



PRIME MINISTER
AUBERGE DE CASTILLE, VALLETTA, MALTA

6 November 2020

Excellency,

On the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, I wish to convey our unwavering desire to see an end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The lack of progress on the ground further emphasizes the need to address the longstanding issues which continue to sow additional instability in this deep-rooted conflict.

The Government of the Republic of Malta fully supports any efforts to instill new life in the stagnating Middle East Peace Process, while reiterating our ardent commitment to the internationally accepted Two-State Solution, addressing the legitimate aspirations of both Israel and Palestine, in line with the relevant UN Security Council resolutions and internationally agreed parameters.

While welcoming the recent normalisation of relations of Israel with the United Arab Emirates and Sudan as well as the establishment of diplomatic relations between Israel and Bahrain, we must not lose track of the Palestinian issue and the need to address the needs and aspirations of the Palestinian People as well as peace and security in the region.

We welcome Israel's commitment to suspend plans to annex areas of the occupied Palestinian territories, as per the Joint Statement between Israel, the United Arab Emirates and the United States of 13 August 2020, and trust that this commitment will be made permanent. This is crucial for the necessary confidence-building measures which are needed in order to establish a basis for the resumption of dialogue between both sides, with a view to advancing the Middle East Peace Process.

The Government of the Republic of Malta also reiterates its longstanding position on settlements and the status of Jerusalem. Settlements outside the 1967 borders remain illegal under international law, while jeopardizing confidence-building efforts and imperil the territorial contiguity of a future Palestinian State as an outcome of a negotiated Two-State solution. Likewise, the future status of Jerusalem must be mutually agreed through meaningful peace negotiations between the two sides.

Allow me to also express our concern the humanitarian situation, particularly in Gaza, which is further exacerbated as a result of the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic this year. We stand firm in our solidarity with Palestine and commend the vital activities and role of UNRWA as the main provider of the much-needed assistance to the Palestinian People.