to their independent State;

(c) A just resolution of the problem of Palestine refugees in conformity with its resolution [194 \(III\)](#) of 11 December 1948;

13. *Calls upon* all States, consistent with their obligations under the Charter and relevant Security Council resolutions, inter alia:

(a) Not to recognize any changes to the pre-1967 borders, including with regard to Jerusalem, other than those agreed by the parties through negotiations, including by ensuring that agreements with Israel do not imply recognition of Israeli sovereignty over the territories occupied by Israel in 1967;

(b) To distinguish, in their relevant dealings, between the territory of the State of Israel and the territories occupied since 1967;

(c) Not to render aid or assistance to illegal settlement activities, including not to provide Israel with any assistance to be used specifically in connection with settlements in the occupied territories, in line with Security Council resolution [465 \(1980\)](#) of 1 March 1980;

(d) To respect and ensure respect for international law, in all circumstances, including through measures of accountability, consistent with international law;

14. *Urges* all States and the United Nations to continue and expedite the provision of economic, humanitarian and technical assistance to the Palestinian people and the Palestinian Government during this critical period in order to help to alleviate the serious humanitarian situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which is dire in the Gaza Strip, to rehabilitate the Palestinian economy and infrastructure and to support the development and strengthening of Palestinian institutions and Palestinian State-building efforts in preparation for independence;

15. *Requests* the Secretary-General, including through his Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority, to continue his efforts with the parties concerned, and in consultation with the Security Council, including with regard to the reporting required pursuant to resolution [2334 \(2016\)](#), towards the attainment of a peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine and the promotion of peace in the region and to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session a report on these efforts and on developments on this matter.

Division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat ([A/74/L.16](#))

The General Assembly,

Having considered the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People,¹

Taking note, in particular, of the action taken by the Committee and the Division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat in accordance with their mandates,

Recalling its resolution [32/40 B](#) of 2 December 1977 and all its subsequent relevant resolutions, including its resolution [73/21](#) of 30 November 2018,

1. *Notes with appreciation* the action taken by the Secretary-General in compliance with its resolution [73/21](#);

2. *Considers* that, by providing substantive support to the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People in the implementation of its mandate, the Division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat continues to make a constructive and positive contribution to raising international awareness of the question of Palestine and of the urgency of a peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine in all its aspects on the

¹ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Seventy-fourth Session, Supplement No. 35 ([A/74/35](#)).*

basis of international law and United Nations resolutions and the efforts being exerted in this regard and to generating international support for the rights of the Palestinian people;

3. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to provide the Division with the necessary resources and to ensure that it continues to effectively carry out its programme of work as detailed in relevant earlier resolutions, in consultation with the Committee and under its guidance;

4. *Requests* the Division, in particular, to continue to monitor developments relevant to the question of Palestine, to organize international meetings and activities in support of the Committee's mandate with the participation of all sectors of the international community and to ensure, within existing resources, the continued participation of eminent persons and international renowned experts in these meetings and activities, to be invited on a par with the members of the Committee, to liaise and cooperate with civil society and parliamentarians, including through the Working Group of the Committee, to develop and expand the "Question of Palestine" website and the documents collection of the United Nations Information System on the Question of Palestine, to prepare and widely disseminate the publications listed in paragraph 81 of the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People for the period 2017/18,² in the relevant official languages of the United Nations, and information materials on various aspects of the question of Palestine and to develop and enhance the annual training programme for staff of the Palestinian Government in contribution to Palestinian capacity-building efforts;

5. *Also requests* the Division, as part of the observance of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People on 29 November, to continue to organize, under the guidance of the Committee, an annual exhibit on Palestinian rights or a cultural event in cooperation with the Permanent Observer Mission of the State of Palestine to the United Nations, and encourages Member States to continue to give the widest support and publicity to the observance of the Day of Solidarity;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to ensure the continued cooperation with the Division of the United Nations system entities with programme components addressing various aspects of the question of Palestine and the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem;

7. *Invites* all Governments and organizations to extend their cooperation to the Division in the performance of its tasks.

² *Ibid.*, Seventy-third Session, Supplement No. 35 ([A/73/35](#)).

Special information programme on the question of Palestine of the Department of Global Communications of the Secretariat ([A/74/L.17](#))

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution [73/20](#) of 30 November 2018,

Recalling also its resolutions [73/102 A](#), entitled “Information in the service of humanity”, and B, entitled “United Nations public information policies and activities”, of 7 December 2018,

Taking note of the report of the Committee on Information on its forty-first session,¹

Having considered the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People,²

Convinced that the worldwide dissemination of accurate and comprehensive information and the role of civil society organizations and institutions remain of vital importance in heightening awareness of and support for the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to self-determination and independence, and for the efforts to achieve a just, lasting and peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine,

Recalling the mutual recognition between the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people, as well as the existing agreements between the two sides,

Affirming its support for a comprehensive, just, lasting and peaceful settlement to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on the basis of the relevant United Nations resolutions, the terms of reference of the Madrid Conference, including the principle of land for peace, the Arab Peace Initiative adopted by the Council of the League of Arab States at its fourteenth session,³ and the Quartet road map to a permanent two-State solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict,⁴ endorsed by the Security Council in its resolution [1515 \(2003\)](#) of 19 November 2003 and recalled by the Council in its resolution [2334 \(2016\)](#) of 23 December 2016,

Recalling the advisory opinion rendered on 9 July 2004 by the International Court of Justice on the legal consequences of the construction of a wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory,⁵

Taking note of its resolution [67/19](#) of 29 November 2012,

¹ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Seventy-fourth Session, Supplement No. 21* ([A/74/21](#)).

² *Ibid.*, Supplement No. 35 ([A/74/35](#)).

³ [A/56/1026-S/2002/932](#), annex II, resolution 14/221.

⁴ [S/2003/529](#), annex.

⁵ See [A/ES-10/273](#) and [A/ES-10/273/Corr.1](#).

Reaffirming that the United Nations has a permanent responsibility towards the question of Palestine until the question is resolved in all its aspects in a satisfactory manner in accordance with international legitimacy,

1. *Notes with appreciation* the action taken by the Department of Global Communications of the Secretariat in compliance with its resolution [73/20](#);

2. *Considers* that the special information programme on the question of Palestine of the Department is very useful in raising the awareness of the international community concerning the question of Palestine and the situation in the Middle East and that the programme is contributing effectively to an atmosphere conducive to dialogue and supportive of peace efforts and should receive the necessary support for the fulfilment of its tasks;

3. *Requests* the Department, in full cooperation and coordination with the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, to continue, with the necessary flexibility as may be required by developments affecting the question of Palestine, its special information programme for 2020–2021, in particular, inter alia:

(a) To disseminate information on all the activities of the United Nations system relating to the question of Palestine and peace efforts, including reports on the work carried out by the relevant United Nations organizations, as well as on the efforts of the Secretary-General and his Special Envoy vis-à-vis the objective of peace;

(b) To continue to issue, update and modernize publications and audiovisual and online materials on the various aspects of the question of Palestine in all fields, including materials concerning relevant recent developments, in particular the efforts to achieve a peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine;

(c) To expand its collection of audiovisual material on the question of Palestine, to continue the production and preservation of such material and to update, on a periodic basis, the public exhibit on the question of Palestine displayed in the General Assembly Building as well as at United Nations headquarters in Geneva and Vienna;

(d) To organize and promote fact-finding news missions for journalists to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel;

(e) To organize international, regional and national seminars or encounters for journalists aimed, in particular, at sensitizing public opinion to the question of Palestine and peace efforts and at enhancing dialogue and understanding between Palestinians and Israelis for the promotion of a peaceful settlement to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, including by fostering and encouraging the contribution of the media in support of peace between the two sides;

(f) To continue to provide assistance to the Palestinian people in the field of media development, in particular through its annual training programme for Palestinian broadcasters and journalists, and recommends that arrangements be made for the provision of such training in the region;

4. *Encourages* the Department to continue organizing encounters for the media and representatives of civil society to engage in open and positive discussions to explore means for encouraging people-to-people dialogue and promoting peace and mutual understanding in the region.

XIII. UN SPECIAL COORDINATOR BRIEFS THE SECURITY COUNCIL

On 20 November, Mr. Nickolay Mladenov, Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, delivered a briefing to the Security Council on the situation in the Middle East. Excerpts from his briefing ([S/PV.8669](#)) are replicated below:

We meet today in the aftermath of the most serious recent escalation between Israel and Palestinian militants in Gaza. Although the immediate crisis was defused, the situation remains highly volatile.

Following Israel's targeted killing of Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) Commander Baha Abu al-Ata in Gaza, Palestinian militants launched more than 500 rockets towards Israel. This latest escalation was preceded on 1 November by some 10 rockets that were launched from Gaza towards Israel, one of them hitting a house in Sderot city. While, according to the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), 90 per cent of the rockets were intercepted by the Iron Dome, those that landed caused damage to residential and commercial property. Seventy-eight Israelis were treated for injuries or shock. The indiscriminate launching of rockets and mortars at civilian population centres is unacceptable and must stop immediately.

In response to the rocket attacks, the IDF conducted a number of strikes against PIJ and militant targets in Gaza. Thirty-four Palestinians were killed, more than 20 of whom were identified by the IDF as militants and including three women and eight children. One of the fatalities was reportedly caused by a Palestinian rocket falling short inside Gaza. In total, 109 people were also injured.

Among the people killed in Gaza were eight members of a family, who were killed in a single Israeli strike. The IDF has reportedly admitted that their home was mistakenly targeted. That is a tragic and heinous incident and must be thoroughly and impartially investigated. There is no justification for the killing of civilians anywhere.

I want to recognize today the extraordinary effort by Egypt, working closely with the United Nations, to ensure that calm in Gaza was restored after 48 hours of hostilities. Had our efforts failed, we would certainly be in the midst of another war that would be far worse than the terrible conflict in 2014. However, the dangers have not passed. Although for now the arrangements that came into effect in the early hours of 14 November are holding, sporadic rocket launches have continued, prompting Israeli retaliation.

But there are also other risks. Israeli closures and intra-Palestinian division feed a desperate reality. Militant activity, rocket fire and retaliatory air strikes constantly risk more violence. Over the past year and a half, the United Nations has worked hard to prevent escalation and to implement the United Nations package for Gaza as endorsed by the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians (AHLC). As a result of that work, the electricity supply was restored to an average of 13 hours per day; more than 16,000 temporary jobs

were created; and work is progressing on reviving an industrial zone to create long-term economic opportunities. All those measures have admittedly eased tensions but they fall far short of what is required in terms of both financial resources as well as political commitment by Palestinian leaders and measures by Israel.

Gaza ultimately requires a political solution. Militant activity cannot continue to undermine the chances for peace and development. Israel cannot continue with its policy of closures that stifle development. Palestinian leaders cannot continue to avoid the devastating consequences of their internal political division.

I take this opportunity to thank those in the international community who have contributed to the implementation of the AHLC plan and call on all to increase their support to United Nations programmes on the ground. Most urgent is the need to address the collapse of the health system in Gaza.

Nevertheless, our important humanitarian engagement must not divert us from the political goal of helping Palestinians to develop freely, without relentless occupation, and Israelis to live in security, free from the fear of terror and rockets. The only way to ensure this goal is to work towards and achieve a twoState solution — one that is based on relevant United Nations resolutions and in which Gaza is an integral part of the future State of Palestine.

Protests in Gaza at the Gaza perimeter fence have also continued, with a small number of participants engaging in violent activities. The IDF responded with riot dispersal means and live fire, injuring over 300 people, including women and children. The Israeli security forces must exercise maximum restraint and use lethal force only when it is strictly necessary, as a last resort, and in response to an imminent threat of death or serious injury, in accordance with international law. Hamas must ensure that protests at the fence remain peaceful and prevent provocations.

If we want a way out of this crisis that leads to something more than just another ceasefire, the road is clear. There must be no more firing of rockets, retaliatory strikes or provocations; the understandings that sustain calm in Gaza must be upheld; efforts must be redoubled to alleviate the humanitarian crisis and lift the closures; and the focus must be towards a long-term, sustainable political solution that includes allowing the Palestinian people throughout the occupied territory to vote and elect their leaders for the first time since 2006.

In recent weeks, I have engaged with senior Palestinian officials and different factions and am encouraged that all sides have moved from their entrenched positions and made important concessions towards making elections a more realistic prospect. Renewing the legitimacy of all national institutions is important for the future of the Palestinian people. In my discussions, I have emphasized all the critical elements required for elections to be credible. First, they must be organized across the occupied Palestinian territory — in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and Gaza — in line with the Palestinian Basic Law, electoral legislation and international best practices. Secondly, both legislative and presidential elections are necessary and should be held within a clearly identified and reasonable timeframe. Thirdly, broad intra-Palestinian agreement must be reached on the modalities of holding elections.

As Palestinians hopefully accelerate their efforts to hold elections, the Israeli-Palestinian political deadlock continues to manifest itself in the continuation of negative trends on the ground.

On 1 November, some 2,600 housing units were advanced by the Civil Administration High Planning Committee, including 182 units in Mevo'ot Yeriho, an outpost in the Jordan Valley that the Israeli Government decided in September to retroactively legalize as a new settlement. Other notable plans include 382 units in the Dolev settlement, west of Ramallah, and 609 units in the large urban settlement of Beitar Illit, west of Bethlehem.

I take the opportunity to reiterate that we regret the announcement made on 18 November by the United States that it no longer views settlements as inconsistent with international law. The United Nations position remains unchanged. As per resolution 2334 (2016), Israeli settlement activities are a flagrant violation under international law and a major obstacle to the achievement of the two-State solution and a just, lasting and comprehensive peace.

Demolitions and seizures of Palestinian-owned structures have also continued across the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Citing the absence of Israeli-issued building permits, which are nearly impossible for Palestinians to obtain in Area C and East Jerusalem, Israeli authorities demolished or seized 48 structures, resulting in the displacement of 101 Palestinians, including 46 children. This practice must immediately cease.

Violence also continues across the occupied Palestinian territory. In the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, 46 Palestinians, including nine children, and three Israelis were injured in various incidents, including during clashes, search-and-arrest operations and settler-related violence. On 11 November, a 22-year-old Palestinian man was killed in circumstances that indicate that he did not pose a threat. Such acts must be thoroughly and impartially investigated and the perpetrators held accountable. The IDF has reportedly launched an investigation into that incident. Four days later on 15 November, a Palestinian journalist lost an eye after being reportedly shot by the Israeli security forces while covering a demonstration in the village of Surif, north of Hebron.

I remain concerned by the continuing and sometimes escalating settler-related violence. Attacks on Palestinians and their property in the context of the annual olive harvest have continued despite preventive measures adopted by the Israeli authorities. These attacks, along with the restrictions on Palestinian farmers' access to their land in areas adjacent to Israeli settlements and behind the West Bank barrier, have undermined agricultural livelihoods.

Despite the agreement reached last month between Israel and the Palestinian Authority, which resulted in the transfer of some \$425 million of clearance revenues to the Authority, the underlying disagreements between the two parties remain, including over Israel's deductions. It remains critical that both sides engage in a constructive manner with the goal of restoring the revenue transfers in full, in line with the Paris Protocol on Economic Relations. The United Nations stands ready to assist that process.

In a positive development, on 11 November UNWomen, with support from the Government of Norway, launched a \$1.2-million programme to support the advancement of the women and peace and security agenda in Palestine, including the development of the Palestinian national action plan for the next four years on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

We have regularly updated the Council and its members on the financial challenges that the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) continues to face. Cash flow is reaching a record low. I welcome the extension of the UNRWA

mandate until 2023, as adopted by the Fourth Committee of the General Assembly on 15 November, but given the stakes, I urge the swift mobilization of support to enable the Agency to sustain its operations.

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In closing, I would like to return to the issue of the long-overdue Palestinian elections. The Palestinian people have a right to vote and elect their leaders. For too long, they have been denied that right and division has set in. A whole generation's voice for the future has yet to be heard. Intra-Palestinian division is like a cancer eating away at the aspiration for statehood, peace and the commitment to democracy, rule of law and human rights.

Elections are not a gift; they are a right. If elections are to build unity, they must take place in Gaza and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. How can we heal the devastating division if people in Gaza are not able to vote for their future as well? The United Nations will do all that is necessary to support a successful Palestinian election process, but we must be cognizant of broader risks as well. The continuing risk of war threatens to upend all our efforts to prevent escalation and revive a political process. The United Nations will continue our efforts to prevent another devastating conflict despite all odds.

Upholding the international consensus on resolving the conflict and all final status issues on the basis of the two-State solution, as per relevant United Nations resolutions, international law and mutual agreements, is just as important. Unilateral moves fuel anger and disillusionment and significantly undermine the prospects for establishing a contiguous and viable Palestinian State with Jerusalem as the future capital of both States.

XIV. THE UN GLOBALLY OBSERVES INTERNATIONAL DAY OF SOLIDARITY WITH PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People held a special meeting in observance of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian people in [New York](#) on 27 November. Observances were also held at the United Nations Offices at [Geneva](#) and [Vienna](#) on 29 November and other United Nations locations. The excerpts of the relevant press releases are below:

New York (27 November)

Speakers called on Israel to respect international law and halt its illegal settlement activities, amid strong objections from others to unilateral moves by the United States in the region, as the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People met today to observe the International Day of Solidarity.

Committee Chair Cheikh Niang (Senegal) opened the meeting by highlighting the importance of resolution 181, adopted by the General Assembly 72 years ago, which recommended the creation of two sovereign States. Only one of those two States has achieved its independence, he said, noting that Palestinians still live under the cloud of illegal occupation.

He urged the international community to stand firm against Israel's settlement expansion in the West Bank and East Jerusalem and demand that the Gaza blockade be lifted. He applauded the peace and reconciliation efforts of Egypt and the United Nations and expressed his support for the recent renewal of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) mandate.

"The Palestinian people will not vanish and will not surrender to oppression and injustice as our fate," said Riyad Mansour, Permanent Observer for the State of Palestine. Israel has carried out "bad faith actions" since conclusion of the Oslo Accords, while its current Prime Minister has not only rejected the two-State formula but aggressively pursued settlement building. The State of Palestine, by contrast, continues to advance the rule of international law by spreading a culture of peace and empowering all people, particularly women and youth.

He condemned the recent announcement by the United States Secretary of State that Israel's settlements in the West Bank, including in East Jerusalem, do not breach international law. This declaration will only embolden Israel to ramp up its activities, and as such, should be considered "null and void", without legal standing.

Maged A. Abdelaziz, permanent observer for the League of Arab States, said these unilateral measures have "given a green light to Israel to begin its plan to make the two-State solution impossible". They also include a decision to move the United States Embassy to Jerusalem, cut funding to UNRWA, he said, declaring Israel's occupation of Palestinian a "moral shame" and a violation of international law.

Speaking for the Non-Aligned Movement, Yashar T. Aliyev (Azerbaijan) likewise rejected the United States statement on the legitimacy of Israeli settlements, as well as the activities themselves. He called for an end to all such violations and implementation of all relevant Security Council resolutions.

Kshenuka Senewiratne, Chair of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories, described first-hand accounts by victims and witnesses in the occupied Palestinian territories and occupied Syrian Golan, which laid bare their suffering. The Committee's most recent report also cites administrative detention of Palestinians and the exploitation of natural resources.

Tijjani Muhammad-Bande (Nigeria), President of the General Assembly, said the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People is observed by the United Nations each year. "Arab or Jewish, we are one, and our destinies are intricately linked", he said.

Also delivering statements today were the President of the Security Council, the Chef de Cabinet of the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, the Permanent Observer for the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the permanent observer of the African Union and social justice advocate Eugene "Gus" Newport.

Before adjourning the meeting, the Chair read out a list of Heads of State and Government, ministers and other governmental and civil society representatives who sent messages of solidarity.

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Geneva (29 November)

The International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People was commemorated today at a Special Meeting held at the United Nations Office at Geneva.

Tatiana Valovaya, the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva, chaired the meeting and read out the message of António Guterres, the United Nations Secretary-General, who said that resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict remained one of the most intractable challenges facing the international community. Regrettably, over the past year, there had been no positive developments, and the situation on the ground continued to deteriorate. The intensification of illegal settlements, demolitions of Palestinian homes and the pervasive suffering in Gaza must stop. The establishment of settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, had no legal validity and constituted a flagrant violation of international law, as stated in Security Council resolution 2334. These actions threatened to undermine the viability of establishing a Palestinian State based on relevant United Nations resolutions. At the same time, the indiscriminate launching of rockets and mortars towards Israeli civilian populations must cease.

The Secretary-General called on Israelis and Palestinians, and all their supporters, to take steps that would restore faith in the two-State solution. Only constructive negotiations between the parties, in good faith, with support from the international community and adhering to long-standing United Nations resolutions and long-agreed parameters, would bring about a just and durable solution, with Jerusalem as the capital of both States.

State of Palestine, reading out a statement on behalf of Mahmoud Abbas, the President of the State of Palestine, said that for over 70 years, the Palestinian people had been martyred and imprisoned while defending their history, their homeland, and their holy sites. State of Palestine had accepted the path of negotiations, dialogue, political engagement and peaceful popular resistance as the means to resolve all final status issues and to achieve a peace agreement that led to independence, ended occupation and ended the conflict. However, all the while, Israel, the occupying power, had only pursued delaying tactics and bad faith actions since the conclusion of the Oslo agreements and to this very day. Moreover, the Israeli Prime Minister had expressed his rejection of the two-State solution and actively pursued annexation and settlement activities in Palestinian occupied land to undermine this solution.

The President of the State of Palestine rejected the declaration by the United States Secretary of State that Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, did not contravene international law. Such unlawful statements and decisions by the United States only emboldened the Israeli Government in perpetuating its occupation and in accelerating its settlement activities and in further committing crimes as determined by the Rome Statute. It was time for concrete measures to provide protection to the Palestinian people and to fulfil their right to self-determination, freedom, and independence on the land occupied in 1967, and with East Jerusalem as its capital.

The Special Meeting was also addressed by Afghanistan on behalf of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People; Sri Lanka on behalf of the Chair of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories; the League of Arab States; the

Organization of Islamic Cooperation; Azerbaijan on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement; the African Union; and the World Young Women's Christian Association and the Young Women's Christian Association of Palestine, representing non-governmental organizations accredited to the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.

Messages or statements for the Day were received from the Heads of State and Government of Qatar, Turkey, Jordan, Indonesia, Brazil, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, India, Namibia and Egypt.

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Vienna (29 November)

The Special Meeting commenced at 10:30 in Boardroom C, in the C Building.

Mr. Teymuraz Gogoalshvili, Secretary of the meeting, introduced the Chairman, Her Excellency Ms. Khojesta Fana Ebrahimkhel, Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to the United Nations (Vienna), nominated by the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People as its Representative.

Following the opening remarks and statement by the Chairman on behalf of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People which, Mr. Dennis Thatchaichawalit, Deputy Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna delivered the Secretary-General's statement.

Mr. Thomas Nader, Head of the Department of the Middle East in the Federal Ministry of Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Austria, then read the address on behalf of the Host Country.

In continuation, His Excellency Mr. Mohamed Samir Koubaa, Head of the Permanent Observer Office of the League of Arab States to the United Nations (Vienna) delivered his statement on behalf of the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States His Excellency Ahmed Aboul Gheit.

On behalf of the Arab Ambassadors' Council in Vienna floor was given to H.E. Mr. Omar Amer Youssef, Permanent Representative of the Arab Republic of Egypt to the United Nations (Vienna) / Chairman of the Arab Ambassadors' Council in Vienna

On behalf of the Non-Aligned-Movement a statement was delivered by Mr. Rovshan Safarov, Representative of the Permanent Mission of Azerbaijan to the United Nations (Vienna)

This was followed by the national statements of the Permanent Representatives of: Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, People's Republic of China, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Tunisian Republic, Sultanate of Oman, Arab Republic of Egypt, Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, State of Qatar, South Africa, Turkey, Kingdom of Morocco, Malaysia, Chile, Lebanon, Republic of Malta, Republic of Iraq, Republic of Namibia, Republic of Yemen, Republic of Peru, People's Republic of Bangladesh, Republic of Angola, People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, State of Kuwait.

In continuation of the representatives of the following Permanent Missions to the United Nations (Vienna) delivered their national statements: Russian Federation, Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Syrian Arab Republic, Islamic Republic of Iran, Republic of Indonesia.

His Excellency Mr. Salahaldin Abdalshafi, Permanent Observer of Palestine read the statement of His Excellency Mr. Mahmoud Abbas, President of the State of Palestine.

Concluding remarks were addressed by the Chairman.

Representatives from 46 Member States and Permanent Observers, as well as officials from the Host Country, Executive Secretary of CTBTO, and representatives from UNIDO, League of Arab States (LAS), UNROD, OFID, OPEC, UNODC, NGOs, other invited guests and staff members attended the meeting, overall approximately 110 participants.
