



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. AD HOC LIAISON COMMITTEE OF DONORS HOLDS MINISTERIAL LEVEL MEETING

On 2 June, the office of Ine Eriksen Søreide, Foreign Minister of Norway and Chair of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee (AHLC), issued the following Chair's [summary](#) of the AHLC meeting.

The AHLC met at ministerial level via videoconference on 2 June 2020.

In the meeting today, the Chair has noted several clear warnings against political developments, which may trigger an imminent crisis in the cooperation between the parties in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic and the most serious economic and fiscal crisis for the PA in many years.

The donors reiterated that the AHLC was established with the aim of creating a framework of cooperation between the parties and the donor community in support of a negotiated two-state solution, Palestinian economic development and institution building for the Palestinian state. This remains the objective of the donors and the work of the AHLC.

For decades, donors have been committed to improving the conditions for a negotiated two-state solution, and building the institutions for the Palestinian state, including by providing financial support for Palestinian economic development and capacity to deliver public services to the Palestinian people. However, our work and commitment alone cannot bring a negotiated two-state solution or be a substitute for it. Political progress is dependent on the commitment of both parties towards this end.

During the Chair's preparations for today's meeting, the growing differences between the parties have become evident.

The Chair welcomes the commitment of both parties to continue to engage within the framework of the AHLC. Donors have today clearly expressed their willingness to continue their efforts. For their support to be effective, the current threats and impediments to economic and political progress must be reversed.

The Chair takes note from today's meeting of the clear warning against Israeli annexation of parts of the West Bank. Any such move, if implemented, would run counter to the efforts to realize a viable two-state solution and be detrimental to peace and security, and would constitute a violation of international law. The Chair also takes note of numerous questions regarding the declaration by the Palestinian leadership, stated to be in response to potential Israeli annexation, to discontinue cooperation with Israel and the US at all levels and to suspend agreements.

For the donor community such political statements and measures call into question the very foundation and logic for state-building upon which donors base their assistance.

The AHLC Chair welcomed the swift response from the parties and members of the donor group to address the Covid-19 pandemic, and recommended that all parties do their utmost to continue these promising efforts. Such successful combined efforts of the parties and the donors

as well as the important role of the UN system, proves that significant achievements are possible through practical cooperation.

Palestinian economic and institutional development continue to be restrained by a combination of factors that limit the PA's fiscal autonomy and stability.

These factors and the Covid-19 crisis are having serious negative repercussions for the Palestinian economy over the short and medium terms, and will lead to a substantial reduction in PA revenues in 2020. This situation will require increased expenditures on health, social assistance, and support for the private sector. Even with a significant reallocation of expenditures, the World Bank estimates that the PA could face a financing gap in 2020 of over \$1.4 billion. According to the World Bank, the pandemic has highlighted several unsustainable aspects of the fiscal relationship, the trade regime, and the labor markets, as well as the fragile situation in Gaza.

In light of this, the donors will welcome and support the implementation of any sort of arrangement between the PA and Israel that lead to regular and predictable monthly transfers to the PA.

In line with the statement of the AHLC Chair of 3 April 2020, the meeting called on the donors:

- to increase and re-focus without delay their budget support and other support to the PA in line with Palestinian priorities.
- to continue financing and supporting the Palestinian response to the Covid-19 crisis and UN response plans, in particular assistance to the public health sector and economic recovery.
- to disburse their announced contributions to UNRWA without delay, and consider further support to the programme budget and emergency appeals, e.g. at the upcoming UNRWA donors conference scheduled for 23 June.
- to continue their financing of the Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism/ Project Management Unit to ensure timely implementation of critical internationally funded projects aimed at improving Gaza's health, energy, water and economic situations, including the Gaza Central Desalination Plant, Gas for Gaza and Cash4work programmes.

Furthermore, donor members of the AHLC called on:

- the parties to continue resolving outstanding fiscal issues, which are key to the PA's longerterm capacity to respond to the humanitarian and development needs of the Palestinian people.
- the parties to further develop agreements and arrangements, including their trading, and labor relationships. The parties to implement without further delay a mechanism to ensure continued correspondent banking relations.
- the PA to continue to reorient its expenditures around emergency health services and direct support to affected households, workers, and private sector firms while continuing to provide basic

services to the Palestinian population, and also to prioritise funds to the education and health sectors, including medical supplies, in both the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and Gaza

- the PA to continue to prioritise implementation of programmes in Gaza both directly and through organizations such as the UN who already have presence and capacity there, while fully recognising the importance of the PA monthly transfers to Gaza.

- Israel to continue to facilitate access and movement, including access for Palestinian workers to the Israeli labor market and supply lines of medical goods, relevant equipment, materials, humanitarian workers etc, especially to Gaza.

Donors today expressed their deep concerns that with the growing tension between the parties, there is a significant risk that a dramatic shift in local dynamics will trigger conflict, radicalization and instability in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and Gaza Strip. Effective donor support during such conditions is demanding and has significant limits. Nevertheless, donors today also reiterated their commitment to continue their support.

Donors urged the parties to restart, without delay, negotiations on a comprehensive political settlement for a two-state solution.

II. PALESTINIAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE HOLDS UNITED NATIONS FORUM ON “THREATS OF ANNEXATION AND THE PROSPECTS FOR PEACE”

On 4 June, United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People held a virtual forum on “The Question of Palestine: Threats of Annexation and the Prospects for Peace”. The [Chair’s summary](#) is replicated below:

The UN Forum on the Question of Palestine “**The Question of Palestine: Threats of Annexation and the Prospects for Peace**” was convened virtually, on 4 June 2020, under the auspices of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (CEIRPP).

The 90-minute event, livestreamed on UNTV, consisted of a panel discussion between three prominent speakers – Ms. Hanan Ashrawi, Member of the PLO Executive Committee and former member of the Palestinian team in the Middle East Peace Process; Mr. Yossi Beilin, Former Israeli Cabinet Minister and participant in the 1993 Oslo Accord negotiations; Mr. James Zogby, Founder and President of the Arab American Institute – who outlined prevailing challenges, offered analysis on current political conditions, and formulated recommendations to overcome the current political impasse for salvaging peace prospects. Through outreach to international audiences – Member States, civil society and media – about the imminent threat posed by Israel’s annexation plans, the Forum helped raise awareness of these illegal plans and their dangerous repercussions if implemented, mobilized these audiences with the aim of preventing Israeli annexation of areas in the occupied West Bank, and identified possible options for a way forward. All Member States and Observers, United Nations organizations, intergovernmental and civil society organizations were invited to attend.

Speakers stressed that decades-long impunity for annexation measures and settlement activities had led to the current situation, with Israel able to exploit international inaction and the paralysis of the UN Security Council. Views were shared that negotiations between unequal parties and under control of the United States, now partner to Israeli annexation, would be counterproductive, so was reliance on the Middle East Quartet also dominated by the United States. Enforcement of accountability – including the application of sanctions, for example through regional blocks (e.g. the European Union) – was necessary to solve the conflict. Others argued that an expectation of sanctions would be unrealistic; instead, Member States should raise voices through visible actions to bring the Israeli-Palestinian conflict back onto the international agenda and offer Israel the resumption of negotiations as an alternative to annexation.

At the opening, the moderator of the event, **Vice-Chair of the Committee Ambassador Neville Gertze (Namibia)**, shared a brief history of the Committee and its mandate and highlighted how, in current challenging times, the Committee would use innovative ways to ensure it continued to support the Palestinian people.

Ms. Ashrawi stated that the theme of the event “Threats of Annexation and the Prospects for Peace” was too sanguine, considering that annexation had been an ongoing process since 1967, with the establishment of Israeli settlements, and East Jerusalem having been annexed in 1980. Annexation had been a unilateral process of *de facto* actions, and the essence of Israel’s colonial settler project. Today, the process had evolved to the point that the new Israeli government was willing to openly legislate it. As for the peace, one could not talk about its prospects when one side – Palestine – had been systematically dismantled and lacked international protection and the other side – Israel – was not held accountable for violating UN resolutions and international law. In this context, the date announced by the Government of Israel to start the annexation process, 1 July, was an arbitrary one; the sudden public interest for this recent announcement even shifted the focus on the issue of annexation as if it was only to begin, while the reality of a long-ongoing annexation on the ground continued to be ignored.

Ms. Ashrawi stated that the United States, under its current administration, had become

Israel’s “partner in crime”: it had recognized Israel’s illegal annexation of Jerusalem, defunded all projects and programmes in Palestine, defunded and delegitimized UNRWA while attempting to redefine the question of refugees ignoring UN resolutions, and closed the PLO Representative Office in Washington, D.C. and the US Consulate in East Jerusalem. It had ceased the usage of the term “occupation” and, in its Peace Plan, referred to settlements as “neighbourhoods” or

“Jewish communities”. All this provided Israel with a “license to steal” and would ultimately result in a total demise of any solution – be it a two-State or one-State solution. Thus, at the present Palestine was dealing with two occupying powers.

With the current Israeli government having emerged in a global context of hyper-nationalism and identity politics based on populism, xenophobia and racism, Mr. Netanyahu had dismantled his domestic and international opposition, through co-opting some factions into his new government and exploiting the COVID-19 restrictions in Israel; through the reticence and timidity of the European Union (EU), which continued to refrain from taking concrete actions to curb Israeli violations; and through the United Nation’s inability to implement its own resolutions or follow

through with its own promises, whether in protecting the Palestinian people or in holding Israel accountable and bringing sanctions to make Israel face the consequences of its actions.

The unilateral Israeli imposition of its own laws and sovereignty over parts of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, was aimed to re-invent the occupation through the US peace proposal, with Israel repositioning itself as a major military, economic and intelligence power in the region and establishing the Palestinian question as a domestic issue. If successful, this plan would legitimise contempt for international law and justice, signal the triumph of nationalism over multilateralism and send the message that Member States could defy the will of the international community and claim exceptionalism.

Mr. Beilin underlined that the common denominator between the Israeli peace camp and Palestinians was the rejection of annexation. In this context he underlined the importance of the inclusion in the discussion of the Israeli pro-annexation camp, to explain itself. While the Israeli and Palestinian peoples would always hold different narratives on historical events, they would also always remain interdependent. He stressed the importance to stop any annexation moves by 1 July, because while practical Israeli steps would not be irreversible, once implemented their retraction would be very difficult. The US proposal was facetious and disastrous at the same time. For example, it would grant Israel the right not only to refuse to accept Palestinian refugees inside its territory but also to decide whether any could enter the future State of Palestine, and if so, how many.

At this stage, a realistic, practicable alternative was needed: a deal to resume negotiations between the two sides for one year with possible extension, with no preconditions and including a moratorium on unilateral steps during this period. That would defer annexation, at least by one year. This deal should take into consideration relevant UN resolutions, previous attempts to achieve a permanent agreement, existing plans including, the Arab Peace Initiative and the current US proposal. The inclusion of the latter as a reference point could obtain US buy-in.

The Arab joint effort, particularly the Arab League's recent resolutions, and Arab leaders' opinion shift vis-à-vis the US proposal may have led to "second thoughts" in Washington, D.C., with regards to its implementation. To this one could add the practical unfeasibility of the US proposal on the ground, e.g. it would triple the length of Israel's borders with a corresponding increase in financial and human resources to ensure its security.

Mr. Zogby connected the current US proposal to previous such endeavours, calling it no different than the 1920 San Remo Resolution when after World War I the victors had arrogated to themselves the power to ignore the needs, rights, and aspirations of the indigenous people of the Arab world and carve up that region to serve their own interests. Now, the US administration was ignoring the needs and aspirations of the Palestinians on the ground. The latter were right in refusing to participate in this process, as they were "like a patient forced to undergo an amputation and being asked to hold the scalpel while the doctor begins to cut."

He also stressed that the Israeli settlement enterprise had been ongoing for more than 50 years with settlements placed in strategic locations and with roads connecting them to Israel, dividing the West Bank. In the years after the Oslo Accords, the number of settlers had increased; today there were 650,000 Israeli settlers in the Palestinian territory, constituting an existing reality that

could no longer be reversed. Successive Israeli and US governments had laid the foundations of the current situation and thus the Netanyahu and Trump administrations should not be blamed alone. And given Israel's apparent impunity and lack of accountability, it would now be impossible to form an Israeli government that would oppose annexation. For example, recently the Israeli opposition could not form a government because it was reluctant to include Palestinian Israelis for fear to be branded a "minority government".

In the United States, even liberal voices opposed to annexation fell short in this discussion. Continued reference to a support for the two-State solution had become a "two-State absolution" since liberals supported a reality in which their refusal to condemn the policies of one of the two States – Israel – enabled it to continue denying the other State – Palestine – to come into existence. Therefore, sanctions and accountability were essential for a solution. The time for dialogue had long passed: Israel would need to feel that it faced paying a price, including economic penalties, for annexation.

The ensuing discussions focused on the impact of sanctions in stopping Israeli violations. Representatives of other Member States, including Cuba, Egypt, Indonesia, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Tunisia, made remarks on their support for the Palestinian people and condemnation of Israeli annexations plans and posed questions on concrete actions the international community could undertake to further support the Palestinian cause, the viability and potential of the Middle East Quartet in the current situation, and the potential shift in US policy vis-à-vis Israel after the

November elections. In line with the multilateral approach advocated by participating Member States, questions from civil society representatives from the United States and abroad touched on the efficiency of grassroot organizations in lobbying for EU-imposed sanctions against Israel in lieu of advocating for the return to likely unfruitful negotiations and in supporting the International Criminal Court (ICC) investigation into the situation in the occupied Palestinian territory and how to work in concert action with Member States and regional organizations.

Ms. Ashrawi stressed that negotiations between unequal parties and under control of the United States, now partner to Israeli annexation, would be counterproductive as they would only provide Israel with more time to continue its occupation, as the experience since 1991 had shown. Instead, now was the time to focus on accountability and sanctions, including through engaging the ICC and encouraging Member States to take preventive actions.

Mr. Beilin, while not dismissing that negotiations had provided an umbrella for unilateral decisions, argued that they could also be helped by the establishment of monitoring mechanisms, which had not been done before. He emphasised a need for realism to prevail to find workable solution as sanctions were unlikely to be implemented – especially by the EU – and, even if they were, it would be too late to prevent annexation steps on 1 July.

Mr. Zogby reiterated the argument for sanctions and accountability. For decades, the United States and the EU had stood by, and supported Israel while it created the current situation; despite resolutions and declarations, Israel never "paid the price for its behaviour." He regretted that vis-à-vis Israel the international community had tried everything except sanctions and underscored their effectiveness – e.g. against Iran, Russia, South Africa – which was why the United States was

using them as a central tool of its foreign policy. Sanctions created accountability and accountability reinforced justice and equal rights.

The **Observer of the Committee Ambassador Riyadh Mansour (State of Palestine)** recalled collective Member State action, e.g. the adoption of Security Council Resolution 2334 (2016) and related efforts on differentiation, including *inter alia* the EU moving towards labelling Israeli settlement products. Also, international stances thwarted attempts by the US administration to replace the global consensus and the Arab Peace Initiative with its own peace plan. Members of the Quartet may yet induce the US administration to pressure Israel from implementing annexation. If that would not come to pass, Palestine had additional options for action, including in the UN Security Council and General Assembly.

In their closing remarks, speakers highlighted that in the United States, the Israel-Palestine conflict had become a partisan issue, with over 50 per cent of Democratic voters supporting economic sanctions on Israel and cuts in military aid should it continue its violations of international law. As a result, a possible Democratic administration in 2021 could implement drastic changes to current policies.

However, a strategic Palestinian response towards annexation would be critical, including through non-violent protests and engaging the International Criminal Court (ICC). The credibility of the Middle East Quartet, perceived as under US control, could also be regained through a unified sanctions programme. UN resolutions continued to be crucial, particularly by the General Assembly that could refer to the ICJ, which had the power to address Israel's accountability.

The European Union was also called to act upon Israel's violation of bilateral agreements with the bloc, ending impunity of breaches of international law and norms.

Finally, bringing the Israel-Palestine issue back on the international agenda was flagged as an utmost priority. For example, no Israeli government could ignore visits of regional leaders who would talk to both sides and declare their views. Voices of African leaders and visits to the region would also have a considerable impact. Similarly, if the Quartet was unable to speak with one voice, three of its members could issue joint statements. It was critical to show that the world had not given up and that the issue was still relevant.

The Vice-Chair closed the event.

****Note: This Summary attempts to provide an overall picture of the deliberations of the virtual event. A [video](#) of the event can be found on the [webpage of the CEIRPP](#), www.un.org/unispa/ as well as in its official [Facebook page](#) and [YouTube account](#).*

****Note: The views and opinions expressed in this summary are those of the speakers and do not necessarily reflect the official position of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.*

III. ORGANIZATION OF ISLAMIC COOPERATION REJECTS ISRAELI ANNEXATION

On 10 June, the Executive Committee of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) held an open-ended ministerial level virtual meeting where a resolution on annexation was adopted. The [resolution](#) is replicated below.

The OIC Executive Committee, convening at an open-ended virtual extraordinary meeting at the level of foreign ministers, at the request of the State of Palestine, about the threats of the Israeli occupation government to annex parts of the Palestinian territory occupied since in 1967; on 18 Shawwal 1441 H corresponding to 10th June 2020.

- Asserting the principles and objectives of the OIC Charter,
- Proceeding from the resolutions of the successive OIC Islamic Summits and Councils of Foreign Ministers on the issue of Palestine and al-Quds al-Sharif,
- Complying with the historical, moral and legal responsibility incumbent on the Muslim Ummah, and acting in the spirit of full solidarity with Palestine and its people,
- Guided by the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, mainly the principle of the inadmissibility of acquisition of territory of others by force,
- Recalling the relevant UN resolutions, as well as the ICJ advisory opinion (9 July 2004) on the legal consequences of the construction of a wall in the occupied Palestinian territory,
- Renewing the principled support for the Palestinian people and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, in the pursuit of their inalienable national rights, including the right to self-determination and independence within a Palestinian state of their own on the 4 June 1967 borders, with al-Quds al-Sharif as its capital, and the refugees right to return and compensation in accordance with UN resolution 194,
- Condemning the Israeli occupation authority's colonial policies, practices and plans in the occupied Palestinian territory, and all attempts to change the demographic composition, character and status of the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, including Al-Quds Al-Sharif, such as, inter alia, settlement construction and expansion, transfer of Israeli citizens to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, land confiscation and annexation, and forced displacement of Palestinian citizens in violation of international humanitarian law and relevant resolutions, considering these acts as crimes endangering international peace and security that undermine stability in the Middle East region and in the world at large,
- Welcoming the stated positions of the UN Secretary General and all countries, explicitly rejecting the Israeli government's threat to annex parts of the Palestinian land occupied in 1967,

Decides the following:

1. Reaffirms the centrality of the Cause of Palestine and Al-Quds Al-Sharif to the entire Muslim Ummah,

2. Warns against the dangerous intention of Israel, the occupying power, to annex parts of the occupied Palestinian territory, and considers the Israeli threat to annex parts of the occupied West Bank, including the Jordan Valley, North of the Dead Sea and the land on which colonial settlements and the apartheid Wall were built, an official declaration by Israel of revocation of all its signed agreements a termination of the negotiated solution, a serious escalation of its colonial policies and measures, a flagrant aggression on the historical, legal and political rights of the Palestinian people, and a blatant violation of the principles and standards of international law, the UN Charter and relevant UN resolutions.

3. Holds the Israeli occupation government fully responsible for the consequences of its colonial policies and measures on the occupied territory of the State of Palestine, including the outcome of its dangerous announcement to annex parts of the State of Palestine's occupied territory, deliberately seeking to undermine the international efforts to establish a just, lasting and comprehensive peace on the basis of the two-state formula, and aiming at undermining the foundations of peace, engulfing the entire region into further violence and instability, which will have serious consequences that jeopardize the stability and security of the whole world.

4. Decides to address strongly the dangerously aggressive threats of Israel, the occupying power, while taking all the possible political, legal and diplomatic actions and measures, including through initiating actions with the UN Security Council, the General Assembly, the UNHRC, international courts, and other international organizations and bodies, to counter and isolate Israel's expansionist colonial regime, and condemns in this regard any party that supports and associates with these hostile steps in any way or form.

5. Emphasizes the right of the State of Palestine to sovereignty over all Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, including East Jerusalem, maritime space, territorial waters, and its borders with neighboring countries, and reaffirms that attempts by the Israeli occupation to annex any part of the occupied Palestinian territory, including Al-Quds Al-Sharif, as well as all administrative measures and procedures to illegally alter the character and status of the occupied territory of the State of Palestine are null and void, have no legal effect, and shall be countered at all levels.

6. Underlines the historical and legal responsibility of the United Nations with regard to the question of Palestine until it is resolved in all its aspects, while calling on the UN Security Council to uphold its legal responsibility with view to enabling the Palestinian people to regain their inalienable rights. It also urges the UN Security Council not to accept or recognize any change to the pre-1967 borders, including with regards to Al-Quds Al-Sharif, and to take the necessary measures to prevent these annexation plans, by compelling the Israeli occupation to stop all its illegal actions, live up fully to its responsibilities under the Fourth Geneva Convention and the ICJ Advisory Opinion of 2004, and implement relevant UN resolutions, including Security Council resolution 2334 (2016).

7. Calls on the international community to take steps against the Israeli occupation and its colonial practices that jeopardize the fundamentals of the rule-based international order, not to recognize the illegal status of Israeli settlement on the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, or help to sustain it in any way, as well as take all the necessary legal countermeasures that include refraining from dealings with any Israeli government that endorses

its annexation agenda, imposing economic and political sanctions on Israel, boycotting the Israeli colonial system, illegal Israeli settlements and their products, in addition to ensuring accountability measures, with a view to ending the Israeli colonial occupation and realizing national independence of the State of Palestine based on 1967 borders, with Al-Quds al-Sharif as its capital.

8. Declares its support for the Palestinian leadership's decisions of 19 May 2020, while reiterating that peace and security in the Middle East, as a strategic option, cannot be achieved without ending Israel's illegal, colonial occupation of the State of Palestine, including Al-Quds Al-Sharif and the Arab territories occupied since June 1967; and calls on the international community to make every effort necessary to end this illegal occupation, and to help the Palestinian people achieve their inalienable rights and fulfill their legitimate national aspirations, including exercising their right to self-determination, realizing sovereignty and independence of the State of Palestine, with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital, and reaching a just solution to the question of Palestinian refugees in compliance with the principles of international law, relevant UN resolutions and the Arab Peace Initiative, which was adopted by the Extraordinary Islamic Summit of Mecca (2005).

9. Reiterates its rejection of any proposal not respecting the Palestinian people's right to independence, freedom and sovereignty over the territory of the State of Palestine, occupied since 1967, including the current US administration's plan, while supporting the Palestinian efforts to gain wider international statehood recognition based on the 4 June 1967 borders; and calls on all states that have not yet recognized the State of Palestine to do so as soon as possible.

10. Reiterates its support for the initiative presented by the Palestinian President to the Security Council in February 2018, while expressing in this regard its determination to continue working with the international community to launch a credible, time-bound multilaterally-sponsored political process to resolve the Palestinian cause on the basis of international law, international legitimacy and agreed terms of reference, including the Arab Peace Initiative adopted at the 2005 Islamic Summit, and the vision of the two-state solution based on the 4 June 1967 borders.

11. Calls on the International Quartet to convene an urgent meeting to save the chances of peace and the two-state solution, adopt an international position consistent with the UN resolutions and the agreed-on terms of reference of the peace process, including the road map and the Arab Peace Initiative, as well compel the Israeli occupation government to halt implementing its colonial plans, including settlement annexation and expansion, and to end its occupation of the Palestinian territory.

12. Calls on the OIC Member States to:

a. Take the necessary political, legal and economic measures to address the Israeli threat to annex any part of the occupied Palestinian territory, as stipulated in this resolution.

b. Take deterrent measures against states, officials, parliamentarians and individuals associated with supporting the Israeli colonial regime and violating international law and UN resolution related to the question of Palestine.

c. Condemn any attempts, statements or positions issued by any party aimed at supporting the Israeli colonial annexation of any parts of the territory of the State of Palestine occupied in 1967.

d. Provide all forms of political, legal, technical and material support necessary for the success of the political and legal endeavors and steps taken by the State of Palestine within the relevant international bodies, to hold Israel, the occupying power, accountable for its crimes against the Palestinian people.

e. Accelerate the banning of companies on the database issued by UNHRC having corporate ties with Israel's settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory.

f. Implement previous resolutions of Islamic Summit and ministerial meetings related to the cause of Palestine and Al-Quds Al-Sharif, including voting in favor of resolutions related to the Palestinian issue in international fora.

g. Provide material and economic support to the Palestinian people to face the financial blockade imposed by Israel, the occupying power, and its allies, against the Palestinian people and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA).

13. Mandates the Islamic Group in New York to conduct broad consultations and take the necessary measures to counter the Israeli annexation and colonial expansion plans, while commissioning the group of ambassadors of member states to take initiatives to bring the contents of the present resolution to the attention of capitals, governments, parliaments, international and regional organizations around the world, to urge them to take practical measures to deter the Israeli occupation government from carrying out its illegal actions.

14. Calls on all states to pressure the Israeli occupation authorities to ensure the release of Palestinian prisoners, especially the sick, the elderly, children and women, to protect them from the risk of COVID-19 infection, while holding the Israeli occupation authorities fully responsible for any consequences to the health of the Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails.

15. Mandates the Secretary General to follow up on the implementation of the provisions of this resolution and submit a progress report on its implementation to the upcoming meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers.

IV. ARAB GROUP IN THE UN OPPOSES ELECTION OF ISRAEL AS SIXTH COMMITTEE VICE CHAIR

On 12 June, the Chair of the Arab Group in the United Nations transmitted the following [letter](#) to the Chair of the Legal (Sixth) Committee of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General, and the President of the General Assembly.

On behalf of the Arab Group and in my capacity as Chair of the Arab Group for the month of June 2020, I have the honour to refer to your letter dated 8 June 2020 on the election of the Chair and other officers of the Sixth Committee at the seventyfifth session of the General Assembly.

Regarding the election of the Vice-Chairs of the Sixth Committee, I would like to transmit the Arab Group's objection to proceeding with the election of Israel's candidate for Vice-Chair of the Sixth Committee at the seventy-fifth session of General Assembly.

The Arab Group has grave concerns about and objects to the candidacy of Israel to the Sixth Committee, and considers Israel ineligible for Bureau membership owing to its continued and systematic violations of international law, international humanitarian law, the Charter of the United Nations and numerous United Nations resolutions for over seven decades.

In my capacity as Chair of the Arab Group, I respectfully request the circulation of the present letters as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5.

(Signed) Mansour Ayyad **Alotaibi**
Permanent Representative of the
State of Kuwait to the United Nations

V. UN SPECIAL RAPPORTEURS AND EXPERTS CALL ON THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY TO ENSURE ACCOUNTABILITY FOR ANNEXATION

On 16 June, Mr. Michael Lynk, Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian Territory; Ms. Agnès Callamard, Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions; Members of the Working Group of experts on people of African descent; Ms. Alena Douhan, Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of the unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights; Ms Alice Cruz, Special Rapporteur on the elimination of discrimination against persons affected by leprosy; Ms. Anaïs Marin, Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Belarus; Mr. Aristide Nononsi, Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in the Sudan; Mr. Alioune Tine, Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Mali; Mr. Balakrishnan Rajagopal, Special Rapporteur on adequate housing Mr. Baskut Tuncak, Special Rapporteur on human rights and hazardous substances and wastes; Ms. Catalina Devandas-Aguilar, Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities; Ms. Cecilia Jimenez-Damary, Special rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons; Mr. Chris Kwaja (Chair), Members of the Working Group on the use of mercenaries as a means of violating human rights and impeding the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination; Ms. Claudia Mahler, Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons; Mr. Clément Nyaletsossi Voule, Special Rapporteur on the right to peaceful

assembly and association; Mr. Dainius Pūras, Special Rapporteur on the right to physical and mental health; Mr. David Kaye, Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of expression; Mr. David R. Boyd, Special Rapporteur on human rights and the environment; Mr. Diego García-Sayán, UN Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers; Ms. Dubravka Šimonovic, Special Rapporteur on violence against women; Members of the Working Group on discrimination against women and girls; Mr. Fernand de Varennnes, Special Rapporteur on minority issues; Ms. Fionnuala D. Ní Aoláin, Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights while countering terrorism; Members of the UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights; Ms. Isha Dyfan, Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Somalia; Mr. Joe Cannataci, Special Rapporteur on the right to privacy; Mr. José Francisco Calí Tzay, Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples; Mr. José Antonio Guevara Bermúdez (Chair), and Members of the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention; Ms. Karima Bennoune, Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights; Ms. Kombou Boly Barry, Special Rapporteur on the right to education; Mr. Léo Heller, Special Rapporteur on the human rights to water and sanitation; Mr. Livingstone Sewanyana, Independent Expert on the promotion of a democratic and equitable international order; Ms. Mama Fatima Singhateh, Special Rapporteur on sale and sexual exploitation of children; Ms Maria Grazia Giammarinaro, Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons; Ms. Mary Lawlor, Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders; Mr. Michael Fakhri, Special Rapporteur on the right to food; Mr. Nils Melzer, Special Rapporteur on torture; Mr. Obiora C. Okafor, Independent Expert on human rights and international solidarity, Mr. Olivier De Schutter, Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights; Mr. Saad Alfarargi, Special Rapporteur on the right to development; Ms. E. Tendayi Achiume, Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Racism; Mr. Thomas Andrews, Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar; Mr. Tomás Ojea Quintana, Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea; Mr. Tomoya Obokata, Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery; Mr. Victor Madrigal-Borloz, Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity; Ms. Yuefen Li, Independent Expert on the effects of foreign debt and other related international financial obligations of States on the full enjoyment of all human rights, and Mr. Yao Agetse, Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Central African Republic, jointly issued the following [press release](#).

The annexation of occupied territory is a serious violation of the Charter of the United Nations and the Geneva Conventions, and contrary to the fundamental rule affirmed many times by the United Nations Security Council and General Assembly that the acquisition of territory by war or force is inadmissible. The international community has prohibited annexation precisely because it incites wars, economic devastation, political instability, systematic human rights abuses and widespread human suffering.

Israel's stated plans for annexation would extend sovereignty over most of the Jordan Valley and all of the more than 235 illegal Israeli settlements in the West Bank. This would amount to approximately 30 percent of the West Bank. The annexation of this territory was endorsed by the American Peace to Prosperity Plan, released in late January 2020.

The United Nations has stated on many occasions that the 53-year-old Israeli occupation is the source of profound human rights violations against the Palestinian people. These violations include land confiscation, settler violence, discriminatory planning laws, the confiscation of natural resources, home demolitions, forcible population transfer, excessive use of force and torture, labour exploitation, extensive infringements of privacy rights, restrictions on the media and freedom of expression, the targeting of women activists and journalists, the detention of children, poisoning by exposure to toxic wastes, forced evictions and displacement, economic deprivation and extreme poverty, arbitrary detention, lack of freedom of movement, food insecurity, discriminatory law enforcement and the imposition of a two-tier system of disparate political, legal, social, cultural and economic rights based on ethnicity and nationality. Palestinian and Israeli human rights defenders, who peacefully bring public attention to these violations, are slandered, criminalised or labeled as terrorists. Above all, the Israeli occupation has meant the denial of the right of Palestinian self-determination.

These human rights violations would only intensify after annexation. What would be left of the West Bank would be a Palestinian Bantustan, islands of disconnected land completely surrounded by Israel and with no territorial connection to the outside world. Israel has recently promised that it will maintain permanent security control between the Mediterranean and the Jordan River. Thus, the morning after annexation would be the crystallisation of an already unjust reality: two peoples living in the same space, ruled by the same state, but with profoundly unequal rights. This is a vision of a 21st century apartheid.

Twice before, Israel has annexed occupied land – East Jerusalem in 1980 and the Syrian Golan Heights in 1981. On both occasions, the UN Security Council immediately condemned the annexations as unlawful but took no meaningful countermeasures to oppose Israel's actions.

Similarly, the Security Council has repeatedly criticised the Israeli settlements as a flagrant violation under international law. Yet, Israel's defiance of these resolutions and its ongoing entrenchment of the settlements has gone unanswered by the international community.

This time must be different. The international community has solemn legal and political responsibilities to defend a rules-based international order, to oppose violations of human rights and fundamental principles of international law and to give effect to its many resolutions critical of Israel's conduct of this protracted occupation. In particular, states have a duty not to recognise, aid or assist another state in any form of illegal activity, such as annexation or the creation of civilian settlements in occupied territory. The lessons from the past are clear: Criticism without consequences will neither forestall annexation nor end the occupation.

Accountability and an end to impunity must become an immediate priority for the international community. Available to it is a broad menu of accountability measures that have been widely and successfully applied by the UN Security Council in other international crises over the past 60 years. The accountability measures that are selected must be taken in full conformity with international law, be proportionate, effective, subject to regular review, consistent with human rights, humanitarian and refugee law, and designed to undo the annexations and bring the occupation and the conflict to a just and durable conclusion. Palestinians and Israelis deserve no less.

We express great regret about the role of the United States of America in supporting and encouraging Israel's unlawful plans for the further annexation of occupied territory. On many occasions over the past 75 years, the United States has played an important role in the advancement of global human rights. On this occasion, it should be ardently opposing the imminent breach of a fundamental principle of international law, rather than actively abetting its violation.

VI. HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL ADOPTS FOUR RESOLUTIONS ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN PALESTINE AND OTHER OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES

On 19 and 22 June, the Human Rights adopted the following draft resolutions.

Ensuring accountability and justice for all violations of international law in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem ([A/HRC/43/L.36/Rev.1](#))

The Human Rights Council,

Guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations,

Recalling the relevant rules and principles of international law, including international humanitarian law and human rights law, in particular the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949, which is applicable to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Recalling also the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the other human rights covenants, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child,

Recalling further the statement of 15 July 1999 and the declarations adopted on 5 December 2001 and 17 December 2014 at the Conference of High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention on measures to enforce the Convention in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, at which the High Contracting Parties reaffirmed, inter alia, their commitment to uphold their obligation to ensure respect for the Convention in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Recalling its relevant resolutions, including resolutions S-9/1 of 12 January 2009, 19/17 of 22 March 2012, S-21/1 of 23 July 2014 and S-28/1 of 18 May 2018,

Recalling also the reports of the independent international commission of inquiry on the protests in the Occupied Palestinian Territory,¹ the independent commission of inquiry on the 2014 Gaza conflict,² the independent international fact-finding mission to investigate the implications of Israeli settlements on the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of the Palestinian

¹ A/HRC/40/74.

² A/HRC/29/52.

people throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,³ and the United Nations Fact-Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict,⁴

Recalling further 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,

Recognizing the work of Palestinian, Israeli and international civil society actors and human rights defenders in documenting and countering violations of international law in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Affirming the obligation of all parties to respect international humanitarian law and international human rights law,

Emphasizing the importance of the safety and well-being of all civilians, and reaffirming the obligation to ensure the protection of civilians in armed conflict,

Gravely concerned by reports regarding serious human rights violations and grave breaches of international humanitarian law, including possible war crimes and crimes against humanity, including the findings of the independent international commissions inquiry, fact-finding missions and the boards of inquiry convened by the Secretary-General,

Condemning all violations of human rights and of international humanitarian law, and appalled at the widespread and unprecedented levels of destruction, death and human suffering caused in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Stressing the urgency of achieving without delay an end to the Israeli occupation that began in 1967, and affirming that this is necessary in order to uphold human rights and international law,

Deploing the non-cooperation by Israel with all Human Rights Council fact-finding missions and independent commissions of inquiry, and its refusal to grant access to and cooperate with international human rights bodies and a number of United Nations special procedures seeking to investigate alleged violations of international law in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Regretting the lack of implementation of the recommendations contained in the reports of the independent commissions of inquiry and fact-finding missions, which follows a pattern of lack of implementation of recommendations made by United Nations mechanisms and bodies,

Alarmed that long-standing systemic impunity for international law violations has allowed for the recurrence of grave violations without consequence, and stressing 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,

³ A/HRC/22/63.

⁴ A/HRC/12/48.

Regretting the lack of progress in the conduct of domestic investigations in accordance with international law standards, and aware of the existence of numerous legal, procedural and practical obstacles in the Israeli civil and criminal legal system contributing to the denial of access to justice for Palestinian victims and of their right to an effective judicial remedy,

Emphasizing the need for States to investigate and prosecute grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and other serious violations of international humanitarian law, to end impunity, to uphold their obligations to ensure respect and to promote international accountability,

Noting the accession by the State of Palestine on 2 January 2015 to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court,

Recognizing the importance of the right to life and the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association to the full enjoyment of all human rights,

1. *Calls upon* all duty bearers and United Nations bodies to pursue the implementation of the recommendations contained in the reports of the independent international commission of inquiry on the protests in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the independent commission of inquiry on the 2014 Gaza conflict, the independent international fact-finding mission to investigate the implications of Israeli settlements on the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of the Palestinian people throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the United Nations Fact-Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict, in accordance with their respective mandates;

2. *Notes* the importance of the work of the independent international commission of inquiry on the protests in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the independent commission of inquiry on the 2014 Gaza conflict, the independent international fact-finding mission to investigate the implications of Israeli settlements on the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of the Palestinian people throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the United Nations Fact-Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict, and of the information collected regarding grave violations in support of future accountability efforts, in particular information on alleged perpetrators of violations of international law;

3. *Emphasizes* the need to ensure that all those responsible for violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law are held to account through appropriate, fair and independent national or international criminal justice mechanisms, and to ensure the provision of effective remedy to all victims, including full reparations, and stresses the need to pursue practical steps towards these goals to ensure justice for all victims and to contribute to the prevention of future violations;

4. *Stresses* that all efforts to end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict should be grounded in respect for international humanitarian law and international human rights law, and should ensure credible and comprehensive accountability for all violations of international law in order to bring about sustainable peace;

5. *Takes note* of the conclusion by the International Criminal Court of its preliminary examination into the situation in Palestine on 20 December 2019, with the determination that all

statutory criteria under the Rome Statute for the opening of an investigation had been met, emphasizes the importance of respecting the Court's mandate and the Prosecutor's independence, and calls upon the parties concerned to cooperate fully with any investigation that may be opened;

6. *Denounces* all acts of intimidation, threats and delegitimization directed at human rights organizations, civil society actors and human rights defenders involved in documenting and countering violations of international law and impunity in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and calls upon all States to ensure their protection;

7. *Condemns* the use of unlawful lethal and other excessive force against civilians, including against civilians with special protected status under international law, who pose no imminent threat to life;

8. *Calls upon* all parties to ensure that future demonstrations remain peaceful and to abstain from actions that could endanger the lives of civilians;

9. *Calls upon* all States to promote compliance with international law and all High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention to respect, and to ensure respect for, international humanitarian law in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, in accordance with article 1 common to the Geneva Conventions, to fulfil their obligations under articles 146, 147 and 148 of the said Convention with regard to penal sanctions, grave breaches and the responsibilities of the High Contracting Parties, including by ensuring that they do not become involved in internationally unlawful conduct, and to assess the potential that arms could be used to commit or facilitate a serious violation of international humanitarian or human rights law;

10. *Requests* the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to report on how all parties can fulfil their obligations in implementing the recommendations reviewed by the High Commissioner in 2017,⁵ including measures of accountability and legal measures to be taken by states to ensure respect by Israel, and all other relevant parties, of their obligations under international law in the Occupied Palestinian Territory including East Jerusalem, and to present a report to the Council at its forty-sixth session, to be followed by an interactive dialogue;

11. *Decides* to remain seized of the matter.

Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan ([A/HRC/43.L37/Rev. 1](#))

The Human Rights Council,

Guided by the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and affirming the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force,

⁵ See A/HRC/35/19.

Reaffirming that all States have an obligation to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms, as stated in the Charter and elaborated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenants on Human Rights and other applicable instruments,

Recalling relevant resolutions of the Commission on Human Rights, the Human Rights Council, the Security Council and the General Assembly reaffirming, inter alia, the illegality of the Israeli settlements in the occupied territories, including in East Jerusalem,

Recalling also Human Rights Council resolution 19/17 of 22 March 2012, in which the Council decided to establish an independent international fact-finding mission to investigate the implications of the Israeli settlements on the human rights of the Palestinian people throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Noting the accession by the State of Palestine to several human rights treaties and the core humanitarian law conventions, and its accession on 2 January 2015 to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court,

Reaffirming the applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949, to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and to the occupied Syrian Golan,

Recalling the declarations adopted at the Conferences of High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention, held in Geneva on 5 December 2001 and 17 December 2014, and reaffirming that States should not recognize as lawful a situation arising from breaches of peremptory norms of international law,

Affirming that the transfer by the occupying Power of parts of its own civilian population to the territory it occupies constitutes a breach of the Fourth Geneva Convention and relevant provisions of customary law, including those codified in Additional Protocol I to the four Geneva Conventions,

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, and recalling also General Assembly resolutions ES-10/15 of 20 July 2004 and ES-10/17 of 15 December 2006,

Deeply concerned that the wall's route has been traced in such a way to include the great majority of the Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Noting that the International Court of Justice concluded, inter alia, that the Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, had been established in breach of international law,

Taking note of the recent relevant reports of the Secretary-General, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories and the treaty bodies monitoring compliance with the human rights treaties to which

Israel is a party, and the recent reports of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967,

Recalling the report of the independent international fact-finding mission to investigate the implications of the Israeli settlements on the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of the Palestinian people throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,¹

Expressing its grave concern at any action taken by any body, governmental or non-governmental, in violation of the Security Council and General Assembly resolutions relevant to Jerusalem,

Noting that Israel has been planning, implementing, supporting and encouraging the establishment and expansion of settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, since 1967, through, inter alia, the granting of benefits and incentives to settlements and settlers,

Recalling the Quartet road map to a permanent two-State solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and emphasizing specifically its call for a freeze on all settlement activity, including so-called natural growth, and the dismantlement of all settlement outposts erected since March 2001, and the need for Israel to uphold its obligations and commitments in this regard,

Aware that Israeli settlement activities involve, inter alia, the transfer of nationals of the occupying Power into the occupied territories, the confiscation of land, the destruction of property, including humanitarian relief items, homes, community infrastructure and projects funded by the international community, the forcible displacement of Palestinian civilians or threat thereof, including Bedouin families, the exploitation of natural resources, the conduct of economic activity for the benefit of the occupying Power, disruption to the livelihood of protected persons, the de facto annexation of land and other actions against the Palestinian civilian population and the civilian population in the occupied Syrian Golan that are contrary to international law,

Affirming that the Israeli settlement policies and practices in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, seriously endanger the viability of the two-State solution, undermining the physical possibility of its realization and entrenching a one-State reality of unequal rights,

Noting in this regard that the Israeli settlements fragment the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, into isolated geographical units, severely limiting the possibility of a contiguous territory and the ability to dispose freely of natural resources, both of which are required for the meaningful exercise of Palestinian self-determination, and deeply concerned that the magnitude, persistence and character of the settlement enterprise suggest that the occupation has been established with the intention of making it permanent, in violation of the prohibition of acquisition of territory resulting from the use of force,

Noting also that the settlement enterprise and the impunity associated with its persistence, expansion and related violence continue to be a root cause of many violations of the Palestinians'

¹ A/HRC/22/63.

human rights, and constitute the main factors perpetuating Israel's belligerent occupation of the Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, since 1967,

Deploing in particular the construction and expansion of settlements by Israel in and around occupied East Jerusalem, including its so-called E-1 plan, which aims to connect its illegal settlements around and further isolate occupied East Jerusalem, the continuing demolition of Palestinian homes and eviction of Palestinian families from the city, the revocation of Palestinian residency rights in the city, and ongoing settlement activities in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, all of which further fragment and undermine the contiguity of the Occupied Palestinian Territory,

Expressing grave concern at the continuing construction by Israel of the wall inside the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, in violation of international law, and expressing its concern in particular at the route of the wall in departure from the Armistice Line of 1949, which is causing humanitarian hardship and a serious decline in socioeconomic conditions for the Palestinian people, fragmenting the territorial contiguity of the Territory and undermining its viability, creating a fait accompli on the ground that could be tantamount to de facto annexation in departure from the Armistice Line of 1949, and making the two-State solution physically impossible to implement,

Gravely concerned at all acts of violence, destruction, harassment, provocation and incitement by extremist Israeli settlers and groups of armed settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, against Palestinian civilians, including children, and their properties, including homes, agricultural lands and historic and religious sites, and the acts of terror carried out by several extremist Israeli settlers, which are a long-standing phenomenon aimed at, inter alia, displacing the occupied population and facilitating the expansion of settlements,

Expressing concern at ongoing impunity for acts of settler violence against Palestinian civilians and their properties, and stressing the need for Israel to investigate and to ensure accountability for all of these acts,

Aware of the detrimental impact of the Israeli settlements on Palestinian and other Arab natural resources, especially as a result of the confiscation of land and the forced diversion of water resources, including the destruction of orchards and crops and the seizure of water wells by Israeli settlers, and of the dire socioeconomic consequences in this regard, which precludes the Palestinian people from being able to exercise permanent sovereignty over their natural resources,

Noting that the agricultural sector, considered the cornerstone of Palestinian economic development, has not been able to play its strategic role because of the dispossession of land and the denial of access for farmers to agricultural areas, water resources and domestic and external markets owing to the construction, consolidation and expansion of Israeli settlements,

Aware that numerous Israeli policies and practices related to settlement activity in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, amount to blatant discrimination, including through the creation of a system privileging Israeli settlements and settlers, against the Palestinian people and in violation of their human rights,

Recalling Human Rights Council resolution 22/29 of 22 March 2013, in follow-up to the report of the independent international fact-finding mission to investigate the implications of Israeli settlements on the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of the Palestinian people throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Recalling also the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, which place responsibilities on all business enterprises to respect human rights by, inter alia, refraining from contributing to human rights abuses arising from conflict, and call upon States to provide adequate assistance to business enterprises to assess and address the heightened risks of abuses in conflict-affected areas, including by ensuring that their current policies, legislation, regulations and enforcement measures are effective in addressing the risk of business involvement in gross human rights abuses,

Noting that, in situations of armed conflict, business enterprises should respect the standards of international humanitarian law, and concerned that some business enterprises have, directly and indirectly, enabled, facilitated and profited from the construction and growth of the Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory,

Emphasizing the importance for States to act in accordance with their own national legislation on promoting compliance with international humanitarian law with regard to business activities that result in human rights abuses,

Concerned that economic activities facilitate the expansion and entrenchment of settlements, aware that the conditions of harvesting and production of products made in settlements involve, inter alia, the exploitation of the natural resources of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and calling upon all States to respect their legal obligations in this regard, including the obligation to ensure respect for the Fourth Geneva Convention,

Aware that products wholly or partially produced in settlements have been labelled as originating from Israel, and concerned about the significant role that the production and trade of such products plays in helping to support and maintain the settlements,

Aware also of the role of private individuals, associations and charities in third States that are involved in providing funding to Israeli settlements and settlement-based entities, contributing to the maintenance and expansion of settlements,

Noting that a number of business enterprises have decided to disengage from relationships or activities associated with the Israeli settlements owing to the risks involved,

Expressing its concern at the failure of Israel, the occupying Power, to cooperate fully with the relevant United Nations mechanisms, in particular the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967,

1. *Reaffirms* that the Israeli settlements established since 1967 in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan are illegal under international law, and constitute a major obstacle to the achievement of the two-State solution and a just, lasting and comprehensive peace, and to economic and social development;

2. *Calls upon* Israel to accept the de jure applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949, to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and to the occupied Syrian Golan, to abide scrupulously by the provisions of the Convention, in particular article 49 thereof, and to comply with all its obligations under international law and to cease immediately all actions causing the alteration of the character, status and demographic composition of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan;

3. *Demands* that Israel, the occupying Power, immediately cease all settlement activities in all the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, and in this regard calls for the full implementation of all relevant Security Council resolutions, including, inter alia, resolutions 446 (1979) of 22 March 1979, 452 (1979) of 20 July 1979, 465 (1980) of 1 March 1980, 476 (1980) of 30 June 1980, 497 (1981) of 17 December 1981, 1515 (2003) of 19 November 2003 and 2334 (2016) of 23 December 2016;

4. *Also demands* that Israel, the occupying Power, comply fully with its legal obligations, as mentioned in the advisory opinion rendered on 9 July 2004 by the International Court of Justice, including to cease forthwith the works of construction of the wall being built in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, to dismantle forthwith the structure therein situated, to repeal or render ineffective forthwith all legislative and regulatory acts relating thereto, and to make reparation for the damage caused to all natural or legal persons affected by the construction of the wall;

5. *Condemns* the continuing settlement and related activities by Israel, including the construction and expansion of settlements, the expropriation of land, the demolition of houses, the confiscation and destruction of property, including humanitarian relief consignments, the forcible transfer of Palestinians, including entire communities, and the construction of bypass roads, which change the physical character and demographic composition of the occupied territories, including East Jerusalem and the Syrian Golan, constitute a violation of international humanitarian law, in particular article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, and of international human rights law, and undermine the viability of the two-State solution;

6. *Also condemns* the declarations made by Israeli officials calling for the annexation of Palestinian land, and reaffirms the prohibition of acquisition of territory resulting from the use of force;

7. *Expresses its grave concern* at and calls for the cessation of:

(a) The operation by Israel of a tramway linking the settlements with West Jerusalem, which is in clear violation of international law and relevant United Nations resolutions;

(b) The expropriation of Palestinian land, the demolition of Palestinian homes, demolition orders, forced evictions and “relocation” plans, the obstruction and destruction of humanitarian assistance and the creation of a coercive environment and unbearable living conditions by Israel in areas identified for the expansion and construction of settlements, and other practices aimed at the forcible transfer of the Palestinian civilian population, including Bedouin communities and herders, and further settlement activities, including the denial of access to water and other basic

services by Israel to Palestinians in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, particularly in areas slated for settlement expansion, and including the appropriation of Palestinian property through, inter alia, the declaration of “State lands”, closed “military zones”, “national parks” and “archaeological” sites to facilitate and advance the expansion or construction of settlements and related infrastructure, in violation of Israel’s obligations under international humanitarian law and international human rights law;

(c) Israeli measures in the form of policies, laws and practices that have the effect of preventing the full participation of Palestinians in the political, social, economic and cultural life of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and prevent their full development in both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip;

8. *Calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power:

(a) To end without delay its occupation of the territories occupied since 1967, which may be contrary to international law, to reverse the settlement policy in the occupied territories, including East Jerusalem and the Syrian Golan, and, as a first step towards the dismantlement of the settlement enterprise, to stop immediately the expansion of existing settlements, including so-called natural growth and related activities, to prevent any new installation of settlers in the occupied territories, including in East Jerusalem, and to discard its so-called E-1 plan;

(b) To put an end to all of the human rights violations linked to the presence of settlements, especially of the right to self-determination, and to fulfil its international obligations to provide effective remedy for victims;

(c) To take immediate measures to prohibit and eradicate all policies and practices that discriminate against and disproportionately affect the Palestinian population in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, by, inter alia, putting an end to the system of separate roads for the exclusive use of Israeli settlers, who reside illegally in the said territory, the complex combination of movement restrictions consisting of the wall, roadblocks and a permit regime that only affects the Palestinian population, the application of a two-tier legal system that has facilitated the establishment and consolidation of the settlements, and other violations and forms of institutionalized discrimination;

(d) To cease the requisition and all other forms of unlawful appropriation of Palestinian land, including so-called State land, and its allocation for the establishment and expansion of settlements, and to halt the granting of benefits and incentives to settlements and settlers;

(e) To put an end to all practices and policies resulting in the territorial fragmentation of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and which are isolating Palestinian communities into separate enclaves and deliberately changing the demographic composition of the Occupied Palestinian Territory;

(f) To take and implement serious measures, including the confiscation of arms and enforcement of criminal sanctions, with the aim of ensuring full accountability for and preventing all acts of violence by Israeli settlers, and to take other measures to guarantee the safety and

protection of Palestinian civilians and Palestinian properties in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem;

(g) To bring to a halt all actions, including those perpetrated by Israeli settlers, harming the environment, including the dumping of all kinds of waste materials in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, which gravely threaten their natural resources, namely water and land resources, and which pose an environmental, sanitation and health threat to the civilian population;

(h) To cease the exploitation, damage, cause of loss or depletion and endangerment of the natural resources of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the occupied Syrian Golan;

9. *Welcomes* the adoption of the European Union Guidelines on the eligibility of Israeli entities and their activities in the territories occupied by Israel since June 1967 for grants, prizes and financial instruments funded by the European Union since 2014;

10. *Urges* all States and international organizations to ensure that they are not taking actions that either recognize, aid or assist the expansion of settlements or the construction of the wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and to continue to actively pursue policies that ensure respect for their obligations under international law with regard to these and all other illegal Israeli practices and measures in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem;

11. *Reminds* all States of their legal obligations as mentioned in the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice of 9 July 2004 on the legal consequences of the construction of a wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including not to recognize the illegal situation resulting from the construction of the wall, not to render aid or assistance in maintaining the situation created by such construction, and to ensure compliance by Israel with international humanitarian law as embodied in the Fourth Geneva Convention;

12. *Calls upon* all States:

(a) To distinguish, in their relevant dealings, between the territory of the State of Israel and the territories occupied since 1967, including not to provide Israel with any assistance to be used specifically in connection with settlements in these territories with regard to, inter alia, the issue of trade with settlements, consistent with their obligations under international law;

(b) To implement the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights in relation to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and to take appropriate measures to help to ensure that businesses domiciled in their territory and/or under their jurisdiction, including those owned or controlled by them, refrain from committing, contributing to, enabling or benefiting from the human rights abuses of Palestinians, in accordance with the expected standard of conduct in the Guiding Principles and relevant international laws and standards, by taking appropriate steps in view of the immitigable nature of the adverse impact of their activities on human rights;

(c) To provide guidance to individuals and businesses on the financial, reputational and legal risks, including the possibility of liability for corporate involvement in gross human rights abuses and the abuses of the rights of individuals, of becoming involved in settlement-related activities, including through financial transactions, investments, purchases, procurements, loans, the provision of services, and other economic and financial activities in or benefiting Israeli settlements, to inform businesses of these risks in the formulation of their national action plans for the implementation of the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, and to ensure that their policies, legislation, regulations and enforcement measures effectively address the heightened risks of operating a business in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem;

(d) To increase monitoring of settler violence with a view to promoting accountability;

13. *Calls upon* business enterprises to take all measures necessary to comply with their responsibilities under the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and relevant international laws and standards with respect to their activities in or in relation to the Israeli settlements and the wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, to avoid the adverse impact of such activities on human rights, and to avoid contributing to the establishment, maintenance, development or consolidation of Israeli settlements or the exploitation of the natural resources of the Occupied Palestinian Territory;

14. *Requests* that all parties concerned, including United Nations bodies, implement and ensure the implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the independent international fact-finding mission to investigate the implications of Israeli settlements on the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of the Palestinian people throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and endorsed by the Human Rights Council through its resolution 22/29, in accordance with their respective mandates;

15. *Calls upon* the relevant United Nations bodies to take all necessary measures and actions within their mandates to ensure full respect for and compliance with Human Rights Council resolution 17/4 of 16 June 2011, on the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and other relevant international laws and standards, and to ensure the implementation of the United Nations “Protect, Respect and Remedy” Framework, which provides a global standard for upholding human rights in relation to business activities that are connected with Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem;

16. *Requests* the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to prepare a report on the consequences of the intensification of settlement activity and other annexation measures in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, particularly in and around East Jerusalem and the so-called E-1 area, for the contiguity of the Palestinian Territory and their implications for the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of the Palestinian people, and to present the report to the Human Rights Council at its forty-sixth session;

17. *Decides* to remain seized of the matter.

Human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem
[\(A/HRC/43/L.38/Rev.1\)](#)

The Human Rights Council,

Recalling the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and all relevant conventions, and affirming that these human rights instruments, among others, are applicable to and must be respected in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Recalling also relevant resolutions of the Human Rights Council,

Taking note of the recent report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967,¹ and other relevant recent reports of the Human Rights Council,

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 of the question of Palestine, on the basis of international law,

Noting the accession by the State of Palestine to several human rights treaties and the core humanitarian law conventions, and its accession on 2 January 2015 to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court,

Recalling the advisory opinion rendered on 9 July 2004 by the International Court of Justice, and recalling also General Assembly resolutions ES-10/15 of 20 July 2004 and ES-10/17 of 15 December 2006,

Noting in particular the Court's reply, including that the construction of the wall being built by Israel, the occupying Power, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, and its associated regime are contrary to international law,

Reaffirming the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, and deeply concerned at the fragmentation of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, through the construction of settlements, settler roads, the wall and other measures that are tantamount to de facto annexation of Palestinian land,

Emphasizing the applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949, to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and reaffirming the obligation of the States parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention

¹ A/74/507.

under articles 146, 147 and 148 with regard to penal sanctions, grave breaches and responsibilities of the High Contracting Parties and to ensure respect for international humanitarian law,

Stressing the importance of accountability in preventing future conflicts and ensuring that there is no impunity for violations and abuses, thereby contributing to peace efforts and avoiding the recurrence of violations of international law, including international humanitarian law and international human rights law,

Expressing grave concern at the continuing violations of international humanitarian law and the systematic violation of the human rights of the Palestinian people by Israel, the occupying Power, including that arising from the excessive use of force and military operations causing death and injury to Palestinian civilians, including children and women, and to non-violent, peaceful demonstrators and to journalists, including through the use of live ammunition; the arbitrary detention of Palestinians, some of whom have been detained for decades; the use of collective punishment; the closure of areas; the confiscation of land; the establishment and expansion of settlements; the construction of a wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory in departure from the Armistice Line of 1949; the forcible displacement of civilians, including of Bedouin communities; the policies and practices that discriminate against and disproportionately affect the Palestinian population in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem; the discriminatory allocation of water resources between Israeli settlers, who reside illegally in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and the Palestinian population of the said Territory; the violation of the basic right to adequate housing, which is a component of the right to an adequate standard of living; the revocation of residency permits from Palestinians of East Jerusalem and their eviction from their city; the destruction of property and infrastructure, inter alia, homes of Palestinians; the hampering of humanitarian assistance and the destruction of, inter alia, structures provided as humanitarian aid, contributing to a coercive environment that leads to the forcible transfer of Palestinian civilians in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including when carried out as an act of collective punishment in violation of international humanitarian law; incidents of harassment of and attacks on schoolchildren and attacks on educational facilities by Israeli settlers and as a result of Israeli military action; and all other actions designed to change the legal status, geographical nature and demographic composition of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Deploring all conflicts in and around the Gaza Strip and the civilian casualties caused, including the killing and injury of thousands of Palestinian civilians, including children, women and elderly persons, the widespread destruction of thousands of homes and of civilian infrastructure, including schools, hospitals, water sanitation and electricity networks, economic, industrial and agricultural properties, public institutions, religious sites and United Nations schools and facilities, the internal displacement of hundreds of thousands of civilians, and all violations of international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, in this regard,

Gravely concerned in particular about the disastrous humanitarian situation and the critical socioeconomic and security situations in the Gaza Strip, including that resulting from the prolonged continuous closures and severe economic and movement restrictions that in effect amount to a blockade, and from the continuing and vastly negative repercussions of previous Israeli military operations, and about the firing of rockets into Israel,

Expressing deep concern at the detrimental impact of continued impediments to the reconstruction process on the human rights situation and on the socioeconomic and humanitarian conditions of the Palestinian civilian population, and calling upon the international community to step up its efforts to provide the Gaza Strip with the assistance that it requires,

Stressing the need for all parties, in conformity with the relevant provisions of international humanitarian law, to cooperate fully with the United Nations and other humanitarian agencies and organizations and to ensure the rapid and unhindered access of humanitarian personnel, and the delivery of supplies and equipment, in order to allow such personnel to perform efficiently their task of assisting affected civilian populations, including refugees and internally displaced persons,

Stressing also the need to end immediately the closure of the Gaza Strip and for the full implementation of the Agreement on Movement and Access and the Agreed Principles for the Rafah Crossing, both of 15 November 2005, to allow for the freedom of movement of the Palestinian civilian population within and into and out of the Gaza Strip, while taking into account Israeli security concerns,

Expressing deep concern at the Israeli policy of closures and the imposition of severe restrictions and checkpoints, several of which have been transformed into structures akin to permanent border crossings, other physical obstacles and a permit regime, which are applied in a discriminatory manner affecting the Palestinian population only and all of which obstruct the freedom of movement of persons and goods, including medical and humanitarian goods, throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and impair the Territory's contiguity, violating the human rights of the Palestinian people,

Convinced that the Israeli occupation has gravely impeded the efforts made to achieve sustainable development and a sound economic environment in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and expressing grave concern at the consequent deterioration of economic and living conditions,

Deploring all policies and practices whereby Israeli settlers, who reside illegally in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, are accorded preferential treatment over the Palestinian population in terms of access to roads, infrastructure, land, property, housing, natural resources and judicial mechanisms, resulting in widespread human rights violations of Palestinians,

Expressing deep concern that thousands of Palestinians, including many children and women and elected members of the Palestinian Legislative Council, continue to be detained and held in Israeli prisons or detention centres under harsh conditions, including unhygienic conditions, solitary confinement, lack of proper medical care, denial of family visits and denial of due process, that impair their well-being, and expressing deep concern also at the ill-treatment and harassment of Palestinian prisoners and all reports of torture,

Recalling the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules) and the United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders (the Bangkok Rules), and calling for respect for those rules,

Recalling also the prohibition under international humanitarian law of transfers and deportations of civilians from or to occupied territories,

Deploring the practice of withholding the bodies of those killed, and calling for the release of the bodies that have not yet been returned to their relatives, in accordance with international humanitarian law and human rights law,

Stressing the need for the protection of human rights defenders engaged in the promotion of human rights issues in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, to allow them to carry out their work freely and without fear of attack, harassment, arbitrary detention or criminal prosecution,

Convinced of the need for an international presence to monitor the situation, to contribute to ending the violence and protecting the Palestinian civilian population and to help the parties to implement the agreements reached, and in this regard recalling the positive contribution of the Temporary International Presence in Hebron, and regretting the unilateral decision by Israel not to renew its mandate, thereby dispensing with one of the few established mechanisms for conflict resolution between Israelis and Palestinians, which may therefore have a negative impact on the situation,

Emphasizing the right of all people in the region to the enjoyment of human rights as enshrined in the international human rights covenants,

1. *Demands* that Israel, the occupying Power, withdraw from the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, including East Jerusalem, so as to enable the Palestinian people to exercise its universally recognized right to self-determination;

2. *Reiterates* that all measures and actions taken by Israel, the occupying Power, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, in violation of the relevant provisions of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949, and contrary to the relevant resolutions of the Security Council are illegal and have no validity;

3. *Demands* that Israel, the occupying Power, comply fully with the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 and cease immediately all measures and actions taken in violation and in breach of the Convention;

4. *Also demands* that Israel, the occupying Power, cease all practices and actions that violate the human rights of the Palestinian people, and that it fully respect human rights law and comply with its legal obligations in this regard, including in accordance with relevant United Nations resolutions;

5. *Calls for* urgent measures to ensure the safety and protection of the Palestinian civilian population in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, in accordance with the relevant provisions of international humanitarian law and as called for by the Security Council in its resolution 904 (1994) of 18 March 1994;

6. *Deplores* the persistent non-cooperation of Israel with special procedure mandate holders and other United Nations mechanisms, and calls for full cooperation by Israel with the Human Rights Council and all its special procedures, relevant mechanisms and inquiries, and with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights;

7. *Demands* that Israel, the occupying Power, cease all of its settlement activities, the construction of the wall and any other measures aimed at altering the character, status and demographic composition of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, all of which have, inter alia, a grave and detrimental impact on the human rights of the Palestinian people and the prospects for a peaceful settlement;

8. *Also demands* that Israel, the occupying Power, comply with its legal obligations under international law, as mentioned in the advisory opinion rendered on 9 July 2004 by the International Court of Justice and as demanded by the General Assembly in its resolutions ES-10/15 and ES-10/13, and that it immediately cease the construction of the wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, dismantle forthwith the structure situated therein, repeal or render ineffective all legislative and regulatory acts relating thereto, and make reparation for all damage caused by the construction of the wall, which has had a grave impact on the human rights and the socioeconomic living conditions of the Palestinian people;

9. *Calls upon* Israel to immediately cease any demolitions or plans for demolitions that would result in the forcible transfer or forced eviction of Palestinians, particularly in the vulnerable areas of the Jordan Valley, the periphery of Jerusalem and the South Hebron Hills, to facilitate the return of those Palestinian communities already subjected to forcible transfer or eviction to their original dwellings and to ensure adequate housing and legal security of tenure;

10. *Deplores* the illegal Israeli actions in occupied East Jerusalem, including the construction of settlements in various areas; the demolition of residential structures, the forced eviction of Palestinian inhabitants and the application of the policy of punitive home demolitions; the ongoing policy of revoking the residency permits of Palestinians living in East Jerusalem through various discriminatory laws; the excavations in and around religious and historic sites; and all other unilateral measures aimed at altering the character, status and demographic composition of the city and of the territory as a whole, including those stemming from attempts aimed at illegally changing the status quo of holy sites;

11. *Expresses grave concern* at the restrictions imposed by Israel that impede the access of Christian and Muslim worshippers to holy sites in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and calls upon Israel to include guarantees for non-discrimination on grounds of religion or belief as well as for the preservation and peaceful access to all religious sites;

12. *Urges* Israel to ensure that water resource allocation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory is not discriminatory and does not result in water shortages disproportionately affecting the Palestinian population of the West Bank, and to take urgent steps to facilitate the restoration of the water infrastructure of the West Bank, including in the Jordan Valley, affected by the destruction of the wells of local civilians, roof water tanks and other water and irrigation facilities under military and settler operation since 1967;

13. *Expresses concern* about the so-called Basic Law: Israel as the Nation-State of the Jewish People, adopted by the Knesset, currently under judicial review, which has raised further concerns regarding compliance with international law, including the law of occupation, insofar as it applies to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem;

14. *Also expresses concern* at the Citizenship and Entry into Israel Law adopted by the Knesset, which suspends the possibility, with certain rare exceptions, of family reunification between Israeli citizens and persons residing in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, thus adversely affecting the lives of many families;

15. *Reiterates* the need for respect for the territorial unity, contiguity and integrity of all of the Occupied Palestinian Territory and for guarantees of the freedom of movement of persons and goods within the Palestinian territory, including movement into and from East Jerusalem, into and from the Gaza Strip, between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and to and from the outside world;

16. *Demands* that Israel, the occupying Power, cease immediately its imposition of prolonged closures and economic and movement restrictions, including those amounting to a blockade on the Gaza Strip, which severely restricts the freedom of movement of Palestinians within, into and out of Gaza and their access to basic utilities, housing, education, work, health and an adequate standard of living via various measures, including import and export restrictions, that have a direct impact on livelihoods, economic sustainability and development throughout Gaza, aggravating the state of de-development in Gaza, and in this regard calls upon Israel to implement fully the Agreement on Movement and Access and the Agreed Principles for the Rafah Crossing in order to allow for the sustained and regular movement of persons and goods and for the acceleration of long overdue reconstruction in the Gaza Strip;

17. *Condemns* all acts of violence, including all acts of terror, provocation, incitement and destruction, especially the excessive use of force by the Israeli occupying forces against Palestinian civilians, particularly in the Gaza Strip, where the bombardment of populated areas has caused extensive loss of life and a vast number of injuries, including among thousands of children and women, massive damage and destruction to homes, economic, industrial and agricultural properties, vital infrastructure, including water, sanitation and electricity networks, religious sites and public institutions, including hospitals and schools, United Nations facilities, and agricultural lands, the large-scale internal displacement of civilians, and the excessive use of force by the Israeli occupying forces against Palestinian civilians in the context of protests in the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip;

18. *Also condemns* the firing of rockets against Israeli civilian areas resulting in loss of life and injury, while encouraging an end to all actions contrary to international law;

19. *Reiterates* the responsibility of Israel, the occupying Power, to respect the right to health of all persons within the Occupied Palestinian Territory and to facilitate the immediate, sustained and unfettered passage of humanitarian relief, including the access of medical personnel, their equipment, transport and supplies to all areas under occupation, including the Gaza Strip, and the granting of exit permits for patients in need of medical treatment outside the Gaza Strip, and stresses the need for the unhindered passage of ambulances at checkpoints, especially in times of conflict;

20. *Urges* Member States to continue to provide emergency assistance to the Palestinian people to alleviate the financial crisis and the dire socioeconomic and humanitarian situation, particularly in the Gaza Strip;

21. *Calls upon* Israel to end all harassment, threats, intimidation and reprisals against human rights defenders and civil society actors who peacefully advocate for the rights of Palestinians in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including by cooperating with United Nations human rights bodies, and underscores the need to investigate all such acts, to ensure accountability and effective remedies, and to take steps to prevent any further such threats, attacks, reprisals or acts of intimidation;

22. *Expresses deep concern* at the conditions of the Palestinian prisoners and detainees, including minors, in Israeli jails and detention centres, calls upon Israel to explicitly prohibit torture, including psychological torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, demands that Israel, the occupying Power, fully respect and abide by its international law obligations towards all Palestinian prisoners and detainees in its custody, expresses its concern at the continued extensive use of administrative detention, calls for the full implementation of the agreement reached in May 2012 for a prompt and independent investigation into all cases of death in custody, and calls upon Israel to immediately release all Palestinian prisoners, including Palestinian legislators, detained in violation of international law;

23. *Calls for* urgent attention to be paid to the plight and the rights, in accordance with international law, of Palestinian prisoners and detainees in Israeli jails, and also calls for respect for the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules) and the United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders (the Bangkok Rules);

24. *Demands* that Israel cease its policy of transferring prisoners from the Occupied Palestinian Territory into the territory of Israel, and respect fully its obligations under article 76 of the Fourth Geneva Convention;

25. *Urges* Israel to ensure that any arrest, detention and/or trial of Palestinian children is in line with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, including by refraining from holding criminal proceedings against them in military courts that, by definition, fall short of providing the necessary guarantees to ensure respect for their rights and that infringe upon their right to non-discrimination;

26. *Emphasizes* the need to preserve and develop Palestinian institutions and infrastructure for the provision of vital public services to the Palestinian civilian population and the promotion of human rights, including civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights;

27. *Urges* 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 inalienable human rights, including their right to self-determination, as a matter of urgency, in the light of the onset of the fiftieth year of the Israeli occupation and the continued denial and violation of the human rights of the Palestinian people;

28. *Requests* the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to prepare a report on the allocation of water resources in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and to recommend measures to ensure the implementation of equitable access to safe drinking water in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, in accordance with international law, and to present the report to the Human Rights Council at its forty-eighth session;

29. *Decides* to remain seized of the matter.

Right of the Palestinian people to self-determination ([A/HRC/43/L.39](#))

The Human Rights Council,

Guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, in particular the provisions of Articles 1 and 55 thereof, which affirm the right of peoples to self-determination, reaffirming the need for the scrupulous respect of the principle of refraining in international relations from the threat or use of force, as specified in the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 2625 (XXV) of 24 October 1970, and affirming the inadmissibility of acquisition of territory resulting from the threat or use of force,

Guided also by the provisions of article 1 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and article 1 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which affirm that all peoples have the right to self-determination,

Guided further by the International Covenants on Human Rights, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, in particular article 1 thereof, and by the provisions of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, adopted on 25 June 1993 by the World Conference on Human Rights, and in particular Part I, paragraphs 2 and 3, relating to the right of self-determination of all peoples and especially those subject to foreign occupation,

Recalling General Assembly resolutions 181 A and B (II) of 29 November 1947 and 194 (III) of 11 December 1948, and all other relevant United Nations resolutions, including those adopted by the Assembly, the Commission on Human Rights and the Human Rights Council, that confirm and define the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, particularly their right to self-determination,

Recalling also Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967, 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973, 1397 (2002) of 12 March 2002 and 1402 (2002) of 30 March 2002,

Recalling further General Assembly resolution 67/19 of 29 November 2012,

Reaffirming the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination in accordance with the provisions of the Charter, relevant United Nations resolutions and declarations, and the provisions of international covenants and instruments relating to the right to self-determination as an international principle and as a right of all peoples in the world, and emphasizing that this jus

cogens norm of international law is a basic prerequisite for achieving a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East,

Deploing the plight of millions of Palestine refugees and displaced persons who have been uprooted from their homes, and expressing deep regret about the fact that more than half of the Palestinian people continue to live in exile in refugee camps throughout the region and in the diaspora,

Affirming the applicability of the principle of permanent sovereignty over natural resources to the Palestinian situation as an integral component of the right to self-determination,

Recalling the conclusion of the International Court of Justice, in its advisory opinion of 9 July 2004, that the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people, which is a right *erga omnes*, is severely impeded by Israel, the occupying Power, through the construction of the wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which, together with the Israeli settlement enterprise and measures previously taken, results in serious violations of international humanitarian and human rights law, including the forcible transfer of Palestinians and Israeli acquisition of Palestinian land,

Considering that the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people is being violated further by Israel through the existence and ongoing expansion of settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Noting that the failure to bring the occupation to an end after 50 years heightens the international responsibility to uphold the human rights of the Palestinian people, and expressing its deep regret that the question of Palestine remains unresolved 70 years since the resolution on partition,

Reaffirming that the United Nations will continue to be engaged on the question of Palestine until the question is resolved in all its aspects in accordance with international law,

1. *Reaffirms* the inalienable, permanent and unqualified right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, including their right to live in freedom, justice and dignity and the right to their independent State of Palestine;
2. *Also reaffirms* the need to achieve a just, comprehensive and lasting peaceful solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, in conformity with international law and other internationally agreed parameters, including all relevant United Nations resolutions;
3. *Calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to immediately end its occupation of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and further reaffirms its support for the solution of two States, Palestine and Israel, living side by side in peace and security;
4. *Expresses grave concern* at any action taken in contravention of the General Assembly and Security Council resolutions relevant to Jerusalem;
5. *Also expresses grave concern* at the fragmentation and the changes in the demographic composition of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which are resulting

from Israel's continuing construction and expansion of settlements, forcible transfer of Palestinians and construction of the wall, stresses that this fragmentation, which undermines the possibility of the Palestinian people realizing their right to self-determination, is incompatible with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and emphasizes in this regard the need for respect for and preservation of the territorial unity, contiguity and integrity of all of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem;

6. *Confirms* that the right of the Palestinian people to permanent sovereignty over their natural wealth and resources must be used in the interest of their national development, the well-being of the Palestinian people and as part of the realization of their right to self-determination;

7. *Calls upon* all States to ensure their obligations of non-recognition, non-aid or assistance with regard to the serious breaches of peremptory norms of international law by Israel, in particular of the prohibition of the acquisition of territory by force, in order to ensure the exercise of the right to self-determination, and also calls upon them to cooperate further to bring, through lawful means, an end to these serious breaches and a reversal of Israel's illegal policies and practices;

8. *Urges* all States to adopt measures as required to promote the realization of the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people, and to render assistance to the United Nations in carrying out the responsibilities entrusted to it by the Charter regarding the implementation of this right;

9. *Decides* to remain seized of the matter.

VII. UN SPECIAL COORDINATOR APPEALS TO MIDDLE EAST QUARTET TO RESTART NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN ISRAEL AND PALESTINE

On 22 June, Nickolay Mladenov, UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, made the following [remarks](#) at an event in Jericho organized by Palestinians in protest against Israel's unilateral plan to annex parts of the occupied West Bank. Several foreign diplomats including some representing the Middle East Quartet were also in attendance.

Thank for inviting the United Nations here today.

I would like to begin by asking all to join me for a moment of silence to commemorate Eyad Hallaq, who recently was killed in East Jerusalem.

May his memory will live forever and may his soul rest in peace!

Eyad Hallaq is the most recent victim in a senseless number of killings of both Israelis and Palestinians.

His death reminds us how precious peace is and how difficult it is to keep it.

The United Nations believes, and I believe I can speak on behalf of the international community represented here, that annexation is against international law. It may kill the very idea that peace and statehood for the Palestinian people can be achieved through negotiations.

I have been asked to speak to the Palestinian people today, but first I would like to address the representatives of member states of the United Nations who are here today with a clear message: we have no time to lose!

In the coming days and weeks, we must do everything possible to uphold the idea that through negotiations the Palestinian and the Israeli people can live in peace.

We must stand against unilateral action and we support peace.

I call on all in the international community to join the Secretary-General of the United Nations in his appeal to our colleagues and friends in the Middle East Quartet: the Russian Federation, the European Union and the United States, to join us in restarting meaningful negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians based on International law and in line with relevant UN resolutions.

The Palestinian people have worked for 26 years to build the foundation to a peaceful state. Abu Ammar brought together Palestinians from refugee camps, scattered around the region. He had brought them together to build a nation. He had the strength to renounce violence.

Do not stray away from the path of nonviolence!

Do not lose sight of the goal of free Palestinian state living side-by-side in peace and security with Israel, with borders that are agreed based on the 1967 lines.

The UN will never ever give up on this goal because it is a just goal. We will work with you everywhere and every day for peace and for security for all.

The Palestinian people are not renting a house here, this is your home! You cannot throw away the keys to something you've been building for 25 years. You must protect your achievements. You must invest in a future that is built on shared values of democracy, of accountability and of prosperity for everyone.

We will work together with you for unity.

The Palestinian people here in the West Bank, in East Jerusalem and in Gaza deserve it.

A cancer has been eating away the body of Palestine for more than a decade -- the cancer of division.

I call on all Palestinian leaders to put away their differences and to build real national unity, for the sake of the youth. So that they may live free from checkpoints, so they may be free to travel and work, so they may fly their national flag over their home.

People of Palestine do not despair! Do not give up! Never give up!

Peace, peace, peace!

VIII. DONORS PLEDGE US\$ 130 MILLION FOR UNRWA

On 23 June, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) issued the following [press release](#).

During an extra-ordinary global meeting on UNRWA at ministerial level hosted today by the governments of Sweden and Jordan, 75 governments and non-governmental organisations made \$130 million in financial commitments to sustain the operations and services of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine refugees in the Near East ([UNRWA](#)). UNRWA is the UN agency responsible for providing protection, health care, education, relief and social services, emergency response and other lifesaving services to more than 5.6 million Palestine refugees [across the Middle East](#). The needs of these refugees are rising as a consequence of the outbreak and long-term implications of the COVID-19 pandemic, the economic downturn in host countries, and the political instability on top of the continued occupation of Palestinian Territory, the blockade on Gaza, and the conflict in Syria.

The theme of this special pledging conference under Sweden and Jordan's leadership was "A Strong UNRWA in a Challenging World – Mobilizing Collective Action." The gathering was co-chaired by Jordan's Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates H.E Ayman Safadi and Swedish Minister for International Development Cooperation H.E Peter Eriksson, with the special participation of His Excellency António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Echoing many participants in today's event, **Ayman Safadi, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Expatriates of Jordan**, told the conference that "This is a time for action. Supporting UNRWA is a necessary action. The agency has done all it could to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in its operations. We must stand by it."

Minister for International Development Cooperation Peter Eriksson urged traditional and non-traditional donors to "translate political support for UNRWA into financial support and contribute to a more sustainable UNRWA with multi-annual support to its programme budget." The Minister added that "supporting UNRWA is critical for stability by ensuring that half a million children can continue go to school and respond effectively to the COVID-19 pandemic."

UN Secretary-General António Guterres said, "In December 2019, UN Member States voted overwhelmingly in support of renewing the mandate of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees. UNRWA stands as a vital source of stability in a region rife with ongoing conflict and now also battling the health, economic and social impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. All nations must come together to create the long-term financial mechanisms necessary for the Agency to continue uninterrupted its UN-mandated mission to protect and assist a vulnerable population of 5.6 million Palestine refugees."

"The results of today's conference demonstrate the international commitment to the rights and well-being of Palestine refugees and the role of UNRWA as their essential provider of human development and humanitarian aid until the political entities involved reach a just and lasting solution to their plight," said **UNRWA Commissioner-General Philippe Lazzarini**. "Palestine refugees have long lived with the threat that UNRWA operations might be suspended. UNRWA has long lived from hand to mouth. Today, we took a significant step forward in addressing the

Agency's chronic short and long-term financial challenges, including promoting multiyear agreements, expanding the donor base, and exploring innovative funding avenues and mechanisms. I commend today's participants for sharing our goal to promote the dignity and the rights of Palestine refugees."

Participants included and ministers and senior officials from 75 governments and international organisations, representing all regional groups of the United Nations.

The Agency's nearly 30,000 staff quickly adapted the way they run services to the new reality, while continuing to ensure Palestine refugees have access to education, health, relief and social services. Across all five of its geographic fields of operation, UNRWA addresses the most pressing humanitarian needs and lays down a pathway to human development. Poverty eradication and respect for human rights, central pillars of the SDGs, are at the core of the Agency's work on behalf of Palestine refugees.

IX. UN SECRETARY-GENERAL CALLS ON ISRAEL TO RENOUNCE WEST BANK ANNEXATION PLANS IN BRIEFING TO SECURITY COUNCIL

The [remarks](#) of António Guterres, UN Secretary-General, at the 24 June Security Council meeting on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian Question, are replicated below.

I address you today with a deep sense of concern over the evolving situation in Israel and Palestine. We are at a watershed moment.

Israel's threat to annex parts of the occupied West Bank has alarmed Palestinians, many Israelis and the broader international community. If implemented, annexation would constitute a most serious violation of international law, grievously harm the prospect of a two-State solution and undercut the possibilities of a renewal of negotiations.

I call on the Israeli Government to abandon its annexation plans. The Palestinian leadership has reacted by considering itself absolved of all bilateral agreements with Israel and the United States.

Increased economic fragility as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, reduced donor support and the recent Palestinian decision to stop accepting clearance revenues that Israel collects on behalf of Palestinian Authority risk increasing the hardship of the Palestinian people.

As I said in February when I spoke before you and President Abbas in the Council, you have my full commitment to continue supporting Palestinians and Israelis to resolve the conflict and end the occupation, in line with international law, relevant United Nations resolutions and bilateral agreements.

The goal is achieving the vision of two States — Israel and an independent, democratic, contiguous, sovereign and viable Palestinian State — living side by side in peace and security

within secure and recognized borders, based on the pre-1967 borders, with Jerusalem as the capital of both States.

I will continue to consistently speak out against any unilateral steps that would undermine peace and the chances for resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through meaningful negotiations. Such actions also further hamper efforts to advance regional peace and to maintain international peace and security.

I urge Israeli and Palestinian leaders to commit to meaningful dialogue, with the support of the international community. I encourage regional and international supporters of the two-State solution to help bring the parties back to a path towards a negotiated, peaceful settlement. I call on fellow members of the Middle East Quartet to take up our mandated mediation role and find a mutually agreeable framework for the parties to re-engage, without preconditions, with us and other key States.

Leaders must act wisely and swiftly and demonstrate the will to advance the goal of a just and lasting peace.

Allow me to ask you to now give the floor to the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and my envoy, Nickolay Mladenov, to brief the Council.

X. UN SPECIAL COORDINATOR REITERATES GRAVE CONCERN OVER THE CONTINUING THREAT OF ISRAELI ANNEXATION WHILE REPORTING ON IMPLEMENTATION OF RESOLUTION 2334 (2016) TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL

On 24 June, Nickolay Mladenov, UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process made the following [remarks](#) to the Security Council.

I am devoting my regular briefing on the situation in the Middle East to the fourteenth report on the implementation of Security Council resolution 2334 (2016). The written report you have already received covers the period from 21 March to 4 June 2020.

Before turning to developments that have occurred since the written report, I would like to reiterate the Secretary-General's grave concern over the continuing threat of Israeli annexation of parts of the occupied West Bank – a process officials have said could begin in a matter of days or weeks. Deliberations over this move have brought this long-standing conflict to a critical juncture.

Annexation could irrevocably alter the nature of Israeli-Palestinian relations. It risks up-ending more than a quarter of a century of international efforts in support of a future viable Palestinian State living in peace, security and mutual recognition with the State of Israel.

The Secretary-General has just unequivocally stated that any move to annex occupied Palestinian territory would have serious implications in terms of international law, the two-State solution and the prospects of a negotiated, sustainable peace.

International and regional opposition has also been widespread. European leaders continue to voice their opposition to annexation and have also affirmed that it would amount to a violation of international law. Powerful statements rejecting such a move have been issued in the past weeks by His Majesty, the King of Jordan, the Arab League, and leaders across the Arab world, including a strong message directly to the Israeli people from the United Arab Emirates.

In addition to the official statements, we have witnessed opposition to the move from Israeli and Palestinian civil society, think tanks, academics and many others.

Multiple opinion polls have indicated that Israelis are deeply divided over the issue and do not consider it a priority as the country is in the grips of an economic crisis and rising unemployment. Thousands of Israelis have protested the move at gatherings in Tel Aviv's Rabin Square and other locations across the country.

Mister President,

Recognising that both peoples have a right to live in their ancestral home, 27 years ago Israeli and Palestinian leaders agreed to embark on a noble but difficult road to resolve the conflict through negotiations, without taking unilateral action, and in order to reach a final status agreement on a just peace.

Today we are further than ever from this goal.

As the prospect of a negotiated two-State solution is undercut, the specter of anger, radicalization and violence emerges. Beyond the legal, security and economic implications, the threat of unilaterally annexing parts of the West Bank will send one message and one message alone – bilateral negotiations cannot achieve peace.

We cannot allow this to happen.

No good can come out of the breakdown of dialogue and communications.

Diplomacy must be given a chance.

All of us who believe in the legitimate right of both Palestinians and Israelis to self-determination, security and a brighter future must reject this move and consolidate efforts to preserve a sustainable two-State solution.

This is why I ask you all today to join the Secretary-General in his call for an immediate reengagement, with no preconditions, between the Middle East Quartet – the United States, the Russian Federation, the European Union and the United Nations – and the Palestinian leadership, Israel and the countries of the region; this is in order to find a way out of the current crisis.

I believe that only by working together we can restore meaningful Israeli-Palestinian dialogue and improve stability and conditions for people on the ground.

Such discussions have been dormant for too long, letting both sides drift further apart along diverging paths. Unilateral action has made the goal appear ever more distant.

Based on shared principles and aspirations, we can identify realistic steps to avoid increasing polarisation and to advance the goal of two states, living side-by-side in peace and security, and integrated into the region.

In the interest of peace, I urge the Israeli and Palestinian leadership to take this opportunity and to return to the path of engagement.

In response to the threat of annexation, the Palestinian leadership declared itself absolved of all agreements and understandings with Israel and the United States. It has subsequently halted all bilateral contacts. This decision has had, and will increasingly have, a dramatic impact on all aspects of Palestinian life.

Particularly worrisome is the decision to stop accepting the clearance revenues that Israel collects on behalf of the Palestinian Authority (PA). Adding to the economic uncertainty caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Palestinian Authority has now lost 80 per cent of its monthly revenue. This gap cannot be filled by donors.

Palestinians in Gaza, who have lived with closures and under the control of Hamas for more than a decade, are particularly vulnerable. The ending of civilian coordination will not allow them to receive life-saving treatment. Already, an eight-month-old infant has lost his life due to this situation.

Surely there must be a red line when it comes to the lives of children!

The UN and other international organizations are increasingly being asked to perform coordination responsibilities. While we are prepared to provide support on an emergency basis, the UN cannot replace the Palestinian Authority. It is critical that humanitarian and other assistance not be delayed or stopped.

In the coming weeks, decisions may be reached that will do irreparable damage to Palestinian and Israeli societies, to the security and economic wellbeing of both peoples.

This bleak vision, however, is not yet a fait accompli. The window is closing, but there is still time to avert chaos. It will require a concerted effort by all stakeholders and the will to take political risks to achieve peace.

As a first step, I join the Secretary-General in calling on Israel to abandon its plans to annex parts of the occupied West Bank.

Allow me to turn briefly to significant developments since the written report has been circulated.

In terms of settlement-related activities, on 9 June, Israel's High Court of Justice struck down a controversial 2017 law that enabled wide-scale expropriation of private Palestinian land and the retroactive legalization, under Israeli law, of thousands of housing units in Israeli settlements. The Court ruled that the law was unconstitutional due to its violation of Palestinians' rights to property and equality.

Meanwhile, one Palestinian was killed, and 44 were injured, including 6 children, during demonstrations, clashes and other incidents across the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including five by live ammunition. Three Israelis were injured when stones were thrown at a bus traveling through the West Bank.

A total of 45 structures were demolished on grounds of lack of permits in Area C and East Jerusalem, displacing some 28 people and otherwise affecting an additional 250.

On 23 June, a 28-year-old Palestinian man from Abu Dis was shot dead by ISF in an apparent carramming attack at a checkpoint and an IDF soldier was injured. Settler-related violence incidents during the reporting period were concentrated mainly in Hebron's H2 area and the Nablus Governorate.

In Gaza, despite the relative calm, the launching of incendiary balloons and devices continued, with some 20 devices launched over the fence into Israel. On 15 June, a rocket was launched from Gaza towards Israel, landing in an open field and causing no damage. In retaliation, Israel Defense Forces (IDF) targeted several Hamas targets in the Strip.

Meanwhile the Kerem Shalom crossing for goods into Gaza has continued to operate normally. However, the Palestinian Civil Affairs Committee in Gaza stopped receiving and processing permit applications for Gaza residents and ended all communications with Israeli authorities. As a result, hundreds of patients, including many children needing life-saving medical treatment have not been able to exit the Strip.

UNRWA's financial situation remains a serious concern to all of us. I thank Jordan and Sweden for their efforts to mobilize support for the Agency, including yesterday's pledging conference which they co-chaired, with the participation of the Secretary-General. I welcome the pledges that were announced, although they fall well short of the needs and UNRWA's funding gap remains extremely serious. I encourage Member States to support the Agency to ensure its operations can continue throughout 2020.

In closing, I would like to again highlight the immense risks we face over the coming weeks and months as we confront the very real possibility of annexation and its consequences.

If implemented, these steps could dramatically alter local dynamics, triggering instability across the Occupied Palestinian Territory and maybe beyond. This conflict has been marked by periods of extreme violence, but never before has the risk of escalation been accompanied by a political horizon so distant, an economic situation so fragile and a region so volatile.

It is crucial for all stakeholders to take action that will enable the parties to step back from the brink. The goal must be to urgently re-engage in dialogue that will halt unilateral steps, chart a positive way forward and avoid a descent into chaos.

Everyone must do their part in the coming weeks to preserve and promote the prospect of ending the occupation and achieving a negotiated two-State solution, based on international law, UN resolutions, and bilateral agreements.

XI. BELGIUM, ESTONIA, FRANCE, GERMANY, IRELAND, NORWAY AND THE UK ISSUE JOINT STATEMENT FOLLOWING SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING ON THE MIDDLE EAST

On 24 June, Belgium, Estonia, France, Germany, Ireland, Norway and the United Kingdom issued the following [statement](#) at UN Headquarters.

I would like to make the following statement today on behalf of the current and incoming EU Members of the UNSC (Belgium, Estonia, France, Germany, Ireland), as well as the United Kingdom and Norway.

We share the grave concerns expressed by the Secretary General in his latest report on the stated intention of the Government of Israel to annex parts of the occupied West Bank and we strongly echo his call on Israel to abandon its annexation plans.

We also share the Secretary General's assessment that if any Israeli annexation of the Occupied West Bank – however big or small – is implemented, it would constitute a clear violation of international law, including the UN Charter, as well as the UN Security Council resolutions. It would severely undermine the renewal of negotiations, the possibility to reach a two-State solution acceptable to both parties, and the prospect of a viable Palestinian State. Any such unilateral step would also weaken efforts to advance regional peace and our broader efforts to maintain international peace and security.

Annexation would have negative consequences for the security and stability of the region, including the security of Israel, which is not negotiable for us. We all currently enjoy a close relationship with Israel and wish to continue working with Israel in a constructive and comprehensive way, in the spirit of the longstanding friendship that binds us. However, following our obligations and responsibilities under international law, annexation would have consequences for our close relationship with Israel and would not be recognised by us.

We stand ready to respond to the Secretary-General's call to take action with all relevant stakeholders that enables the parties to re-engage in a dialogue that will halt unilateral action. We will continue engaging with the parties and the international community in support of a negotiated two-state solution based on the international parameters.

International law is a fundamental pillar of the international rules-based order. In this respect, we recall our long-standing position that we will not recognize any changes to the 1967 borders, unless agreed by Israelis and Palestinians. The two-state solution, with Jerusalem as the future capital for both States, is the only way to ensure sustainable peace and stability in the region.

In relation to the Palestinian leadership's announcement with regard to agreements with Israel including security cooperation we are worried about the potential implications these steps could have on the ground. We call on both sides to refrain from any unilateral steps that could further deteriorate the situation on the ground, to remain committed to the Oslo agreements and to fully implement all resolution 2334, including with regard to settlement activities as well as with regard

to all acts of violence against civilians, including acts of terror, as well as all acts of provocation, incitement, destruction and inflammatory rhetoric.

XII. UN SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ISSUES STATEMENT ON THE ROLE OF THE EU AND LOOMING ISRAELI ANNEXATION

On 26 June, Michael Lynk, Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian Territory occupied since 1967, released the following [statement](#).

I urge the European Union and its member states to recognize, and act upon, the rising exigency to address the deteriorating human rights, humanitarian and political situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The Israeli occupation continues to deepen. The number of announced new Israeli settlement units has risen dramatically. Gaza remains besieged and beleaguered. The new Israeli government plans to move ahead with the annexation proposals in the American plan of January 2020. And the possibilities of a genuine Palestinian state emerging from this trajectory are fading to black. In the face of all of this, the international community is badly in need of decisive leadership to pull this situation back from the abyss and to re-set its course.

Among the major international players, it is the European Union which has the greatest potential to right the ship. The EU possesses the economic weight, the diplomatic expertise, the political authority, the respect of the parties, and the aid, trade and investment leverage to make a substantial and positive difference to the future of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

But, to do so, the EU must recognize that resolutions without resolve and criticism without consequences can no longer have a place in reaching the just and durable peace and human security that Palestinians and Israelis deserve. Only with a firm commitment by the EU to defend the rules-based international order, the protection of peremptory norms and the international consensus, and its determination to ensure that all the parties, and particularly Israel, are truly accountable under international law for their actions and inactions, will there be any possibility of success. As Amos Schocken, the publisher of *Ha'aretz*, the liberal Israeli daily, wrote in 2016: “[The Israeli leadership] will object and protest, but it may be that international pressure is precisely the force that will drive them to do the right thing.”¹

In particular, there are four issues of particular concern regarding the 53-year-old Israeli occupation of Palestine that I urge the European Union to take decisive action on:

1. Annexation. The new Israeli collation agreement between Benjamin Netanyahu and Benny Gantz (April 20th) provides for annexation of Palestinian territory in the West Bank, which would proceed after the beginning of July 2020. This is in accordance with the Trump plan, but opposed by the rest of the world.

What would be left of the West Bank after the annexation would be a Levantine Bantustan, an archipelago of territorial islands, completely surrounded and divided up by Israel and unconnected to the outside world. The plan would crystalize apartheid for the 21st century, it is divorced from

¹ <https://www.haaretz.com/opinion/.premium-only-international-pressure-will-end-israeli-apartheid-1.5394041>

international law and it would leave in its wake the demise of the Palestinians' right to self-determination.

Annexation of territory by an occupying power is profoundly illegal under international law. The United Nations Security Council, starting with Resolution 242 (1967) and most recently in Resolution 2334 (2016), has expressly affirmed on eight occasions the principle of the "... inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory" by war or force with respect to Israel's occupation.

The European Union must clearly signal not just its declarative opposition to Israel's annexation of parts of the West Bank, but its resolve to take the critical steps commensurate to the flaunting of international law and global opinion. If Israel proceeds with any form of annexation, the EU should review and be willing to suspend or downgrade its array of trade and cooperation agreements, including the EU-Israel Association Agreement and Horizon 2020/Horizon Europe. As you know, the EU is permitted to suspend these agreements should there be a serious breach of "common values", which includes human rights and international law. Annexation is surely such a serious breach.

2. The Israeli Settlements. There are approximately 240 Israeli settlements, and more than 650,000 Israeli settlers, in occupied East Jerusalem and the West Bank. In late February 2020, Israel announced that it has green-lit the proposal to build more than 8,000 new settlement housing units. In his regular quarterly reports to the UN Security Council over the past three years, Nickolay Mladenov, the UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, has repeatedly stated that Israel remains entirely non-compliant with the direction of Resolution 2334 to cease all settlement activities. An occupying power which continues to expand its civilian settlements in defiance of international opprobrium cannot be serious about peace.

The Israeli settlements are deemed by the UN Security Council in Resolution 2334 to be a "flagrant violation of international law." They violate the *Fourth Geneva Convention*, and they are a presumptive war crime under the 1998 *Rome Statute*. The settlements are also a significant source of human rights violations and a serious obstacle to the Palestinians' right to self-determination.

International trade and investment involving the Israeli settlements provides them with the necessary economic oxygen to thrive and grow. Accordingly, the European Union should not permit Israeli settlement goods to enter into the EU market without a certificate of origin from the Palestinian Authority, replicating EU practice with respect to Crimea and northern Cyprus. Nor should it allow any EU registered companies or organizations to trade or invest in, donate to or financially assist, the settlements in any way.

As well, the EU should deepen its policy of differentiating between Israel and the settlements across the entire scope of EU-Israel relations – something that the EU institutions are bound to advance on the basis of the EU's own legal obligations and past FAC conclusions.

As part of its active opposition to the Israeli settlements, I also urge the EU to fully support a robust follow-up on the UN database on business activities in the Israeli settlements, which was released by the Human Rights Council in February 2020. The database maintains a spotlight on those Israeli and foreign enterprises which maintain business investments in the settlements,

providing a measure of accountability. As part of its evolving commitment towards corporate accountability domestically and abroad, the EU should support the assignment of sufficient resources to maintaining and updating the database as a living tool, as well as ensure that it accurately captures all meaningful business and economic activity that sustains the settlements.

3. The Gaza Blockade. By international consensus, Israel remains the occupying power in Gaza. Although it demolished its settlements and removed its settlements in 2005, Israel has maintained a comprehensive land, air and sea blockade on Gaza for the past 13 years, and it controls virtually everything and everybody that enters or leaves the Strip. The blockade has contributed mightily to the civilian suffering in Gaza, which has a collapsed health care system, an aquifer with almost completely undrinkable water, enormous rates of unemployment and poverty, intermittent electrical power and densely packed housing.

The Israeli blockade on Gaza amounts to collective punishment, which is forbidden under Article 33 of the *Fourth Geneva Convention*. Numerous international voices have called for an end to the blockade, commensurate with Israel's security needs. In 2016, Ban Ki-moon, the then United Nations Secretary General, stated that: "The closure of Gaza suffocates its people, stifles its economy and impedes reconstruction efforts. It is a collective punishment for which there must be accountability."²

Accordingly, I urge the EU to insist that Israel honour its obligations under international law and end the Gaza blockade, while taking the necessary steps to enhance Gaza's economy. This must include the opening of the Gaza crossings for goods and people, an alignment of the restricted dual-use items with the Wassenaar list, a guarantee that Gaza's fishing zone should reach its agreed maximum limit, an increase in the number of permits for Gazans to work in Israel and opening the door for the Palestinian Authority to explore the natural gas field off Gaza's coast.

4. Destruction of Property, including EU-funded Humanitarian Aid. Israel has pursued a long-standing policy of destroying Palestinian property, including property and items provided as humanitarian assistance to Palestinian communities in East Jerusalem and Area C of the West Bank. This has been well documented by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, several international NGOs and the European Union itself through its Six-Month Report on Demolitions and Confiscations of EU funded structures in Area C.

Israel's wrongful seizure and destruction of property is aimed at depriving communities adjacent to settlements and destined for annexation of essential relief. It also is designed to discourage the EU and its member states from protecting them from forcible transfer, as well as hinder humanitarian organizations in the delivery of aid in an effective and timely manner.

These practices and policies persist, despite being in direct violation of international law. The *Fourth Geneva Convention* obliges the occupying power to provide for the wellbeing of the protected population as a primary duty, and if need be, agree to relief schemes on behalf of the occupied population, and facilitate them by all means at its disposal.

² <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/press-encounter/2016-06-28/secretary-generals-remarks-press-encounter>

I urge the EU to condition its present and any future agreements with Israel on the complete halt to the destruction of such property. The European Union should also seek reparations if the humanitarian assistance it has provided has been adversely affected. Additionally, the EU should resort to instruments of retorsion to enforce the right of Palestinians to receive aid, and its right to provide such imperative relief.

Conclusion

In the absence of any other influential international leadership on this issue, it is incumbent upon the European Union to not only insist upon Israel's strict adherence to international law, but to detail the political, diplomatic and economic consequences that it will implement should Israel proceed to defy world opinion. This is a moment of truth for the EU and the integrity of its foreign policy.

Taking firm action on these issues would be entirely consistent with the obligations of the EU under Article 21.1 of the *Treaty of the European Union*, which directs that the Union's actions are to be guided by:

"...democracy, the rule of law, the universality and indivisibility of human rights and fundamental freedoms, respect for human dignity, the principles of equality and solidarity, and respect for the principles of the United Nations Charter and international law."

In addition to the recommendations above, I also urge the EU to undertake the following:

- Take the lead in creating a working group among UN member states to develop a menu of counter-measures that would be employed should Israel's annexation plans materialize; and
- Remind all UN member states that they all bear legal duties through the fundamental principle of Third State Responsibility, as per the 2001 *Articles on State Responsibility*, Common Article 1 of the *Geneva Conventions* and Article 25 of the *Charter of the United Nations*.

It has sometimes been said by critics of the EU's foreign policy towards Israel and Palestine that it suffers from paralysis and inaction.

Nothing could better demonstrate that this argument is misplaced than for the EU to back up its criticisms of Israel's occupation and looming annexation with a decisive menu of counter-measures. As it did with the occupation of Crimea and northern Cyprus, the European Union can prove that defying international law can only come at a significant cost to the perpetrator. This is the best hope, and perhaps the last hope for the foreseeable future, that justice can be salvaged, and peace may remain on the agenda.

XIII. UN SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE ISRAELI PRACTICES ISSUES END-OF-MISSION STATEMENT

On 26 June, The United Nations Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories issued the following [statement](#).

The United Nations Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices* notes with deep concern the ongoing deterioration of the human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory – including in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza – as a result of the decades-long Israeli occupation, its policies and practices.

The Committee is particularly alarmed by the recently announced annexation plans by the Israeli Government which would constitute a grave breach of international law, the United Nations Charter and a flagrant violation of UN resolutions. It would also potentially have grave consequences on the human rights of Palestinians and would further worsen violations committed against them.

Due to the spread of COVID-19, the Committee was not able to conduct annual briefings with Member States in Geneva and undertake its annual mission to the region this year. Alternatively, the Committee organised a series of virtual meetings with UN agencies, Palestinian ministries and institutions and civil society organisations from 9-12 and 16-17 June 2020. The Committee also sent requests for written submissions, including to Member States.

During these meetings, members of the Committee were briefed on the human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including the marked increase in settlements expansion, settler violence and demolitions of Palestinian-owned property.

The Committee was also briefed on cases of continued use of excessive force by Israeli Security Forces against Palestinians and the ongoing lack of accountability for these and other human rights violations.

The Committee also took note of the concerns expressed by a number of interlocutors, with regard to access to health for Palestinians, including women and people with disabilities especially in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Committee noted with strong concern the impact of Israeli policies and practices on women and girls. It will dedicate a segment of its upcoming report, which will be presented in November to the General Assembly's 75th session, on this issue.

In the context of continued Israeli discriminatory practices against Palestinians, members of the Committee stressed the importance of the peace process and the two-state solution.

**The United Nations Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories was established by the UN General Assembly in December 1968 to examine the human rights situation in the occupied Syrian Golan, the West Bank, including East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip.*

XIV. UN HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS URGES ISRAEL TO HALT WEST BANK ANNEXATION PLANS

On 29 June, Michelle Bachelet, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, issued a statement reflected in the following [press release](#).

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet, on Monday added her voice to the wave of international and national calls on the Government of Israel not to proceed with its plans to illegally annex a swathe of occupied Palestinian territory, saying it would have a disastrous impact on human rights of Palestinians and across the region.

“Annexation is illegal. Period,” she said. “Any annexation. Whether it is 30 percent of the West Bank, or 5 percent. I urge Israel to listen to its own former senior officials and generals, as well as to the multitude of voices around the world, warning it not to proceed along this dangerous path.”

“The precise consequences of annexation cannot be predicted,” Bachelet said. “But they are likely to be disastrous for the Palestinians, for Israel itself, and for the wider region. The Secretary-General of the United Nations has called on the Israeli Government to abandon its annexation plans, and I back that call one hundred percent.”

“As many others have noted, any attempt to annex any part of the occupied Palestinian territory will not only seriously damage efforts to achieve lasting peace in the region, it is likely to entrench, perpetuate and further heighten serious human rights violations that have characterized the conflict for decades,” Bachelet said.

Restrictions on the right to freedom of movement would almost certainly increase substantially as Palestinian population centers become enclaves. Significant tracts of private land could be illegally expropriated, and even where this does not occur, many Palestinians may not be able to access and cultivate their own lands. Palestinians living within the annexed zone would experience greater difficulty accessing essential services like education and health, and humanitarian access may also be hindered.

Palestinians would come under even heavier pressure to move out of the annexed zone, and entire communities that are currently not recognized under Israel’s planning regime would be at high risk of forcible transfer. Palestinians outside the annexed zone risk seeing their access to natural resources cut off, their opportunity for natural growth removed, and even their ability to leave and return to their own country severely restricted.

Settlements – already a clear violation of international law – will almost certainly expand, increasing the existing friction between the two communities.

“This is a highly combustible mix,” Bachelet said. “I am deeply concerned that even the most minimalist form of annexation would lead to increased violence and loss of life, as walls are erected, security forces deployed and the two populations brought into closer proximity. The existing two-tier system of law in the same territory will become embedded, with devastating impacts on the lives of Palestinians who have little or no access to legal remedy,” she added.

The High Commissioner warned that illegal annexation “will not change the obligations of Israel as occupying power towards the occupied population under international humanitarian or human rights law. Instead, it will grievously harm the prospect of a two-state solution, undercut the possibilities of a renewal of negotiations, and perpetuate the serious existing human rights and international humanitarian law violations we witness today.”

“The shockwaves of annexation will last for decades, and will be extremely damaging to Israel, as well as to the Palestinians,” Bachelet warned. “However there is still time to reverse this decision.”
