

Statement of H.E. Mahmoud Abbas, President of the State of Palestine, on the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity of the Palestinian people, 29 November 2020

H.E. Antonio Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations,

H.E. Volkan Bozkir, President of the General Assembly,

H.E. Jerry Matthews Matjila, President of the Security Council,

H.E. Cheikh Niang, Chair of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian people,

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Since its establishment 75 years ago, the United Nations has embodied the pledge to the nations of the world to maintain international peace and security by upholding international law; a pledge to provide dignity, justice and equality to humanity and to support the liberation of peoples from the shackles of colonialism and occupation, as well as the pledge to ensure development and prosperity for the peoples of the world without exception.

It is paradoxical that as this organization was adopting its Charter, and the international community was elaborating the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Geneva Conventions, the Palestinian people were being deprived of the very rights enshrined in these instruments, and to this day continue to live under occupation. However, this has not altered our faith in the rule of international law as the basis for a just resolution of the conflict, and we accepted negotiations, political initiatives and peaceful popular resistance as the path to achieve an end of the Israeli occupation of the land of the State of Palestine and the fulfillment of our people's freedom and independence.

Excellencies, dear friends,

In the darkest hours, and despite the Nakba, the injustice and all the Israeli measures since that could have pushed us to abandon our faith in peaceful dialogue and in the political and legal approach, we have remained steadfast in the defense of our rights, committed to international law and calling for its respect and implementation in Palestine, fully aware that international law is imprescriptible and remains the cornerstone of the multilateral rules-based order that we have to abide by.

We express our gratitude to all States around the world committed to the international consensus on the basis of the two-State solution on 1967 borders, upholding the legal status of the City of Jerusalem and the historic status quo of the Christian and Muslim holy places, including Al-Haram Al-Sharif. We thank those who believe in our just cause and recognize its centrality despite the numerous other crises and conflicts around the world. We express our appreciation to all those who offer political support, in line with the UN Charter and all those who provide humanitarian and development support to our people, our institutions and UNRWA, until a just solution is found to the question of Palestine refugees, in accordance with the UN General Assembly resolution 194.

We express our deep gratitude to the countries that, despite attempts to pressure and coerce them, have reaffirmed their commitment to international law through non-recognition of the unlawful situation created by the Israeli occupation's policies and practices, including settlements activities, oppressive policies and suffocation of the Palestinian economy in the occupied territory of the State of Palestine, including East Jerusalem, through distinction between the territory of the occupying Power and the occupied territory,

through accountability and non-assistance to Israeli settlements, including in relation to related entities and products.

We stress it is time for the international community to undertake the necessary practical measures to translate into reality this international consensus and rejection of annexationist colonial policies, oppression, and blockade that have only intensified during the pandemic instead of ceasing, and the international support to the exercise by the Palestinian people of their right to self-determination, freedom and independence on the territory of the State of Palestine occupied since 1967, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

I reiterate here that our hand remains extended for a just peace based on the internationally recognized terms of reference and UN resolutions, and the two-State solution on 1967 borders. We reiterate in this regard our readiness to resume direct negotiations with Israel. We never rejected negotiations and presented our peace initiative in February 2018 before the Security Council, calling for an international conference, and setting up a multilateral mechanism, such as the Quartet, to support the parties in the negotiations of all final status issues, and to offer guarantees for the implementation of what has been agreed upon, within a defined timeframe, to achieve just and comprehensive peace based on international law and UN resolutions.

I seize this opportunity to reiterate my call to the Secretary-General to undertake, in coordination with the Quartet and the Security Council, preparations, early next year, to convene an international conference, with full authority, involving all concerned parties, so as to launch a genuine and meaningful peace process on the basis of international law, UN resolutions and the internationally recognized terms of reference, leading to an end of the occupation and the achievement by the Palestinian people of their freedom and independence in their State, with East Jerusalem as its capital, on the 1967 borders, and resolving all final status issues. I salute all countries that expressed support to the convening of the international peace conference, including the near unanimity among Security Council members reflected in their statements at the meeting held under the Russian presidency this past October.

Excellencies, dear friends,

The Palestinian people will remain on their land, and will never surrender to oppression and injustice, pursuing their epic and legitimate resistance against this colonial occupation. We will not abandon the unity of our land and people, will continue building our national institutions, uphold the rule of law, and spread a culture of peace and tolerance which is deeply rooted within us. On this International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian people, we extend our thanks too all countries, governments, organizations and peoples that have expressed support to the Palestinian people and their just struggle in the most dire of circumstances and as they are facing the greatest challenges.

The international solidarity movement with Palestine draws its strength from the just nature of our cause, the steadfastness of our people and from the experience of liberation movements against colonialism, Apartheid and oppression throughout history, and the success of their struggles for independence leading to their memberships in these United Nations as free countries. And we draw from this international solidarity more determination and faith that one day soon we will take our natural and legitimate place among the nations of the world, as a free, independent and prosperous country, contributing to the achievement of a more just, developed and peaceful world.