



THE CHEF DE CABINET

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**STATEMENT BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
DELIVERED BY MS. MARIA LUIZA RIBEIRO VIOTTI
INTERNATIONAL DAY OF SOLIDARITY WITH THE
PALESTINIAN PEOPLE**

New York, 29 November 2021

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

I bring you special greetings from the Secretary-General, who has asked me to share with you his message to mark the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People:

On this International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory -- including East Jerusalem -- continues to pose a significant challenge to international peace and security.



Persistent violations of the rights of Palestinians along with the expansion of settlements risk eroding the prospect of a two-State solution.

As the international community strives to re-start Israeli – Palestinian dialogue, I am encouraged by recent engagements between senior Israeli and Palestinian officials.

However, containing the situation is not sufficient.

The overall goal remains two states living side-by-side in peace and security, fulfilling the legitimate national aspirations of both peoples, with borders based on the 1967 lines and Jerusalem as the capital of both states.

I call on the parties to avoid unilateral steps that would undermine the chances for a peaceful resolution of the conflict based on international law and relevant United Nations resolutions.

I further call on the parties to engage constructively to end the closure of Gaza and improve the living conditions of all Palestinians under occupation.



I commend the generous donors who support UNRWA and call for Member States to provide timely and predictable funding to allow the Agency to conduct its vital work.

Together, let us reaffirm our unwavering commitment to the Palestinian people in their quest to achieve their inalienable rights and build a future of peace, justice, security, and dignity for both Palestinians and Israelis.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

Allow me now to add a few words of my own:

The United Nations is committed to supporting Palestinians and Israelis to resolve the conflict.

The overall situation remains volatile as a result of continued unilateral actions, violence, military operations and the threat of escalation.

Settlements in the occupied West Bank continue to expand, including in East Jerusalem and areas crucial for the contiguity of a future Palestinian State.



Ongoing construction undermines the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and sovereignty and increases the risk of violent confrontation.

They are illegal and must stop.

Human rights violations against Palestinians -- including land confiscation, the use of extended administrative detention, the excessive use of force, severe restrictions on freedom of movement and mounting settler violence -- significantly impede the ability of Palestinians to live in security and develop their communities and economy.

The situation in East Jerusalem is also concerning, including recurring tensions in and around the Holy Sites and the persistent threat of evictions of Palestinian inhabitants from their homes.

All parties must act to preserve the status quo in the Holy Sites, halt unilateral actions and avoid inflaming an already precarious situation.

And in Gaza, Egypt and other key partners, as well as the UN Special Coordinator, are working to sustain the fragile ceasefire.



Ultimately, genuine and sustainable progress can only be realized by establishing a legitimate political horizon.

The peace process must be relaunched to achieve the long-sought goal of ending the occupation and realizing a two-State solution, with an independent Palestine living side-by-side with Israel in peace and security, with Jerusalem as the capital of both states.

We urge all parties to take concrete steps to improve the prospects of a negotiated two-State solution and achievement of a just and lasting peace.

An important aspect of bridging divides between Israelis and Palestinians are the efforts of civil society.

Thus, international donors and other Member States have expressed concern about Israel's recent actions against six Palestinian civil society organizations and called on Israel to provide further information.

The UN will continue to engage with the Israeli authorities on this matter to ensure space for activities under international law.



While we are working on restarting negotiations, there is the immediate imperative of addressing Palestinians' economic and humanitarian needs.

The UN Humanitarian Flash Appeal for Gaza has received vital support.

However, more must be done to increase sustainable economic development and employment opportunities.

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In addition, the occupied West Bank needs economic revitalization to advance recovery and reduce poverty – without the additional generosity of donors it will not be feasible to urgently expand assistance to the Palestinian people.

On this International Day of Solidarity, let us reinforce our shared commitment to the Palestinian people in their quest to achieve their inalienable rights and build a future of peace, justice, security, and dignity.
