



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. UNRWA COMMISSIONER-GENERAL LAZZARINI CALLS FOR SUPPORT TO PREVENT COLLAPSE OF THE AGENCY

Following the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) Advisory Commission meeting in Amman, UNRWA issued on 1 December the following [press release](#).

The Advisory Commission (AdCom) on the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) met on 29-30 November in Amman amidst immense concern over the financial shortfall that the Agency is facing. The Commissioner-General of UNRWA, Mr. Philippe Lazzarini, engaged participants on the risks associated with the financial crisis that the Agency faces and its impact on its ability to maintain services to Palestine refugees. He urgently called on the Agency's governing body to help him ensure that basic services to Palestine refugees continue in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, Gaza, Syria, Jordan and Lebanon.

“Imagine the immense feeling of abandonment that can come with the disruption of what is probably the only stable lifeline for Palestine refugees,” said the Commissioner-General. “If UNRWA health services are compromised in the middle of a global pandemic, COVID-19 vaccination rollout will come to a halt. Maternal and childcare will stop. Half a million girls and boys will not know if they can continue learning.”

This meeting of the Advisory Commission comes on the heels of the International Conference on UNRWA that took place last month in Brussels and was chaired by Jordan and Sweden. The conference sought to raise urgent funds to bridge the gap in 2021 and to establish a predictable longer term planning scheme for the Agency.

The UNRWA Commissioner-General warned against the impact of chronic underfunding on the quality of critical services such as health, education and social safety net to the most destitute. “Decades of investment in excellent services now risk being reversed. Together, we should not allow a reversal of one of the best investments of the international community in the region.”

The Commissioner-General reiterated his urgent call for all partners to continue their solidarity with Palestine refugees in a way that is sustainable, predictable and long-term, until there is a political solution that includes them. He and his team particularly focused on empowering young people and help them in their journey towards self-reliance.

The Advisory Commission is tasked with advising and assisting the Commissioner-General of UNRWA in carrying out the Agency's mandate. It meets twice a year, usually in June and November, to discuss issues of importance to UNRWA, striving to reach consensus and provide advice and assistance to the Commissioner-General of UNRWA.

II. GENERAL ASSEMBLY ADOPTS TWO RESOLUTIONS ON THE QUESTIONS OF PALESTINE AND THE MIDDLE EAST

On 1 December, the General Assembly adopted two resolutions under agenda item 39 “Question of Palestine” and agenda item 38 “The Situation in the Middle East” by a recorded vote. The resolutions are on the “Peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine” ([A/RES/76/10](#)) and “Jerusalem” ([A/RES/76/12](#)). The texts of the resolutions and voting results are reproduced below.

76/10. Peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine (148 in favour, 9 against, 144 abstentions)

The General Assembly,

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

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

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

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General submitted pursuant to the request made in its resolution [75/22](#) of 2 December 2020,¹

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

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

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

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

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

Recalling its resolution [2625 \(XXV\)](#) of 24 October 1970, and reiterating the importance of maintaining and strengthening international peace founded upon freedom, equality, justice and respect for fundamental human rights and of developing friendly relations among

¹ [A/76/299-S/2021/749](#).

nations irrespective of their political, economic and social systems or the level of their development,

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

Recalling the advisory opinion rendered on 9 July 2004 by the International Court of Justice on the legal consequences of the construction of a wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory,² and recalling also its resolutions [ES-10/15](#) of 20 July 2004 and [ES-10/17](#) of 15 December 2006,

Reaffirming the illegality of Israeli settlement activities and all other unilateral measures aimed at altering the demographic composition, character and status of the City of Jerusalem and of the Occupied Palestinian Territory as a whole, including the wall and its associated regime, demanding their immediate cessation, and condemning any use of force against Palestinian civilians in violation of international law, notably children,

Condemning the firing of rockets against Israeli civilian areas,

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

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

Stressing the need for measures to be taken to guarantee the safety and protection of the Palestinian civilian population throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, particularly in the Gaza Strip, consistent with the provisions and obligations of international humanitarian law, and taking note of the report of the Secretary-General on the protection of the Palestinian civilian population,³

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

Calling for the release of the bodies that have not yet been returned to their relatives, in line with international humanitarian law and human rights law, in order to ensure dignified closure in accordance with their religious beliefs and traditions,

Recalling the mutual recognition 27 years ago between the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian

² See [A/ES-10/273](#) and [A/ES-10/273/Corr.1](#).

³ [A/ES-10/794](#).

people,⁴ and stressing the urgent need for efforts to ensure full compliance with the agreements concluded between the two sides,

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

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

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

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

Welcoming the ongoing efforts of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians, chaired by Norway, and noting its recent meeting held with virtual and physical participation at the ministerial level in Oslo on 17 November 2021,

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

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

Taking note of the application of Palestine for admission to membership in the United Nations, submitted on 23 September 2011,⁵

⁴ See [A/48/486-S/26560](#), annex.

⁵ [A/66/371-S/2011/592](#), annex I.

Taking note also of its resolution [67/19](#) of 29 November 2012, by which, inter alia, Palestine was accorded non-member observer State status in the United Nations, and taking note further of the follow-up report of the Secretary-General,⁶

Acknowledging the efforts being undertaken by civil society to promote respect for human rights and a peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine, stressing the need for the protection of civil society actors to allow them to conduct their work freely and without fear of attacks and harassment from any party, and rejecting any attack against civil society,

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

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

Recalling the Arab Peace Initiative, adopted by the Council of the League of Arab States at its fourteenth session, held in Beirut on 27 and 28 March 2002,⁷ and stressing its importance in the efforts to achieve a just, lasting and comprehensive peace,

1. *Reiterates its call for* the achievement, without delay, of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East on the basis of the relevant United Nations resolutions, including Security Council resolution [2334 \(2016\)](#), the Madrid terms of reference, including the principle of land for peace, the Arab Peace Initiative and the Quartet road map,⁸ and an end to the Israeli occupation that began in 1967, including of East Jerusalem, and reaffirms in this regard its unwavering support, in accordance with international law, for the two-State solution of Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security within recognized borders, based on the pre-1967 borders;

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

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

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

⁶ [A/67/738](#).

⁷ [A/56/1026-S/2002/932](#), annex II, resolution 14/221.

⁸ [S/2003/529](#), annex.

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

6. *Calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to comply strictly with its obligations under international law and to cease all of its measures that are contrary to international law, including all unilateral actions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, that are aimed at altering the demographic composition, character and status of the Territory and thus at prejudging the final outcome of peace negotiations, and recalls in this regard the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of land by force and therefore the illegality of the annexation of any part of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which constitutes a breach of international law, undermines the viability of the two-State solution and challenges the prospects for the achievement of a peaceful settlement and of just, lasting and comprehensive peace;

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

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

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

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

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

12. *Calls for*:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

*42nd plenary meeting
1 December 2021*

76/12. Jerusalem (129 in favour, 11 against, 31 abstentions)

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution [181 \(II\)](#) of 29 November 1947, in particular its provisions regarding the City of Jerusalem,

Recalling also its resolution [36/120](#) E of 10 December 1981 and all its subsequent relevant resolutions, including resolution [56/31](#) of 3 December 2001, in which it, inter alia, determined that all legislative and administrative measures and actions taken by Israel, the occupying Power, which have altered or purported to alter the character and status of the Holy City of Jerusalem, in particular the so-called “Basic Law” on Jerusalem and the proclamation of Jerusalem as “the capital of Israel”, were null and void and must be rescinded forthwith, as well as its previous resolutions on Jerusalem,

Recalling further the Security Council resolutions relevant to Jerusalem, including resolutions [250 \(1968\)](#) of 27 April 1968, [251 \(1968\)](#) of 2 May 1968, [252 \(1968\)](#) of 21 May 1968, [267 \(1969\)](#) of 3 July 1969, [271 \(1969\)](#) of 15 September 1969, [298 \(1971\)](#) of 25 September 1971, [476 \(1980\)](#) of 30 June 1980, [672 \(1990\)](#) of 12 October 1990, [1073 \(1996\)](#) of 28 September 1996 and [1322 \(2000\)](#) of 7 October 2000,

Recalling, in particular, Security Council resolution [478 \(1980\)](#) of 20 August 1980, in which the Council, inter alia, decided not to recognize the “Basic Law” on Jerusalem, and such other actions by Israel that, as a result of this law, seek to alter the character and status of Jerusalem, and calling upon States to act in accordance with the provisions therein, as well as Council resolution [2334 \(2016\)](#) of 23 December 2016, in which the Council affirmed that it would not recognize any changes to the 4 June 1967 lines, including with regard to Jerusalem, other than those agreed by the parties through negotiations,

Deploring any action taken by any body, governmental or non-governmental, in violation of the above-mentioned resolutions, and reiterating that all measures which have altered the geographic, demographic and historical character and status of the Holy City of Jerusalem are null and void and must be rescinded in compliance with the relevant resolutions of the Security Council,

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,

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

Deploring, in particular, Israeli construction and expansion of settlements in and around East Jerusalem, including measures regarding the so-called E-1 plan, construction of the wall, demolition of Palestinian homes and other civilian infrastructure, expulsions and displacement of numerous Palestinian families, including Bedouin families, restrictions on

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

Palestinian access to and residence in East Jerusalem, including revocation of residency rights, and the further isolation of the city from the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and expressing grave concern over the continued closure of Palestinian institutions in the city as well as acts of provocation and incitement, including by Israeli settlers, including against holy sites,

Expressing its serious concern about the possible displacement of Palestinian families from homes that they have lived in for generations in the Sheikh Jarrah and Silwan neighbourhoods in East Jerusalem, and stressing its opposition to all such unilateral actions, which are illegal under international law and risk exacerbating the already tense and fragile environment,

Expressing its concern about the Israeli excavations undertaken in the Old City of Jerusalem, including in and around religious sites,

Recalling the Security Council press statement on Jerusalem of 17 September 2015, in which the Council called, inter alia, for the exercise of restraint, refraining from provocative actions and rhetoric and upholding unchanged the historic status quo at the Haram al-Sharif – in word and in practice, as well as for full respect for international law, including international human rights law and international humanitarian law, as may be applicable in Jerusalem,

Reaffirming that the international community, through the United Nations, has a legitimate interest in the question of the City of Jerusalem and in the protection of the unique spiritual, religious and cultural dimensions of the city, as foreseen in relevant United Nations resolutions on this matter,

Reaffirming also the importance and holiness of the City of Jerusalem for the three monotheistic religions,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Middle East,²

1. *Reiterates its determination* that any actions taken by Israel, the occupying Power, to impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration on the Holy City of Jerusalem are illegal and therefore null and void and have no validity whatsoever, and calls upon Israel to immediately cease all such illegal and unilateral measures;

2. *Stresses* that a comprehensive, just and lasting solution to the question of the City of Jerusalem should take into account the legitimate concerns of both the Palestinian and Israeli sides, in accordance with international law, and should include internationally guaranteed provisions to ensure the freedom of religion and of conscience of its inhabitants, as well as permanent, free and unhindered access to the holy places by people of all religions and nationalities;

3. *Also stresses* the need for the parties to observe calm and restraint and to refrain from provocative actions, incitement and inflammatory rhetoric, especially in areas of

² [A/76/194](#).

religious and cultural sensitivity, and expresses its grave concern, in particular, about the recent series of serious negative incidents in East Jerusalem;

4. *Calls for* respect for the historic status quo at the holy places of Jerusalem, in word and in practice, and urges all sides to work immediately and cooperatively to defuse tensions and halt all provocations, incitement and violence at the holy sites in the City;

5. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its seventy-eighth session on the implementation of the present resolution.

*42nd plenary meeting
1 December 2021*

III. PALESTINIAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE HOSTS VIRTUAL MEETING: “SUPPORTING HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS IN THE OPT: REALITY, CHALLENGES, AND OBLIGATIONS”

On 7 December, a virtual event entitled “Supporting Human Rights Defenders in the Occupied Palestinian Territory: Reality, Challenges, and Obligations” took place under the auspices of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (CEIRPP). The [Chair’s Summary](#) is reproduced below.

The virtual event “*Supporting Human Rights Defenders in the Occupied Palestinian Territory: Reality, Challenges, and Obligations*” took place on 7 December 2021, under the auspices of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (CEIRPP). The event was chaired by H.E. Ambassador Mohamad Hasrin Aidid, Member of the Committee and Permanent Representative of Malaysia to the United Nations.

The Forum consisted of an opening session – with remarks by H.E. Ambassador Aidid and H.E. Ambassador Riyadh Mansour, Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine – and a panel discussion including Wesam Ahmad, Director of the Centre for Applied International Law at Al-Haq; Saleh Hijazi, Head of the Jerusalem Office for Israel and Palestine and Deputy Regional Director of the Middle East and North Africa at Amnesty International; Michael Sfard, an Israeli human rights lawyer; and Omar Shakir, Israel and Palestine Director at Human Rights Watch.

In his opening remarks, **Amb. Aidid** expressed the Committee’s deep concern about Israel’s decision of 22 October to designate as “terrorist organizations” six Palestinian human rights and humanitarian civil society organizations. He called on Israel to respect the rights to freedom of expression and association and to rescind the decision. Noting that some of those organizations are longstanding partners of the Committee and the United Nations, he said the event aimed to shed light on the implications of Israel’s decision on the work of civil society organizations and human rights defenders in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and to underline the international community’s roles and responsibilities in the context of prevailing challenges and shrinking space of Palestinian human rights defenders. He further affirmed Malaysia’s commitment to the issue and its condemnation of Israel’s actions.

Amb. Mansour stressed the importance of giving those six Palestinian human rights organizations who are working to defend the human rights of the Palestinians the necessary space to do their commendable work and of supporting not only them but all civil society organizations operating in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and in Israel to protect human rights and promote justice and peace.

In the panel discussion, **Mr. Ahmad** noted that the recent Israeli designation of Palestinian civil society organizations as “terrorist organizations” had not come as a surprise, as for years Israel has been trying to undermine their efforts. He also informed that these organizations have recently developed a more proactive approach to advocate for the enforcement of international law by pressuring the international community’s political will to enhance accountability for Israel’s violations and that the extent to which Israel will apply its tactics will depend on the international community’s actions. The best way to respond to attempts to silence the messenger, Mr Ahmad noted, is to amplify and implement the message and that requires serious measures of accountability for Israel’s violations of international law and the human rights of the Palestinian people.

Mr. Hijazi highlighted the term “shrinking space” used to describe Israel’s policies toward Palestinian civil society organizations – policies that restrict and punish those who aim to expose Israel’s systematic human rights violations and advocate for Israel to be held accountable. **Mr. Shakir** spoke of Israel’s “frontal assault on the international human rights movement” in the designation of six Palestinian human rights and humanitarian civil society organizations as terrorist organizations. Further he pointed out that, even in relation to the six civil society organizations, Israel’s ambassadors had not been summoned by other countries for questioning on this decision, and that a reaction was required from the international community commensurate with their words of indignation and condemnation of this attempt by Israel to silence human rights advocates.

Mr. Sfard remarked that silencing organizations that are among those calling for investigations against it has become a strategic Israeli Government aim and stressed that Israel’s action was an obstruction of justice. Under Israeli law, designating a civil society entity as a terrorist organization is equivalent to the “death penalty”, as it invokes criminal powers forcing that body into isolation, and that this measure must be taken seriously because of the very damaging ramifications on these Palestinian civil society organizations, their human rights work and those they defend, including women and children.

In the **Question & Answer** session, participants urged the United Nations to establish a global envoy and a body on the crimes of apartheid and persecution. They further pointed out that words from the international community needed to be immediately translated into action and that there would have to be a clear call for Israel to rescind its designation of those civil society organizations or face consequences.

Amb. Aidid closed the event.

Civil Society Recommendations:

- For the international community, Member States – and particularly members of the European Union – that had been supporting those organizations to take concrete actions against Israel and to continue their support to the six CSOs.

- For the international community to reconcile its political rhetoric and positions with its economic activity and relations with Israel, especially in terms of differentiation.
- For the international community to expose Israel's recent actions against human rights defenders, ensure financial support for them, and hold Israel accountable, stressing that the era of impunity must end and stressing the importance of the ICC investigation in this regard. – For the UN to (re)establish the Centre against Apartheid and prosecute Israel for the crimes of apartheid and persecution.

IV. UN HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS BACHELET BRIEFS PALESTINIAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE

On 7 December, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet, [briefed](#) the United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People on the human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The text is reproduced below.

I am grateful for the opportunity to brief the Committee about the acute concerns of my Office regarding the human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

I begin with the situation in Gaza. In May of this year, we witnessed the most significant escalation in hostilities since 2014, resulting in the killing of 261 Palestinians including 67 children. My Office determined that 130 of those killed were civilians. This escalation was directly linked to protests and violent responses by Israeli security forces – first in East Jerusalem, then spreading to the entire Occupied Palestinian Territory and to Israel.

A Special Session of the Human Rights Council was subsequently convened, in which I and other speakers raised serious concerns over the high level of civilian fatalities and injuries resulting from strikes in densely populated areas – as well as the widespread destruction of civilian infrastructure – noting that such attacks raised serious concerns of compliance with international humanitarian law. At that time the Human Rights Council decided to establish an ongoing, independent, international commission of inquiry, with a mandate to investigate “all alleged violations and abuses of international human rights law leading up and since 13 April 2021”. It was also mandated to investigate “all underlying root causes of recurrent tensions, instability and protraction of conflict, including systematic discrimination and repression based on national, ethnic, racial or religious identity”. My Office has been providing administrative support to the establishment of the Commission, which is expected to present its first report at the Human Rights Council session in June 2022.

In addition to recurring cycles of hostilities, the people of Gaza also continue to suffer from a 15-year land, sea and air blockade, leading to a continuous and deeply damaging deterioration of the human rights and humanitarian situation. Vital infrastructure is crumbling. The decaying sewer system constitutes a threat to health, as I noted in my report to the Human Rights Council's September session on the allocation of water resources in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Severe movement restrictions and obstructions to people's access to essential goods and services, including specialised health-care, generate immense suffering. I have repeatedly emphasised that Palestinians have the right to live safely and freely in their homes, with adequate access to essential services and opportunities, amid respect for their right to life and physical integrity. Instead, in the

lived reality of the occupation and blockade, they are systematically deprived of the fundamental rights and freedoms due to every human being.

Reconstruction and recovery efforts are ongoing in Gaza, and the fragile cessation of hostilities continues to hold. However, although some goods have been gradually allowed to enter Gaza through the Israel-controlled Kerem Shalom crossing, as well as the Egypt-controlled Rafah crossing, humanitarian conditions remain deeply concerning. Further steps are needed by all parties to ensure a sustainable solution that ultimately leads to the return of legitimate Palestinian governmental institutions to the Gaza Strip.

Let me turn to the issue of civic freedoms. On 19 October, Israel designated six Palestinian civil society organizations as “terrorist organizations” under Israel’s Counter-Terrorism Law of 2016. On 7 November, they were also declared unlawful in the occupied territory under the Emergency (Defence) Regulations of 1945. These designations appear to have been based on vague or unsubstantiated reasons, including claims related to legitimate and entirely peaceful human rights activities. All six organisations have worked with the international community, including the UN, for decades, collectively defending human rights and providing humanitarian assistance for thousands of people.

My Office has also received credible reports that the notorious ‘Pegasus’ spyware was installed on the mobile phones of some staff of the six designated organizations.

Claims of links to terrorism are extremely serious, and should be treated as such by all. The basis for such allegations must be of the highest standard, based in provable evidence, and should be made in a transparent manner.

Without adequate substantive evidence, these decisions appear arbitrary, and further erode the civic and humanitarian space in the occupied Palestinian territory. They can therefore legitimately be viewed as an attack on human rights defenders, on the rights to freedoms of association, opinion and expression, and on the right to public participation. This pattern of pressure on civil society groups – notably those who work to document and defend Palestinians’ human rights – has existed for many years. Israel’s continuous policy of restricting the space for legitimate activities of civil society is inconsistent with its obligations under international human rights law. It also threatens to limit further the space for peaceful dialogue.

I also regret that actions by the Palestinian Authority have contributed to restricting the civic space for Palestinians. The rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly are increasingly curtailed. Since June 2021, my Office has documented cases of assaults of journalists and human rights defenders, as well as intimidation; gender-based violence and harassment; excessive use of force; arbitrary arrests and censorship. In Gaza, the de facto authorities have also restricted Palestinians’ rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, with particular targeting of journalists through raids, arrests and harassment.

My concerns continue to deepen about the numerous killings and injuries of Palestinians across the Occupied Palestinian Territory by Israeli forces – as well as, increasingly, by armed settlers. The use of excessive or entirely unwarranted force by Israeli forces appears in many instances to be a measure of first – rather than last – resort, as required under international law.

I am particularly alarmed at recurring incidents of excessive use of force leading to the death and injury of Palestinian children. On 5 November, a 15-year-old Palestinian boy was shot with live ammunition in the abdomen, and killed, by Israeli forces stationed about 50 meters away, during demonstrations in Deir Al-Hatab near the illegal Israeli settlement Elon Moreh. This year, Israeli forces have killed 16 children in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. These and all other killings, as well as all incidents of excessive and unwarranted use of lethal force by Israeli forces, must be thoroughly and effectively investigated, and those responsible held to account. The chronic impunity in the occupied Palestinian territory for violations has been repeatedly raised in reports by the Secretary-General and myself.

Settler-related violence is also at alarmingly high levels, amid continued tensions over settlement expansion and the annual olive harvest season. In the past year, there have been 490 incidents resulting in deaths, injury and/or significant property damage – the highest incidence of settler violence ever recorded by the United Nations. Currently, it represents an average of almost one incident of settler violence each day.

The severity of the violence has also intensified, with four Palestinians killed and 167 injured by settlers, including seven with live ammunition. In three additional cases it was not possible to determine whether the victims were killed by the ISF or by settlers. Despite reports that the Israeli authorities have taken steps, the justice system continues to fail to hold settlers accountable for violence against Palestinians. This lack of accountability for settler violence contributes to the increased number and severity of attacks.

I note also that the approval, planning and construction of Israeli settlements continues unabated across the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem. In the past year, settlers have established 12 new outposts in the West Bank. Most recently, on 24 October, Israeli authorities announced tenders for some 1,350 housing units in settlements. The announcement also included a re-issuance of tenders for some 80 units in the settlement of Givat Hamatos, and would further curtail access and links between East Jerusalem and Bethlehem.

Children continued to suffer disproportionate impact from the recurring cycles of military escalation and associated deprivation. Reports by our UN partners indicate that 75 per cent of all children in Gaza are in need of mental health and psycho-social support, as well as other community- and family-based services.

Currently, 160 Palestinian children are detained by Israel, some of them without charge, under administrative detention regulations, whereas international law provides that arrest, detention or imprisonment of a child shall be used only as a measure of last resort and for the shortest appropriate period of time, and that children must benefit from a child-friendly justice system that minimises the challenges they face in each aspect of a legal proceeding.

It should be clearly understood that under international law, administrative detention is permitted only in exceptional circumstances and must be subject to strict safeguards to prevent arbitrariness. This is not the case in the Occupied Palestinian Territory today.

We also continue to receive disturbing reports of the ill-treatment of children during their arrest, transfer, interrogation and detention by Israeli authorities.

Overall, the human rights situation in the OPT at present can fairly be characterised as disastrous, with severe infringements on the inalienable rights of over 4 million people in numerous domains. This clearly also has damaging impact on prospects for peace and sustainable development for Israel, as well as the surrounding region.

The root causes of the violations I have described need to be addressed, so that the continuing cycles of violence can be stopped. This requires the commitment of the international community to ensure long-overdue accountability for all violations of human rights and humanitarian law in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, by whoever committed. As we have repeatedly said, no matter how long the road has been, “never-ending” cannot be an acceptable description for any situation in which human rights are violated and abused. Only an end to the occupation can bring about lasting peace, and establish the conditions in which the human rights of all can be fully respected.

V. GENERAL ASSEMBLY ADOPTS FIVE RESOLUTIONS ON PALESTINE REFUGEES, SETTLEMENTS, AND HUMAN RIGHTS

On 9 December, under agenda item 54 “United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East”, the General Assembly adopted three resolutions ([A/RES/76/77](#), [A/RES/76/78](#), and [A/RES/76/79](#)) related to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), and two resolutions under agenda item 55 “Israeli practices and settlement activities affecting the rights of the Palestinian People and other Arabs of the occupied territories” ([A/RES/76/80](#) and [A/RES/76/82](#)) on Israeli practices and settlement activities affecting the rights of the Palestinian People and other Arabs of the occupied territories. The adopted texts including voting results are replicated below.

76/77. Assistance to Palestine refugees (164 in favour, 1 against, 10 abstentions)

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution [194 \(III\)](#) of 11 December 1948 and all its subsequent resolutions on the question, including resolution [75/93](#) of 10 December 2020,

Recalling also its resolution [302 \(IV\)](#) of 8 December 1949, by which, inter alia, it established the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East,

Recalling further the relevant resolutions of the Security Council,

Aware of the fact that, for more than seven decades, the Palestine refugees have suffered from the loss of their homes, lands and means of livelihood,

Affirming the imperative of resolving the problem of the Palestine refugees for the achievement of justice and for the achievement of lasting peace in the region,

Acknowledging the essential role that the Agency has played for more than seven decades since its establishment in ameliorating the plight of the Palestine refugees through the provision of education, health, relief and social services and ongoing work in the areas of camp infrastructure, microfinance, protection and emergency assistance,

Acknowledging also the commitment of the Agency to operate in line with the humanitarian principles of neutrality, humanity, independence and impartiality,

Taking note of the report of the Commissioner-General of the Agency covering the period from 1 January to 31 December 2020,¹

Taking note also of the report of the Commissioner-General of 31 May 2021, submitted pursuant to paragraph 57 of the report of the Secretary-General,² and expressing concern regarding the severe financial crisis of the Agency and the negative implications for the continued delivery of core programmes to the Palestine refugees in all fields of operation,

Aware of the growing needs of the Palestine refugees throughout all the fields of operation, namely, Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and the Occupied Palestinian Territory,

Expressing grave concern at the especially difficult situation of the Palestine refugees under occupation, including with regard to their safety, well-being and socioeconomic living conditions,

Expressing grave concern in particular at the grave humanitarian situation and socioeconomic conditions of the Palestine refugees in the Gaza Strip, and underlining the importance of emergency and humanitarian assistance and urgent reconstruction efforts,

Noting the signing of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements on 13 September 1993 by the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization³ and the subsequent implementation agreements,

1. *Notes with regret* that repatriation or compensation of the refugees, as provided for in paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution [194 \(III\)](#), has not yet been effected, and that, therefore, the situation of the Palestine refugees continues to be a matter of grave concern and the Palestine refugees continue to require assistance to meet basic health, education and living needs;

2. *Also notes with regret* that the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine has been unable to find a means of achieving progress in the implementation of paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution [194 \(III\)](#), and reaffirms its request to the Conciliation Commission to continue exerting efforts towards the implementation of that paragraph and to report to the Assembly on the efforts being exerted in this regard as appropriate, but no later than 1 September 2022;

3. *Affirms* the necessity for the continuation of the work of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East and the importance of its unimpeded operation and its provision of services, including emergency assistance, for the

¹ Official Records of the General Assembly, Seventy-sixth Session, Supplement No. 13 ([A/76/13](#)).

² [A/71/849](#).

³ [A/48/486-S/26560](#), annex.

well-being, protection and human development of the Palestine refugees and for the stability of the region, pending the just resolution of the question of the Palestine refugees;

4. *Calls upon* all donors to continue to strengthen their efforts to meet the anticipated needs of the Agency, including with regard to increased expenditures and needs arising from conflicts and instability in the region and the serious socioeconomic and humanitarian situation, particularly in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and those needs mentioned in recent emergency, recovery and reconstruction appeals and plans for the Gaza Strip and in the regional crisis response plans to address the situation of Palestine refugees in the Syrian Arab Republic and those Palestine refugees who have fled to countries in the region;

5. *Commends* the Agency for its provision of vital assistance to the Palestine refugees and its role as a stabilizing factor in the region and the tireless efforts of the staff of the Agency in carrying out its mandate.

*49th plenary meeting
9 December 2021*

76/78. Operations of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (162 in favour, 5 against, 6 abstentions)

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions [194 \(III\)](#) of 11 December 1948, [212 \(III\)](#) of 19 November 1948, [302 \(IV\)](#) of 8 December 1949 and all subsequent related resolutions, including its resolution [75/94](#) of 10 December 2020,

Recalling also the relevant resolutions of the Security Council,

Having considered the report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East covering the period from 1 January to 31 December 2020,¹

Taking note of the letter dated 1 July 2021 from the Chair of the Advisory Commission of the Agency addressed to the Commissioner-General,²

Underlining that, at a time of heightened conflict and instability in the Middle East, the Agency continues to play a vital role in ameliorating the plight of the Palestine refugees through the provision of, inter alia, essential education, health, relief and social services programmes and emergency assistance to a registered population of more than 5.7 million refugees whose situation is extremely precarious, in mitigating the consequences of alarming trends in the Agency's areas of operation, including increasing violence, marginalization and poverty and the impact of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, and in providing a crucial measure of stability in the region,

¹ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Seventy-sixth Session, Supplement No. 13* ([A/76/13](#)).

² *Ibid.*, pp. 7–8.

Recalling its resolutions [2252 \(ES-V\)](#) of 4 July 1967 and [2341 B \(XXII\)](#) of 19 December 1967 and all subsequent related resolutions, recalling also Security Council resolutions [237 \(1967\)](#) of 14 June 1967 and [259 \(1968\)](#) of 27 September 1968, stressing the necessity of an accelerated return of displaced persons, and calling for compliance with the mechanism agreed upon by the parties in article XII of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements of 13 September 1993³ on the return of displaced persons,

Deeply concerned about the extremely critical financial situation of the Agency, caused by the structural underfunding of the Agency, as well as by rising needs and expenditures resulting from the deterioration of the socioeconomic and humanitarian conditions and the conflicts and rising instability in the region and their significant negative impact on the ability of the Agency to deliver essential services to the Palestine refugees, including its emergency, recovery, reconstruction and development programmes in all fields of operation,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General on the operations of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East,⁴ submitted pursuant to resolution [71/93](#) of 6 December 2016, and the request contained therein for broad consultations to explore all ways and means, including through voluntary and assessed contributions, to ensure that the Agency's funding is sufficient, predictable and sustained for the duration of its mandate, and considering the recommendations contained in the report,

Taking note also of the report of 31 May 2021 of the Commissioner-General, submitted pursuant to paragraph 57 of the report of the Secretary-General and in follow-up to the update to the special report of 3 August 2015 of the Commissioner-General,⁵ submitted pursuant to paragraph 21 of General Assembly resolution [302 \(IV\)](#), regarding the severe financial crisis of the Agency and the negative implications for the continued delivery of core Agency programmes to the Palestine refugees in all fields of operation,

Expressing appreciation for the efforts of donors and host countries to respond to the Agency's unprecedented financial crisis, including through generous, additional contributions and, where possible, continued increases in voluntary contributions, while acknowledging the steadfast support of all other donors to the Agency,

Welcoming the contributions made to the Agency's emergency appeals, including for the Gaza Strip and for the Syrian Arab Republic, and calling urgently upon the international community to continue its support, since needs persist and these appeals remain severely underfunded,

Noting that contributions have not been predictable enough or sufficient to meet growing needs and remedy the persistent shortfalls, thereby undermining the Agency's operations and efforts to promote human development and meet Palestine refugees' basic needs, and stressing the need for further efforts to comprehensively address the recurrent funding shortfalls affecting the Agency's operations,

³ [A/48/486-S/26560](#), annex.

⁴ [A/71/849](#).

⁵ [A/70/272](#), annex.

Recognizing the Agency's extensive efforts to rapidly develop innovative and diversified ways to address its financial shortfall and mobilize resources, including through the expansion of the donor base and partnerships with international financial institutions, the private sector and civil society, including through special digital campaigns,

Commending the Agency for the measures taken to address the financial crisis, despite difficult operational circumstances, including through the implementation of the medium-term strategy for 2016–2021 and various internal measures to contain expenditures, reduce operational and administrative costs, maximize the use of resources and reduce the funding shortfalls, and expressing profound concern that, despite such measures, the Agency's programme budget, which is funded primarily by voluntary contributions from Member States and intergovernmental organizations, faces persistent shortfalls that continue to threaten the delivery of the Agency's core programmes of assistance to the Palestine refugees,

Encouraging the Agency to sustain those reform efforts, while also taking all possible measures to protect and improve the quality of access to and the delivery of core programmes of assistance,

Recalling its resolution [65/272](#) of 18 April 2011, in which it requested the Secretary-General to continue to support the institutional strengthening of the Agency,

Stressing the need to support the Agency's capacity to uphold its mandate and to avert the serious humanitarian, political and security risks that would result from any interruption or suspension of its vital work,

Recognizing that the recurring and growing financial shortfalls directly affecting the sustainability of the Agency's operations need to be remedied by examining new funding modalities designed to put the Agency on a stable financial footing to enable it to effectively carry out its core programmes in accordance with its mandate and commensurate with humanitarian needs,

Welcoming the affirmation in the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, adopted by the General Assembly on 19 September 2016,⁶ that, inter alia, the Agency, along with other relevant organizations, requires sufficient funding to be able to carry out its activities effectively and in a predictable manner,

Bearing in mind the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,⁷ including the pledge that no one will be left behind, emphasizing that the Sustainable Development Goals apply to all, including refugees, and commending the efforts of the Agency's programmes to promote 10 of the 17 Goals, as indicated in the report of the Secretary-General,

Welcoming the joint efforts of host countries and donors to mobilize support for the Agency, including through extraordinary ministerial meetings, inter alia, the extraordinary ministerial conference held in Rome on 15 March 2018, the ministerial meeting convened at United Nations Headquarters in New York on 26 September 2019 and the extraordinary

⁶ Resolution [71/1](#).

⁷ Resolution [70/1](#).

virtual ministerial pledging conference convened on 23 June 2020, hosted by Jordan and Sweden, aimed at urgently addressing the Agency's funding shortfall and the need for predictable multi-year funding, expanding donor support for the Agency and reaffirming support for its mandate,

Recalling Articles 100, 104 and 105 of the Charter of the United Nations and the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations,⁸

Recalling also the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel,⁹

Recalling further its resolutions [75/125](#) of 11 December 2020 on the safety and security of humanitarian personnel and protection of United Nations personnel and [75/127](#) of 11 December 2020 on the strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations, calling upon, inter alia, all States to ensure respect for and the protection of all humanitarian personnel and United Nations and associated personnel, to respect the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence for the provision of humanitarian assistance and to respect and ensure respect for the inviolability of United Nations premises,

Affirming the applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,¹⁰ to the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, including East Jerusalem,

Aware of the continuing needs of the Palestine refugees in all fields of operation, namely Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and the Occupied Palestinian Territory,

Gravely concerned about the extremely difficult socioeconomic conditions being faced by the Palestine refugees in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, particularly in the refugee camps in the Gaza Strip, as a result of the recurrent military operations, continuing prolonged Israeli closures, the construction of settlements and the wall, evictions, the demolition of homes and livelihood properties causing forced transfers of civilians, and the severe economic and movement restrictions that in effect amount to a blockade, which have deepened unemployment and poverty rates among the refugees, with potentially lasting, long-term negative effects, while taking note of developments with regard to the situation of access there,

Concerned about plans and measures to interfere with or obstruct the operations of the Agency, including in East Jerusalem, contrary to international law and the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel, and reiterating the need for the Agency to fully implement its mandate in support of Palestine refugees without interference, including in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

⁸ Resolution [22 A \(I\)](#).

⁹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2051, No. 35457.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, vol. 75, No. 973.

Commending the health-care staff of the Agency for their dedication in responding to the profound stresses caused to the health system by the high number of Palestinian civilian casualties in the recent period in the Gaza Strip,

Commending also the important role played by the Agency throughout its areas of operations to help to prevent and contain the spread of COVID-19,

Expressing grave concern in this regard about the lasting impact on the humanitarian and socioeconomic situation of the Palestine refugees in the Gaza Strip, including high rates of food insecurity, poverty, displacement and the depletion of coping capacities,

Recalling the temporary tripartite agreement facilitated by the United Nations in September 2014, and stressing the urgent need for the lifting of all Israeli closures and restrictions on the Gaza Strip,

Recalling also its resolution [ES-10/18](#) of 16 January 2009 and Security Council resolution [1860 \(2009\)](#) of 8 January 2009, as well as the Agreement on Movement and Access of 15 November 2005,

Expressing concern about the continuing classroom shortage, including in the Gaza Strip, and the consequent negative impact on the right to education of refugee children,

Stressing the urgent need for the provision of the necessary humanitarian assistance and funding support for the advancement of reconstruction and recovery in the Gaza Strip, including by ensuring the timely facilitation of construction projects, including extensive shelter repair, and the need for the accelerated implementation of other urgent United Nations-led civilian reconstruction activities, and calling upon Israel to ensure the expedited and unimpeded import of all necessary construction materials into the Gaza Strip and to reduce the burdensome cost of importation of Agency supplies, while taking note of the continued implementation of the tripartite agreement facilitated by the United Nations,

Stressing that the situation in the Gaza Strip is unsustainable and that a durable ceasefire agreement must lead to a fundamental improvement in the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip, including through the sustained and regular opening of crossing points, and must ensure the safety and well-being of civilians on both sides,

Affirming the need to support the Palestinian Government in its assumption of full government responsibilities in both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, in all fields, as well as through its presence at Gaza's crossing points,

Expressing deep concern at the critical situation of Palestine refugees in the Syrian Arab Republic and at the impact of the crisis on the Agency's installations and its ability to deliver its services, and regretting profoundly the loss of life and widespread displacement among refugees and the killing of staff members of the Agency in the crisis since 2012,

Emphasizing the continuing need for assistance to Palestine refugees in the Syrian Arab Republic, as well as those who have fled to neighbouring countries, including in particular Lebanon, where an unprecedented financial crisis is further affecting socioeconomic

conditions among the refugees, and emphasizing the necessity of ensuring open borders for Palestine refugees fleeing the crisis in the Syrian Arab Republic, consistent with the principles of non-discrimination and non-refoulement under international law, and recalling in this regard the statement by the President of the Security Council of 2 October 2013¹¹ and the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants,

Aware of the valuable work done by the Agency in providing protection to the Palestinian people, in particular Palestine refugees, and recalling the need for the protection of all civilians in situations of armed conflict,

Deploring the endangerment of the safety of the Agency's staff and the damage and destruction caused to the facilities and properties of the Agency, and stressing the need to maintain the neutrality and safeguard the inviolability of United Nations premises, installations and equipment at all times,

Deploring also the breaches of the inviolability of United Nations premises, the failure to accord the property and assets of the Organization immunity from any form of interference, incursions or misuse, the failure to protect United Nations personnel, premises and property and any disruption caused to Agency operations by such violations,

Deploring further all attacks affecting United Nations installations, including Agency schools sheltering displaced civilians, and all other breaches of the inviolability of United Nations premises, including during the conflict in the Gaza Strip in July and August 2014, as reported in the summary by the Secretary-General of the report of the Board of Inquiry¹² and by the independent commission of inquiry established pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution [S-21/1](#),¹³ and stressing the imperative of ensuring accountability,

Condemning the killing, injury and detention contrary to international law of Agency staff members,

Condemning also the killing, wounding and detention contrary to international law of refugee children and women,

Affirming the need for accountability and compensation to victims of violations of international law in accordance with international standards by all sides,

Deeply concerned about the continuing imposition of restrictions on the freedom of movement and access of the Agency's staff, vehicles and goods, and the injury, harassment and intimidation of the Agency's staff, which undermine and obstruct the work of the Agency, including its ability to provide essential basic and emergency services,

Recalling the statement of 15 July 1999 and the declarations adopted on 5 December 2001 and on 17 December 2014¹⁴ by the Conference of High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention, including the call upon parties to facilitate the activities of the

¹¹ [S/PRST/2013/15](#); see *Resolutions and Decisions of the Security Council, 1 August 2013–31 July 2014* ([S/INF/69](#)).

¹² [S/2015/286](#), annex.

¹³ See [A/HRC/29/52](#).

¹⁴ [A/69/711-S/2015/1](#), annex.

Agency, to guarantee its protection and to refrain from levying taxes and imposing undue financial burdens,

Aware of the agreement between the Agency and the Government of Israel,

Taking note of the agreement reached on 24 June 1994, embodied in an exchange of letters between the Agency and the Palestine Liberation Organization,¹⁵

1. *Reaffirms* that the effective functioning of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East remains essential in all fields of operation;

2. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Commissioner-General of the Agency, as well as to all the staff of the Agency, for their tireless efforts and valuable work, particularly in the light of the difficult conditions, instability and crises faced during the past year;

3. *Expresses special commendation* to the Agency for the essential role that it has played for more than seven decades since its establishment in providing vital services for the well-being, human development and protection of the Palestine refugees and the amelioration of their plight and for the stability of the region, and affirms the necessity for continuing the work of the Agency and its unimpeded operation and provision of services, pending the just resolution of the question of the Palestine refugees;

4. *Commends* the Agency for its extraordinary efforts, in cooperation with other United Nations agencies on the ground, to provide emergency humanitarian assistance, including shelter, food and medical aid, to refugees and affected civilians during periods of crisis and conflict, and recognizes its exemplary capacity to mobilize in emergency situations while continuously carrying out its core human development programmes;

5. *Endorses* in this regard the efforts of the Commissioner-General of the Agency to continue to provide humanitarian assistance, as far as practicable, on an emergency basis, and as a temporary measure, to persons in the area who are currently displaced and in serious need of continued assistance as a result of the June 1967 and subsequent hostilities, while reaffirming the right of all persons displaced as a result of the June 1967 and subsequent hostilities to return to their homes or former places of residence in the territories occupied by Israel since 1967;

6. *Strongly appeals* to all Governments and to organizations and individuals to contribute generously to the Agency and to the other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations concerned for the above-mentioned purpose;

7. *Expresses its grave concern* about attempts to discredit the Agency despite its proven operational capacity, record of effective provision of humanitarian and development assistance and consistent implementation of its mandate in accordance with relevant resolutions and its regulatory framework, even under the most difficult circumstances;

8. *Reaffirms* the Agency's important role in providing humanitarian and development assistance to Palestine refugees, engaging with international human rights mechanisms, as

¹⁵ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 13 (A/49/13), annex I.

appropriate, and in doing so contributing to the protection and resilience of Palestinian civilians, as outlined in the report of the Secretary-General on the protection of the Palestinian civilian population,¹⁶ and contributing to regional stability;

9. *Expresses its appreciation* for the important support and cooperation provided by the host Governments to the Agency in the discharge of its duties;

10. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Advisory Commission of the Agency, and requests it to continue its efforts and to keep the General Assembly informed of its activities;

11. *Takes note* of the report of the Working Group on the Financing of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East¹⁷ and the efforts to assist in ensuring the financial security of the Agency, and requests the Secretary-General to provide the necessary services and assistance to the Working Group for the conduct of its work;

12. *Expresses its deep appreciation* to all donor countries and organizations that have, inter alia, sustained, accelerated or increased their contributions to the Agency, helping to alleviate its recurrent financial crises, to mitigate imminent risks to its core and emergency programming and to prevent an interruption of essential assistance to Palestine refugees;

13. *Commends* the Agency for its six-year medium-term strategy for 2016–2021 and the Commissioner-General for his continuing efforts to increase the budgetary transparency and efficiency of the Agency, as reflected in the Agency's proposed programme budget for 2022;¹⁸

14. *Also commends* the Agency for sustaining its robust internal reform efforts, despite difficult operational circumstances, and recognizes its implementation of maximum efficiency procedures to contain expenditures, reduce operational and administrative costs, reduce its funding shortfalls and maximize the use of resources;

15. *Calls upon* the Agency to further enhance its internal governance and oversight mechanisms to ensure that the Agency's management is delivering on its mandate with transparency and accountability, while preserving the Agency's agility and operational response capacity;

16. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the operations of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East and the conclusions and recommendations contained therein;

17. *Appeals* to States and organizations for the maintenance of their voluntary contributions to the Agency, as well as an increase in contributions where possible, in particular to the Agency's programme budget, including in the consideration of their allocation of resources for international human rights, peace and stability, development and humanitarian

¹⁶ [A/ES-10/794](#).

¹⁷ [A/76/306](#).

¹⁸ [A/76/6 \(Sect. 26\)](#).

efforts, to support the Agency's mandate and its ability to meet the rising needs of the Palestine refugees and essential associated costs of operations;

18. *Appeals* to States and organizations not currently contributing to the Agency to urgently consider making voluntary contributions in response to the calls of the Secretary-General for expansion of the Agency's donor base, in order to stabilize funding and ensure greater sharing of the financial burden of supporting the Agency's operations, in accordance with the continuing responsibility of the international community as a whole to assist the Palestine refugees;

19. *Calls for* the provision by donors of early annual voluntary contributions, less earmarking, and multi-year funding, in line with the Grand Bargain on humanitarian financing announced at the World Humanitarian Summit, held in Istanbul, Turkey, in May 2016, in order to enhance the Agency's ability to plan and implement its operations with a greater degree of assurance regarding resource flows;

20. *Also calls for* the full and timely funding by donors of the Agency's emergency, recovery and reconstruction programmes as set out in its appeals and response plans;

21. *Requests* the Commissioner-General to continue efforts to maintain and increase traditional donor support and to enhance income from non-traditional donors, including through partnerships with public and private entities;

22. *Encourages* the Agency to explore financing avenues in relation to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals;¹⁹

23. *Urges* States and organizations to actively pursue partnerships with and innovative support for the Agency, including as recommended in paragraphs 47, 48 and 50 of the report of the Secretary-General,²⁰ including through the establishment of endowments, trust funds or revolving fund mechanisms and assistance to the Agency to access humanitarian, development and peace and security trust funds and grants;

24. *Welcomes* pledges by States and organizations to provide diplomatic and technical support to the Agency, including engagement with international and financial development institutions, including the World Bank and the Islamic Development Bank, and, where appropriate, to facilitate support for the establishment of financing mechanisms that can provide assistance to refugees and in fragile contexts, including to meet the needs of the Palestine refugees, and calls for serious follow-up efforts;

25. *Urges* States and organizations to provide contributions to the waqf fund established by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation at the Islamic Development Bank in support of Palestine refugees through enhanced support to the Agency;

26. *Encourages* further progress with regard to the creation of a World Bank multi-donor trust fund;

¹⁹ See resolution [70/1](#).

²⁰ [A/71/849](#).

27. *Requests* the Agency to continue to implement efficiency measures through its medium-term strategy and the development of a five-year proposal for stabilizing the Agency's finances, including specific and time-bound measures, and to continue to improve its cost efficiency and resource mobilization efforts;

28. *Calls upon* the members of the Advisory Commission and the Working Group on the Financing of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East to consider the relevant recommendations in the report of the Secretary-General, including to help the Agency to address resource mobilization challenges and to actively assist the Commissioner-General in the efforts to create sustainable, sufficient and predictable support for the Agency's operations;

29. *Takes note* of the recommendations of the Secretary-General regarding the support provided to the Agency from the regular budget of the United Nations;

30. *Endorses* the efforts of the Commissioner-General to continue to provide humanitarian assistance, as far as is practicable, on an emergency basis and as a temporary measure, to persons in the area who are internally displaced and in serious need of continuing assistance as a result of recent crises in the Agency's fields of operation;

31. *Encourages* the Agency to provide increased assistance, in accordance with its mandate, to affected Palestine refugees in the Syrian Arab Republic as well as to those who have fled to neighbouring countries, as detailed in the Syrian regional crisis response plans, and calls upon donors to urgently ensure sustained support to the Agency in this regard in the light of the continuing grave deterioration of the situation and the growing needs of the refugees;

32. *Welcomes* the progress made thus far by the Agency in rebuilding the Nahr el-Bared refugee camp in northern Lebanon, and calls for donor funding to enable the expeditious completion of its reconstruction, for the continued provision of relief assistance to those displaced following its destruction in 2007 and for the alleviation of their ongoing suffering through the provision of the necessary support and financial assistance until the reconstruction of the camp is complete;

33. *Encourages* the Agency, in close cooperation with other relevant United Nations entities, to continue to make progress in addressing the needs, rights and protection of children, women and persons with disabilities in its operations, including through the provision of necessary psychosocial and humanitarian support, in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child,²¹ the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women²² and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities;²³

34. *Also encourages* the Agency to continue to reduce the vulnerability and improve the self-reliance and resilience of Palestine refugees through its programmes;

²¹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

²² *Ibid.*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.

²³ *Ibid.*, vol. 2515, No. 44910.

35. *Recognizes* the acute protection needs of Palestine refugees across the region, and encourages the Agency's efforts to contribute to a coordinated and sustained response in accordance with international law, including the Agency's new protection strategic framework;

36. *Commends* the Agency for its humanitarian and psychosocial support programmes and other initiatives that provide recreational, cultural and educational activities for children in all fields, including in the Gaza Strip, recognizing their positive contribution, calls for full support for such initiatives by donor and host countries, and encourages the building and strengthening of partnerships to facilitate and enhance the provision of these services;

37. *Calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to comply fully with the provisions of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949;

38. *Also calls upon* Israel to abide by Articles 100, 104 and 105 of the Charter of the United Nations and the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations in order to ensure the safety of the personnel of the Agency, the protection of its institutions and the safeguarding of the security of its facilities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, at all times;

39. *Urges* the Government of Israel to expeditiously reimburse the Agency for all transit charges incurred and other financial losses sustained as a result of the delays and restrictions on movement and access imposed by Israel;

40. *Calls upon* Israel particularly to cease obstructing the movement and access of the staff, vehicles and supplies of the Agency and to cease levying taxes, extra fees and charges, which affect the Agency's operations detrimentally;

41. *Reiterates its call upon* Israel to fully lift the restrictions impeding or delaying the import of necessary construction materials and supplies for the reconstruction and repair of the remaining damaged or destroyed refugee shelters, and for the implementation of suspended and urgently needed civilian infrastructure projects in refugee camps in the Gaza Strip, noting the alarming figures reflected in the United Nations country team reports of 26 August 2016, entitled "Gaza: two years after", and of July 2017, entitled "Gaza ten years later";

42. *Notes with appreciation* the positive contribution of the Agency's microfinance and job creation programmes, encourages efforts to enhance the sustainability and benefits of microfinance services to a greater number of Palestine refugees, especially in view of the high unemployment rates affecting them, and youth in particular, welcomes the Agency's efforts to streamline costs and increase microfinance services through internal reform efforts, and calls upon the Agency, in close cooperation with the relevant agencies, to continue to contribute to the development of the economic and social stability of the Palestine refugees in all fields of operation;

43. *Reiterates its appeals* to all States, the specialized agencies, and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to continue and to augment their contributions to the

programme budget of the Agency, to increase their special allocations for grants and scholarships for higher education to Palestine refugees and to contribute to the establishment of vocational training centres for Palestine refugees, and requests the Agency to act as the recipient and trustee for the special allocations for grants and scholarships;

44. *Calls upon* the Commissioner-General to include, in the annual reporting to the General Assembly, assessments on the progress made to remedy the recurrent funding shortfalls of the Agency and ensure sustained, sufficient and predictable support for the Agency's operations, including through the implementation of the relevant provisions of the present resolution.

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76/79. Palestine refugees' properties and their revenues (159 in favour, 5 against, 8 abstentions)

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions [194 \(III\)](#) of 11 December 1948 and [36/146](#) C of 16 December 1981 and all its subsequent resolutions on the question,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General submitted pursuant to its resolution [75/95](#) of 10 December 2020,¹ as well as that of the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine for the period from 1 September 2020 to 31 August 2021,²

Recalling that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights³ and the principles of international law uphold the principle that no one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his or her property,

Recalling in particular its resolution [394 \(V\)](#) of 14 December 1950, in which it directed the Conciliation Commission, in consultation with the parties concerned, to prescribe measures for the protection of the rights, property and interests of the Palestine refugees,

Noting the completion of the programme of identification and evaluation of Arab property, as announced by the Conciliation Commission in its twenty-second progress report,⁴ and the fact that the Land Office had a schedule of Arab owners and a file of documents defining the location, area and other particulars of Arab property,

Expressing its appreciation for the preservation and modernization of the existing records, including the land records, of the Conciliation Commission, and stressing the importance of such records for a just resolution of the plight of the Palestine refugees in conformity with resolution [194 \(III\)](#),

¹ [A/76/289](#).

² [A/76/282](#).

³ Resolution [217 A \(III\)](#).

⁴ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Nineteenth Session, Annexes, Annex No. 11*, document [A/5700](#).

Recalling that, in the framework of the Middle East peace process, the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Government of Israel agreed, in the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements of 13 September 1993,⁵ to commence negotiations on permanent status issues, including the important issue of the refugees,

1. *Reaffirms* that the Palestine refugees are entitled to their property and to the income derived therefrom, in conformity with the principles of equity and justice;
2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to take all appropriate steps, in consultation with the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine, for the protection of Arab property, assets and property rights in Israel;
3. *Calls once again upon* Israel to render all facilities and assistance to the Secretary-General in the implementation of the present resolution;
4. *Calls upon* all the parties concerned to provide the Secretary-General with any pertinent information in their possession concerning Arab property, assets and property rights in Israel that would assist him in the implementation of the present resolution;
5. *Urges* the Palestinian and Israeli sides, as agreed between them, to deal with the important issue of Palestine refugees' properties and their revenues within the framework of the final status peace negotiations;
6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its seventy-seventh session on the implementation of the present resolution.

*49th plenary meeting
9 December 2021*

76/80. Work of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories (80 in favour, 18 against, 73 abstentions)

The General Assembly,

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

Guided also by international humanitarian law, in particular the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,¹ as well as international standards of human rights, in particular the Universal Declaration of Human Rights² and the International Covenants on Human Rights,³

Recalling its relevant resolutions and the relevant resolutions of the Human Rights Council,

⁵ [A/48/486-S/26560](#), annex.

¹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, No. 973.

² Resolution [217 A \(III\)](#).

³ Resolution [2200 A \(XXI\)](#), annex.

Recalling also the relevant resolutions of the Security Council, including resolution [2334 \(2016\)](#) of 23 December 2016,

Taking into account 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,⁴ and recalling in this regard its resolution [ES-10/15](#) of 20 July 2004,

Recalling the statement of 15 July 1999 and the declarations adopted on 5 December 2001 and on 17 December 2014⁵ by the Conference of High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention, and welcoming initiatives by States parties, both individually and collectively, according to article 1 of the Convention and aimed at ensuring respect for the Convention in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

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

Convinced that occupation itself represents a grave violation of human rights, and deeply concerned by the ensuing persistent violations of international law committed by Israel, including international humanitarian and human rights law, including discriminatory policies against the Palestinian civilian population in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,⁶

Gravely concerned by reports regarding serious human rights violations and grave breaches of international humanitarian law,

Taking note of 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,⁷

Recalling the report of the independent international commission of inquiry established pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution [S-28/1](#),⁸

Stressing the need for ensuring 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,

Having considered the report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories⁹ and the relevant reports of the Secretary-General,¹⁰

⁴ See [A/ES-10/273](#) and [A/ES-10/273/Corr.1](#).

⁵ [A/69/711-S/2015/1](#), annex.

⁶ See [A/63/855-S/2009/250](#) and [A/HRC/12/48](#).

⁷ [A/HRC/22/63](#).

⁸ [A/HRC/40/4](#).

⁹ [A/76/360](#).

¹⁰ [A/76/304](#), [A/76/333](#) and [A/76/336](#).

Recalling the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements of 13 September 1993¹¹ and the subsequent implementation agreements between the Palestinian and Israeli sides,

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

Stressing the urgency of bringing a complete end to the Israeli occupation that began in 1967, and an end to the violation of the human rights of the Palestinian people, and of allowing for the realization of their inalienable human rights, including their right to self-determination and their independent State, leading to a peaceful, just, lasting and comprehensive solution for the question of Palestine,

1. *Commends* the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories for its efforts in performing the tasks assigned to it by the General Assembly, in spite of the obstruction of its mandate;

2. *Reiterates its demand* that Israel, the occupying Power, cooperate, in accordance with its obligations as a State Member of the United Nations, with the Special Committee in implementing its mandate, and regrets the continued lack of cooperation in this regard;

3. *Deplores* those policies and practices of Israel that violate the human rights of the Palestinian people and other Arabs of the occupied territories, as reflected in the report of the Special Committee covering the reporting period;

4. *Expresses grave concern* about the critical situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as a result of unlawful Israeli practices and measures, and especially condemns and calls for the immediate cessation of all illegal Israeli settlement activities and the construction of the wall, the lifting of the blockade of the Gaza Strip, as well as the complete cessation of the excessive and indiscriminate use of force and military operations against the civilian population, settler violence, provocations and incitements regarding the holy places, the destruction and confiscation of properties, the forced displacement of civilians, the detention and imprisonment of thousands of civilians, and all measures of collective punishment against the Palestinian civilian population;

5. *Requests* the Special Committee, pending complete termination of the Israeli occupation, to continue to investigate Israeli policies and practices in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967, especially Israeli violations of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949, and to consult, as appropriate, with the International Committee of the Red Cross, according to its regulations, in order to ensure that the welfare and human rights of the peoples of the occupied territories, including prisoners and detainees, are safeguarded, as well as to submit to the Secretary-General

¹¹ [A/48/486-S/26560](#), annex.

annual reports on the current situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem;

6. *Also requests* the Special Committee to continue to investigate the treatment and status of the thousands of Palestinian and Arab prisoners and detainees, including children, women and elected representatives, in Israeli prisons and detention centres, and expresses grave concern about the harsh conditions of imprisonment and ill-treatment of prisoners and recent hunger strikes, stressing the need for respect for all applicable rules of international law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention,¹² the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules)¹³ and the United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders (the Bangkok Rules);¹⁴

7. *Requests* the Secretary-General:

(a) To provide the Special Committee with all necessary facilities, including those required for its visits to the occupied territories, so that it may investigate the Israeli policies and practices referred to in the present resolution;

(b) To utilize his good offices to facilitate and support the Special Committee in carrying out its mandate;

(c) To continue to task the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights with assisting the Special Committee in the performance of its tasks;

(d) To circulate to Member States the annual reports mentioned in paragraph 5 above and ensure the widest availability of the reports of the Special Committee and of information regarding its activities and findings through the Department of Global Communications of the Secretariat.

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¹² United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, No. 973.

¹³ Resolution [70/175](#), annex.

¹⁴ Resolution [65/229](#), annex.

76/82. Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan (146 in favour, 7 against, 20 abstentions)

The General Assembly,

Guided by the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations and the need to respect the obligations arising from the Charter and other instruments and rules of international law,

Reaffirming the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force,

Recalling its relevant resolutions, including resolution [75/97](#) of 10 December 2020, as well as those resolutions adopted at its tenth emergency special session,

Recalling also the relevant resolutions of the Security Council, including resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#) of 22 November 1967, [446 \(1979\)](#) of 22 March 1979, [465 \(1980\)](#) of 1 March 1980, [476 \(1980\)](#) of 30 June 1980, [478 \(1980\)](#) of 20 August 1980, [497 \(1981\)](#) of 17 December 1981, [904 \(1994\)](#) of 18 March 1994 and [2334 \(2016\)](#) of 23 December 2016, and stressing the need for their implementation,

Recalling further the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,¹

Recalling the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,² the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights³ and the Convention on the Rights of the Child,⁴ and affirming that these human rights instruments must be respected in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Reaffirming the applicability of the Regulations annexed to the Hague Convention IV of 1907, the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,⁵ and relevant provisions of customary law, including those codified in Additional Protocol I⁶ to the four Geneva Conventions,⁷ to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and to other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967, including the occupied Syrian Golan,

Affirming that the transfer by the occupying Power of parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies constitutes a breach of the Fourth Geneva Convention,⁸

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

¹ Resolution [217 A \(III\)](#).

² See resolution [2200 A \(XXI\)](#), annex.

³ Ibid.

⁴ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

⁵ Ibid., vol. 75, No. 973.

⁶ Ibid., vol. 1125, No. 17512.

⁷ Ibid., vol. 75, Nos. 970–973.

⁸ Ibid., No. 973.

Territory,⁹ and recalling also General Assembly resolutions [ES-10/15](#) of 20 July 2004 and [ES-10/17](#) of 15 December 2006,

Noting that the International Court of Justice concluded that “the Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (including East Jerusalem) have been established in breach of international law”,¹⁰

Taking note of the recent reports of the Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967,¹¹ as well as of other relevant recent reports of the Council,

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,¹²

Recalling also the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements of 13 September 1993¹³ and the subsequent implementation agreements between the Palestinian and Israeli sides,

Recalling further the Quartet road map to a permanent two-State solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict,¹⁴ 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,

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

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

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 forced transfer of Palestinian civilians, including Bedouin families, the exploitation of natural resources, the fragmentation of territory and other actions against the Palestinian civilian population and the civilian population in the occupied Syrian Golan that are contrary to international law,

Bearing in mind the extremely detrimental impact of Israeli settlement policies, decisions and activities on the ongoing regional and international efforts to resume and advance the peace process, on the prospects for the achievement of peace in the Middle East in accordance with the two-State solution of Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace

⁹ See [A/ES-10/273](#) and [A/ES-10/273/Corr.1](#).

¹⁰ Ibid., advisory opinion, para. 120.

¹¹ [A/HRC/40/73](#); see also [A/74/507](#).

¹² [A/HRC/22/63](#).

¹³ [A/48/486-S/26560](#), annex.

¹⁴ [S/2003/529](#), annex.

and security within recognized borders, on the basis of the pre-1967 borders, and on the viability and credibility of that solution,

Condemning settlement activities by Israel, the occupying Power, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as violations of international humanitarian law, relevant United Nations resolutions, the agreements reached between the parties and obligations under the Quartet road map and as actions in defiance of the calls by the international community to cease all settlement activities,

Deploring in particular Israel's construction and expansion of settlements in and around occupied East Jerusalem, including its so-called E-1 plan that 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 Jordan Valley, all of which further fragment and undermine the contiguity of the Occupied Palestinian Territory,

Deploring the plans to demolish the Palestinian village of Khan al-Ahmar, in contravention of international law, which would have serious consequences with regard to the displacement of its residents, severely threaten the viability of the two-State solution and undermine the prospect of peace, given the area's sensitive location and importance for preserving the contiguity of the Palestinian territory, and demanding the cessation of such plans,

Condemning the demolition by Israel, in contravention of international law, of Palestinian buildings in the neighbourhood of Wadi al-Hummus in the village of Sur Bahir, south of occupied East Jerusalem,

Taking note of the Quartet report of 1 July 2016,¹⁵ and stressing its recommendations, as well as its relevant statements in which the Quartet members concluded that, inter alia, the continuing policy of settlement construction and expansion, designation of land for exclusive Israeli use and denial of Palestinian development, including the recent high rate of demolitions, are steadily eroding the two-State solution,

Deploring the continuing unlawful construction by Israel of the wall inside the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, and expressing its concern, in particular, about the route of the wall in departure from the Armistice Line of 1949 and in such a way as to include the great majority of the Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and which is causing humanitarian hardship and a serious decline of socioeconomic conditions for the Palestinian people, is fragmenting the territorial contiguity of the Territory and undermining its viability, and could prejudice future negotiations and make the two-State solution physically impossible to implement,

¹⁵ [S/2016/595](#), annex.

Condemning acts of violence and terror against civilians on both sides, and recalling the need to end all acts of violence, including acts of terror, provocation, incitement and destruction,

Condemning also all acts of violence, destruction, harassment, provocation and incitement by Israeli settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, against Palestinian civilians, including children, and their properties, including historic and religious sites, and agricultural lands, as well as acts of terror by several extremist Israeli settlers, and calling for accountability for the illegal actions perpetrated in this regard,

Taking note of the relevant reports of the Secretary-General, including pursuant to Security Council resolution [2334 \(2016\)](#),¹⁶

1. *Reaffirms* that the Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan are illegal and an obstacle to peace and economic and social development;

2. *Demands* that Israel 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 other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967, including the occupied Syrian Golan, and abide scrupulously by the provisions of the Convention, in particular article 49, and comply with all of its obligations under international law and cease immediately all actions causing the alteration of the character, status and demographic composition of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the occupied Syrian Golan;

3. *Reiterates its demand* for the immediate and complete cessation of all Israeli settlement activities in all of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, and calls in this regard for the full implementation of all the relevant resolutions of the Security Council, including, inter alia, resolutions [446 \(1979\)](#), [452 \(1979\)](#) of 20 July 1979, [465 \(1980\)](#), [476 \(1980\)](#), [478 \(1980\)](#), [1515 \(2003\)](#) of 19 November 2003 and [2334 \(2016\)](#);

4. *Stresses* that a complete cessation of all Israeli settlement activities is essential for salvaging the two-State solution on the basis of the pre-1967 borders;

5. *Also stresses* the urgent need to reverse negative trends on the ground, including the building of settlements and the demolition of Palestinian homes, which are imperilling the viability of the two-State solution and entrenching a situation of unequal rights and discrimination, and are preventing the Palestinian people from exercising their fundamental rights;

6. *Recalls* the affirmation by the Security Council, in its resolution [2334 \(2016\)](#), that it will not recognize any changes to the 4 June 1967 lines, including with regard to Jerusalem, other than those agreed by the parties through negotiations;

¹⁶ [A/76/304](#), [A/76/333](#) and [A/76/336](#).

7. *Stresses* that the occupation of a territory is to be a temporary, de facto situation, whereby the occupying Power can neither claim possession nor exert its sovereignty over the territory it occupies, recalls in this regard the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of land by force and therefore the illegality of the annexation of any part of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which constitutes a breach of international law, undermines the viability of the two-State solution and challenges the prospects for a just, lasting and comprehensive peace settlement, and expresses its grave concern at recent statements calling for the annexation by Israel of areas in the Occupied Palestinian Territory;

8. *Condemns* in this regard settlement activities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan and any activities involving the confiscation of land, the disruption of the livelihood of protected persons, the forced transfer of civilians and the annexation of land, whether de facto or through national legislation;

9. *Demands* that Israel, the occupying Power, comply with its legal obligations, as mentioned in the advisory opinion rendered on 9 July 2004 by the International Court of Justice;

10. *Reiterates its call for* the prevention of all acts of violence, destruction, harassment and provocation by Israeli settlers, especially against Palestinian civilians and their properties, including historic and religious sites and including in Occupied East Jerusalem, and their agricultural lands;

11. *Calls for* accountability for the illegal actions perpetrated by Israeli settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, stresses in this regard the need for the implementation of Security Council resolution [904 \(1994\)](#), in which the Council called upon Israel, the occupying Power, to continue to take and implement measures, including the confiscation of arms, aimed at preventing illegal acts of violence by Israeli settlers, and called for measures to be taken to guarantee the safety and protection of the Palestinian civilians in the occupied territory, recalls in this regard the report of the Secretary-General on the protection of the Palestinian civilian population,¹⁷ and welcomes the Secretary-General's observations, including with respect to the expansion of existing protection mechanisms to prevent and deter violations;

12. *Stresses* the responsibility of Israel, the occupying Power, to investigate all acts of settler violence against Palestinian civilians and their properties and to ensure accountability for these acts;

13. *Calls upon* all States and international organizations to continue to actively pursue policies that ensure respect for their obligations under international law with regard to all illegal Israeli practices and measures in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, particularly Israeli settlement activities;

14. *Calls for* measures of accountability, consistent with international law, in the light of continued non-compliance with the demands for a complete and immediate cessation of

¹⁷ [A/ES-10/794](#).

all settlement activities, which are illegal under international law, constitute an obstacle to peace and threaten to make a two-State solution impossible, stressing that compliance with and respect for international humanitarian law and international human rights law is a cornerstone for peace and security in the region;

15. *Recalls*, in this regard, the statement of 15 July 1999 and the declarations adopted on 5 December 2001 and on 17 December 2014¹⁸ by 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, welcomes in this regard initiatives by States parties, both individually and collectively, in accordance with article 1 of the Convention, aimed at ensuring respect for the Convention and accountability, and calls upon all High Contracting Parties to the Convention to continue, individually and collectively, to exert all efforts to ensure respect for its provisions by Israel, the occupying Power, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967;

16. *Also recalls* that the Security Council, in its resolution [2334 \(2016\)](#), called upon all States to distinguish, in their relevant dealings, between the territory of the State of Israel and the territories occupied since 1967;

17. *Calls upon* all States, consistent with their obligations under international law and the relevant resolutions, not to recognize, and not to render aid or assistance in maintaining, the situation created by measures that are illegal under international law, including those aimed at advancing annexation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967;

18. *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 2011,¹⁹ concerning the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights²⁰ 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;

19. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its seventy-seventh session on the implementation of the present resolution;

20. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its seventy-seventh session the item entitled “Israeli practices and settlement activities affecting the rights of the Palestinian people and other Arabs of the occupied territories”.

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¹⁸ [A/69/711-S/2015/1](#), annex.

¹⁹ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 53 (A/66/53)*, chap. III, sect. A.

²⁰ [A/HRC/17/31](#), annex.

VI. GENERAL ASSEMBLY ADOPTS RESOLUTION ON THE ASSISTANCE TO THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

On 10 December, the General Assembly, under Agenda item 75 (b) “Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance”, adopted without a vote a resolution on Assistance to the Palestinian people. The text of the resolution ([A/RES/76/126](#)) is replicated below.

76/126. Assistance to the Palestinian people

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution [75/126](#) of 11 December 2020, as well as its previous resolutions on the question,

Recalling also the signing of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements in Washington, D.C., on 13 September 1993, by the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,¹ and the subsequent implementation agreements concluded by the two sides,

Recalling further all relevant international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, and, in particular, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,² the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,³ the Convention on the Rights of the Child⁴ and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,⁵

Gravely concerned at the difficult living conditions and humanitarian situation affecting the Palestinian people, in particular women and children, throughout the occupied Palestinian territory, particularly in the Gaza Strip where economic recovery and vast infrastructure repair, rehabilitation and development are urgently needed, especially in the aftermath of the conflict of July and August 2014,

Conscious of the urgent need for improvement in the economic and social infrastructure of the occupied territory,

Welcoming, in this context, the development of projects, notably on infrastructure, to revive the Palestinian economy and improve the living conditions of the Palestinian people, stressing the need to create the appropriate conditions to facilitate the implementation of these projects, and noting the contribution of partners in the region and of the international community,

Aware that development is difficult under occupation and is best promoted in circumstances of peace and stability,

¹ [A/48/486-S/26560](#), annex.

² See resolution [2200 A \(XXI\)](#), annex.

³ Ibid.

⁴ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

⁵ Ibid., vol. 1249, No. 20378.

Noting the great economic and social challenges facing the Palestinian people and their leadership,

Emphasizing the importance of the safety and well-being of all people, in particular women and children, in the whole Middle East region, the promotion of which is facilitated, inter alia, in a stable and secure environment,

Deeply concerned about the negative impact, including the health and psychological consequences, of violence on the present and future well-being of children in the region,

Conscious of the urgent necessity for international assistance to the Palestinian people, taking into account the Palestinian priorities, and recalling in this regard the National Early Recovery and Reconstruction Plan for Gaza,

Expressing grave concern about the grave humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip, and underlining the importance of emergency and humanitarian assistance and the need for the advancement of reconstruction in the Gaza Strip,

Welcoming the results of the Conference to Support Middle East Peace, convened in Washington, D.C., on 1 October 1993, the establishment of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians and the work being done by the World Bank as its secretariat and the establishment of the Consultative Group, as well as all follow-up meetings and international mechanisms established to provide assistance to the Palestinian people,

Underlining the importance of the Cairo International Conference on Palestine: Reconstructing Gaza, held on 12 October 2014, and urging the timely and full disbursement of pledges for expediting the provision of humanitarian assistance and the reconstruction process,

Recalling the International Donors' Conference for the Palestinian State, held in Paris on 17 December 2007, the Berlin Conference in Support of Palestinian Civil Security and the Rule of Law, held on 24 June 2008, and the Palestine Investment Conferences, held in Bethlehem from 21 to 23 May 2008 and on 2 and 3 June 2010, and the International Conference in Support of the Palestinian Economy for the Reconstruction of Gaza, held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, on 2 March 2009,

Welcoming the ministerial meetings of the Conference on Cooperation among East Asian Countries for Palestinian Development, convened in Tokyo in February 2013 and in Jakarta in March 2014, as a forum to mobilize political and economic assistance, including through exchanges of expertise and lessons learned, in support of Palestinian development,

Welcoming also the latest meetings of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians, held in Brussels on 27 May 2015, in New York on 25 September 2013, 22 September 2014, 30 September 2015, 19 September 2016, 18 September 2017, 27 September 2018 and 26 September 2019, by videoconference on 2 June 2020 and on 23 February 2021 and in Oslo on 17 November 2021,

Welcoming further the activities of the Joint Liaison Committee, which provides a forum in which economic policy and practical matters related to donor assistance are discussed with the Palestinian Authority,

Welcoming the implementation of the Palestinian National Development Plan 2011–2013 on governance, economy, social development and infrastructure and the adoption of the Palestinian National Development Plan 2014–2016: State-building to Sovereignty, and stressing the need for continued international support for the Palestinian State-building process, as outlined in the summary by the Chair of the meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee held on 22 September 2014,

Stressing the need for the full engagement of the United Nations in the process of building Palestinian institutions and in providing broad assistance to the Palestinian people,

Recognizing, in this regard, the positive contribution of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework 2014–2016, which is aimed, inter alia, at enhancing developmental support and assistance to the Palestinian people and strengthening institutional capacity in line with Palestinian national priorities,

Welcoming steps to ease the restrictions on movement and access in the West Bank, while stressing the need for further steps to be taken in this regard, and recognizing that such steps would improve living conditions and the situation on the ground and could promote further Palestinian economic development,

Welcoming also the tripartite agreement facilitated by the United Nations regarding access to the Gaza Strip, and calling for its full implementation and complementary measures that address the need for a fundamental change in policy that allows for the sustained and regular opening of the border crossings for the movement of persons and goods, including for humanitarian and commercial flows and for the reconstruction and economic recovery of Gaza,

Stressing that the situation in the Gaza Strip is unsustainable and that a durable ceasefire agreement must lead to a fundamental improvement in the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip and ensure the safety and well-being of civilians on both sides,

Stressing also the urgency of reaching a durable solution to the crisis in Gaza through the full implementation of Security Council resolution [1860 \(2009\)](#) of 8 January 2009, including by preventing the illicit trafficking in arms and ammunition and by ensuring the sustained reopening of the crossing points on the basis of existing agreements, including the 2005 Agreement on Movement and Access between the Palestinian Authority and Israel,

Stressing, in this regard, the importance of the effective exercise by the Palestinian Authority of its full government responsibilities in the Gaza Strip in all fields, including through its presence at the Gaza crossing points,

Noting the active participation of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine

Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority in the activities of the Special Envoys of the Quartet,

Reaffirming the necessity of achieving a comprehensive resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict in all its aspects, on the basis of relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#) of 22 November 1967, [338 \(1973\)](#) of 22 October 1973, [1397 \(2002\)](#) of 12 March 2002, [1515 \(2003\)](#) of 19 November 2003, [1850 \(2008\)](#) of 16 December 2008 and [1860 \(2009\)](#), as well as the terms of reference of the Madrid Conference and the principle of land for peace, in order to ensure a political solution, with two States – Israel and an independent, democratic, contiguous, sovereign and viable Palestinian State – living side by side in peace and security and mutual recognition,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General,⁶

Expressing grave concern about continuing violence against civilians,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;
2. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Secretary-General for his rapid response and ongoing efforts regarding assistance to the Palestinian people, including with regard to the emergency humanitarian needs in the Gaza Strip;
3. *Also expresses its appreciation* to the Member States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental, regional and non-governmental organizations that have provided and continue to provide assistance to the Palestinian people;
4. *Stresses* the importance of the work of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority and of the steps taken under the auspices of the Secretary-General to ensure the achievement of a coordinated mechanism for United Nations activities throughout the occupied territories;
5. *Urges* Member States, international financial institutions of the United Nations system, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and regional and interregional organizations to extend, as rapidly and as generously as possible, economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people, in close cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization and through official Palestinian institutions;
6. *Welcomes* the meetings of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians of 25 September 2013, 22 September 2014, 27 May and 30 September 2015, 19 September 2016, 18 September 2017, 27 September 2018, 26 September 2019, 2 June 2020 and 23 February and 17 November 2021, the outcome of the Cairo International Conference on Palestine: Reconstructing Gaza, held on 12 October 2014, and the generous donor response to support the needs of the Palestinian people, and urges the rapid disbursement of donor pledges;

⁶[A/76/78-E/2021/71](#).

7. *Stresses* the importance of following up on the results of the Cairo International Conference on Palestine: Reconstructing Gaza to effectively promote economic recovery and reconstruction in a timely and sustainable manner;

8. *Calls upon* donors that have not yet converted their budget support pledges into disbursements to transfer funds as soon as possible, encourages all donors to increase their direct assistance to the Palestinian Authority in accordance with its government programme in order to enable it to build a viable and prosperous Palestinian State, underlines the need for equitable burden-sharing by donors in this effort, and encourages donors to consider aligning funding cycles with the Palestinian Authority's national budget cycle;

9. *Calls upon* relevant organizations and agencies of the United Nations system to intensify their assistance in response to the urgent needs of the Palestinian people in accordance with priorities set forth by the Palestinian side;

10. *Expresses its appreciation* for the work of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, and recognizes the vital role of the Agency in providing humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people, particularly in the Gaza Strip;

11. *Calls upon* the international community to provide urgently needed assistance and services in an effort to alleviate the difficult humanitarian situation being faced by Palestinian women, children and their families and to help in the reconstruction and development of relevant Palestinian institutions;

12. *Stresses* the role that all funding instruments, including the European Commission's Palestinian-European Mechanism for the Management of Socioeconomic Aid and the World Bank trust fund, have been playing in directly assisting the Palestinian people;

13. *Urges* Member States to open their markets to exports of Palestinian products on the most favourable terms, consistent with appropriate trading rules, and to implement fully existing trade and cooperation agreements;

14. *Calls upon* the international donor community to expedite the delivery of pledged assistance to the Palestinian people to meet their urgent needs;

15. *Stresses*, in this context, the importance of ensuring free humanitarian access to the Palestinian people and the free movement of persons and goods;

16. *Also stresses* the need for the full implementation by both parties of existing agreements, including the Agreement on Movement and Access and the Agreed Principles for the Rafah Crossing, of 15 November 2005, to allow for the freedom of movement of the Palestinian civilian population, as well as for imports and exports, within and into and out of the Gaza Strip;

17. *Further stresses* the need to ensure the safety and security of humanitarian personnel, premises, facilities, equipment, vehicles and supplies, as well as the need to ensure safe and unhindered access by humanitarian personnel and delivery of supplies and

equipment, in order to allow such personnel to efficiently perform their task of assisting affected civilian populations;

18. *Urges* the international donor community, United Nations agencies and organizations and non-governmental organizations to extend to the Palestinian people, as rapidly as possible, emergency economic assistance and humanitarian assistance, particularly in the Gaza Strip, to counter the impact of the current crisis;

19. *Stresses* the need for the continued implementation of the Paris Protocol on Economic Relations of 29 April 1994, fifth annex to the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, signed in Washington, D.C., on 28 September 1995,⁷ including with regard to the full, prompt and regular transfer of Palestinian indirect tax revenues;

20. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its seventy-seventh session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the present resolution, containing:

(a) An assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people;

(b) An assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them;

21. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its seventy-seventh session, under the item entitled “Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance”, the sub-item entitled “Assistance to the Palestinian people”.

*51st plenary meeting
10 December 2021*

⁷ [A/51/889-S/1997/357](#), annex.

VII. UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY ADOPTS RESOLUTION ON THE RIGHT OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE TO SELF-DETERMINATION

On 16 December, under agenda item 73 “Rights of People to Self-Determination”, the General Assembly adopted resolution ([A/RES/76/150](#)). The text including voting results is replicated below.

76/150. The right of the Palestinian people to self-determination (168 in favour, 5 against, 10 abstentions)

The General Assembly,

Aware that the development of friendly relations among nations, based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, is among the purposes and principles of the United Nations, as defined in the Charter,

Recalling, in this regard, its resolution [2625 \(XXV\)](#) of 24 October 1970, entitled “Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations”,

Bearing in mind the International Covenants on Human Rights,¹ the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,² the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples³ and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action adopted at the World Conference on Human Rights on 25 June 1993,⁴

Recalling the Declaration on the Occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations,⁵

Recalling also the United Nations Millennium Declaration,⁶

*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,⁷ and noting in particular the reply of the Court, including on the right of peoples to self-determination, which is a right *erga omnes*,⁸*

Recalling the conclusion of the Court, in its advisory opinion of 9 July 2004, that the construction of the wall by Israel, the occupying Power, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, along with measures previously taken, severely impedes the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination,⁹

Stressing the urgency of achieving without delay an end to the Israeli occupation that began in 1967 and a just, lasting and comprehensive peace settlement between the

¹ Resolution [2200 A \(XXI\)](#), annex.

² Resolution [217 A \(III\)](#).

³ Resolution [1514 \(XV\)](#).

⁴ [A/CONF.157/24 \(Part I\)](#), chap. III.

⁵ Resolution [50/6](#).

⁶ Resolution [552](#).

⁷ See [A/ES-10/273](#) and [A/ES-10/273/Corr.1](#).

⁸ *Ibid.*, advisory opinion, para. 88.

⁹ *Ibid.*, para. 122.

Palestinian and Israeli sides, based on the relevant resolutions of the United Nations, the Madrid terms of reference, including the principle of land for peace, the Arab Peace Initiative¹⁰ and the Quartet road map to a permanent two-State solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict,¹¹

Stressing also the need for respect for and preservation of the territorial unity, contiguity and integrity of all of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and recalling in this regard its resolution [58/292](#) of 6 May 2004,

Recalling its resolution [75/172](#) of 16 December 2020,

Recalling also its resolution [67/19](#) of 29 November 2012,

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

1. *Reaffirms* the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, including the right to their independent State of Palestine;
2. *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 right to self-determination.

*53rd plenary meeting
16 December 2021*

VIII. STATEMENT BY UN SPECIAL COORDINATOR WENNESLAND ALARMED BY VIOLENCE IN THE OCCUPIED WEST BANK

On 17 December, the UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Tor Wennesland, issued a [statement](#) on the situation in the occupied West Bank reproduced below.

I am alarmed by the escalating violence in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, which is claiming the lives of Israelis and Palestinians.

Last night, Palestinian assailants opened fire towards an Israeli vehicle near Nablus, in which one Israeli was killed and two others injured. Since this morning, there have been several retaliatory attacks by Israeli settlers against Palestinians in villages near Nablus.

These tragic incidents, and numerous others in recent weeks, highlight the volatility of the current situation and the urgency for all political, religious and community leaders to speak up and reject violence.

I condemn all acts of violence and terrorism and appeal to all sides to deescalate the situation.

¹⁰ [A/56/1026-/2002/932](#), annex II, resolution 14/221.

¹¹ [S/2003/529](#), annex.

IX. GENERAL ASSEMBLY ADOPTS A RESOLUTION ON PERMANENT SOVEREIGNTY OVER NATURAL RESOURCES

On 17 December, the General Assembly, under agenda item 64, taking note of the report (A/76/94–E/2021/73) prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan, adopted a resolution on the “Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources” ([A/RES/76/225](#)) by a recorded vote. The resolution and the voting results are reproduced below.

76/225. Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources (156 in favour, 7 against, 15 abstentions)

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution [75/236](#) of 21 December 2020, and taking note of Economic and Social Council resolution [2021/4](#) of 14 September 2020,

Recalling also its resolutions [58/292](#) of 6 May 2004 and [59/251](#) of 22 December 2004,

Reaffirming the principle of the permanent sovereignty of peoples under foreign occupation over their natural resources,

Guided by the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, affirming the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, and recalling relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#) of 22 November 1967, [465 \(1980\)](#) of 1 March 1980, [497 \(1981\)](#) of 17 December 1981 and [2334 \(2016\)](#) of 23 December 2016,

Recalling its resolution [2625 \(XXV\)](#) of 24 October 1970,

Bearing in mind its resolution [70/1](#) of 25 September 2015, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”,

Reaffirming the applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,¹² to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967,

Recalling, in this regard, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights¹³ and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,¹⁴ and affirming that these human rights instruments must be respected in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan,

¹² United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, No. 973.

¹³ See resolution [2200 A \(XXI\)](#), annex.

¹⁴ Ibid.

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

Recalling further its resolution [67/19](#) of 29 November 2012,

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

Expressing its concern about the exploitation by Israel, the occupying Power, of the natural resources of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967,

Expressing its grave concern about the extensive destruction by Israel, the occupying Power, of agricultural land and orchards in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including the uprooting of a vast number of fruit-bearing trees and the destruction of farms and greenhouses, and the grave environmental and economic impact in this regard,

Expressing its grave concern also about the widespread destruction caused by Israel, the occupying Power, to vital infrastructure, including water pipelines, sewage networks and electricity networks, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, in particular in the Gaza Strip during the military operations of July and August 2014, which, inter alia, has polluted the environment and which negatively affects the functioning of water and sanitation systems and the water supply and other natural resources of the Palestinian people, and stressing the urgency of the reconstruction and development of water and other vital civilian infrastructure, including the project for the desalination facility for the Gaza Strip,

Expressing its grave concern further about the negative impact on the environment and on reconstruction and development efforts of unexploded ordnance that remains in the Gaza Strip as a result of the conflict in July and August 2014, and commending the efforts of the Mine Action Service of the United Nations for the safe removal of such ordnance,

Expressing its grave concern about the chronic energy shortage in the Gaza Strip and its detrimental impact on the operation of water and sanitation facilities, which threaten to further erode groundwater resources, of which only 5 per cent remains potable,

Recalling the 2009 report by the United Nations Environment Programme regarding the grave environmental situation in the Gaza Strip, and relevant reports by the United Nations country team, including “Gaza in 2020: a liveable place?”, “Gaza: two years after” and “Gaza ten years later”, and stressing the need for follow-up to the recommendations contained therein,

Deploring 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

¹⁵ See [A/ES-10/273](#) and [A/ES-10/273/Corr.1](#).

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,

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,¹⁶

Aware of the detrimental impact on Palestinian natural resources being caused by the unlawful construction of the wall by Israel, the occupying Power, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, and of its grave effect as well on the economic and social conditions of the Palestinian people,

Stressing the urgency of achieving without delay an end to the Israeli occupation that began in 1967 and a just, lasting and comprehensive peace settlement on all tracks, on the basis of Security Council resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#), [338 \(1973\)](#) of 22 October 1973, [425 \(1978\)](#) of 19 March 1978, [1397 \(2002\)](#) of 12 March 2002 and [2334 \(2016\)](#), the principle of land for peace, the Arab Peace Initiative¹⁷ and the Quartet performance-based road map to a permanent two-State solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict,¹⁸ as endorsed by the Council in its resolution [1515 \(2003\)](#) of 19 November 2003 and supported by the Council in its resolution [1850 \(2008\)](#) of 16 December 2008,

Stressing also, in this regard, the need for respect for the obligation upon Israel under the road map to freeze settlement activity, including so-called “natural growth”, and to dismantle all settlement outposts erected since March 2001,

Stressing further the need for respect and preservation of the territorial unity, contiguity and integrity of all of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Recalling that the Security Council, in its resolution [2334 \(2016\)](#), underlined that it would not recognize any changes to the 4 June 1967 lines, including with regard to Jerusalem, other than those agreed by the parties through negotiations,

Recalling also the need to end all acts of violence, including acts of terror, provocation, incitement and destruction,

Taking note of the report prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan, as transmitted by the Secretary-General,¹⁹

¹⁶ [A/HRC/22/63](#).

¹⁷ [A/56/1026-S/2002/932](#), annex II, resolution 14/221.

¹⁸ [S/2003/529](#), annex.

¹⁹ [A/76/94-E/2021/73](#).

1. *Reaffirms* the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and of the population of the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources, including land, water and energy resources;
2. *Demands* that Israel, the occupying Power, cease the exploitation, damage, cause of loss or depletion and endangerment of the natural resources in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan;
3. *Recognizes* the right of the Palestinian people to claim restitution as a result of any exploitation, damage, loss or depletion or endangerment of their natural resources resulting from illegal measures taken by Israel, the occupying Power, and Israeli settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and expresses the hope that this issue will be dealt with within the framework of the final status negotiations between the Palestinian and Israeli sides;
4. *Stresses* that the wall and settlements being constructed by Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, are contrary to international law and are seriously depriving the Palestinian people of their natural resources, and calls in this regard for full compliance with the legal obligations affirmed in the 9 July 2004 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice and in relevant United Nations resolutions, including General Assembly resolution [ES-10/15](#);
5. *Calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to comply strictly with its obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law, and to cease immediately and completely all policies and measures aimed at the alteration of the character and status of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem;
6. *Also calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to bring a halt to 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 populations;
7. *Further calls upon* Israel to cease its destruction of vital infrastructure, including water pipelines, sewage networks and electricity networks, and to cease its demolition and confiscation of Palestinian homes and civilian infrastructure, agricultural lands and water wells, which, inter alia, have a negative impact on the natural resources of the Palestinian people, stresses the urgent need to advance reconstruction and development projects in this regard, including in the Gaza Strip, and calls for support for the necessary efforts in this regard, in line with the commitments made at, inter alia, the Cairo International Conference on Palestine: Reconstructing Gaza, held on 12 October 2014;
8. *Calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to remove all obstacles to the implementation of critical environmental projects, including sewage treatment plants in the Gaza Strip and the reconstruction and development of water infrastructure, including the project for the desalination facility for the Gaza Strip;

9. *Also calls upon* Israel not to impede Palestinian development and export of discovered oil and natural gas reserves;

10. *Calls for* the immediate and safe removal of all unexploded ordnance in the Gaza Strip and for support for the efforts of the Mine Action Service of the United Nations in this regard, and welcomes the extensive efforts exerted by the Mine Action Service to date;

11. *Encourages* all States and international organizations to continue to actively pursue policies to ensure respect for their obligations under international law with regard to all illegal Israeli practices and measures in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, particularly Israeli settlement activities and the exploitation of natural resources;

12. *Underscores*, in this regard, the call by the Security Council, in its resolution [2334 \(2016\)](#), upon all States to distinguish, in their relevant dealings, between the territory of the State of Israel and the territories occupied since 1967;

13. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its seventy-sixth and seventy-seventh sessions, through the Economic and Social Council, on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan, and to the Assembly at its seventy-seventh session on the implementation of the present resolution, including with regard to the cumulative impact of the exploitation, damage and depletion by Israel of natural resources in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, and with regard to the impact of such practices on the promotion of the Sustainable Development Goals,²⁰ and decides to include in the provisional agenda of its seventy-seventh session the item entitled “Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources”.

*54th plenary meeting
17 December 2021*

²⁰ See resolution [70/1](#).

X. UN SECRETARY-GENERAL GUTERRES TO PALESTINE REFUGEES IN LEBANON: DO NOT LOSE HOPE

On 20 December, United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres visited the Lydda Co-Ed School of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) in Tripoli, Lebanon. The UNRWA [press release](#) is reproduced below.

Yesterday, United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres visited the Lydda Co-Ed School of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) in Tripoli, accompanied by a senior UN delegation. The Lebanese Minister of the Interior, Bassam Mawlawi, was also present.

Mr. Guterres met with student members of the School Parliament, as well as parents and a teacher, hearing about their concerns and aspirations. Among the students, Wasim spoke about the increase in transport costs due to the economic crisis which prevent parents from sending their children to school. Jamal, a Palestinian Refugee from Syria, described how his father does not have money for rent, clothes and food, and how he often goes to sleep on an empty stomach. Students are eager to learn and have a future: Zeina spoke about the importance of education and her dream to get a scholarship to study astronomy abroad.

The Secretary-General also heard from Ahmad, a parent, about the general living conditions of Palestine refugees in Lebanon, the restrictions of their rights and the need to ensure that UNRWA is able to maintain its vital services, especially education and health. He heard from teacher Iman how students are often distracted in class because of their difficult living conditions at home and how they lack modern equipment, such as computer labs.

Mr. Guterres expressed his solidarity with the Palestine refugees. He apologized for the inability to secure all the necessary support for students and parents and stressed his determination to raise the necessary funding for UNRWA to continue providing its services. He also promised to continue to work for a peace process which would result in a two-state solution and which would end the plight of the refugees. Mr. Guterres' concluding message to everyone was on the importance of not losing hope.

XI. BRIEFING BY SPECIAL COORDINATOR WENNESLAND TO SECURITY COUNCIL ON MIDEAST SITUATION, IMPLEMENTATION OF RES. 2334

On 21 December, the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Tor Wennesland, briefed the Security Council on the Situation in the Middle East including the Palestinian question, focusing on the twentieth report of the Secretary General ([S/2021/1047](#)) on the implementation of Security Council Resolution 2334 (2016). The Secretary-General's report covers the period between 29 September and 9 December 2021. The text of the briefing ([S/PV.8940](#)) is replicated below.

I am devoting my regular briefing on the situation in the Middle East to the twentieth report on the implementation of resolution 2334 (2016). The written report of the SecretaryGeneral that

members of the Security Council have already received covers the period from 29 September and 9 December.

Before turning to developments that have taken place since the submission of the written report, I would like to express my continued concern about recent developments in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, in particular the deteriorating security situation. Clashes, attacks, military operations, including in Area A, and high levels of settler-related violence have continued, alongside calls by Palestinian militant factions for increased confrontations with Israel.

Continued unilateral steps, including Israeli settlement advancement, evictions and demolitions, and the severe fiscal and economic crisis in the occupied Palestinian territory are further exacerbating the situation and undermining the institutional stability of the Palestinian Authority. If left unchecked, I am concerned that not only may the situation in the West Bank further deteriorate, but the dynamics could also impact the security situation in Gaza and undermine the cessation of hostilities in place since 21 May. It is crucial that all parties take immediate steps to lower tensions and restore calm.

Violent incidents have, unfortunately, continued throughout the occupied territories. Overall, since 29 September, 12 Palestinians, including one woman and four children, have been killed by Israeli security forces during demonstrations, clashes, search-and-arrest operations, attacks and alleged attacks against Israelis and other incidents across the occupied Palestinian territory; and 306 Palestinians, including three women and 53 children, have been injured, including 16 by live ammunition. Thirty-nine Palestinians, including four children, have been injured by Israeli settlers or other civilians, who have also perpetrated 121 attacks, resulting in damage to Palestinian property.

In all, two Israeli civilians have been killed and 39 Israelis — 30 civilians, including two women and two children, and nine members of the Israeli security forces — injured by Palestinians in clashes and shooting, stabbing and ramming attacks, as well as incidents involving the throwing of stones and Molotov cocktails and other incidents. Palestinians have perpetrated 105 attacks resulting in damage to Israeli property.

On 10 December, a Palestinian man was shot and killed by Israel security forces during clashes near the town of Beita in the West Bank, near Nablus. The man was the ninth Palestinian fatality in the same area this year since protests began in May in the vicinity of Beita against the neighbouring Evyatar settlement outpost, which was partly evacuated in July. On 12 December, clashes erupted in Aida camp, Bethlehem, between Hamas supporters and Palestinian security forces during a celebration for a released prisoner. Two Palestinian officers were injured by an explosive device.

On 13 December, Israeli security forces conducted a search-and-arrest operation in Nablus, which was followed by an exchange of fire with armed Palestinians. One Palestinian man was killed and two others were injured in unclear circumstances. Later that day, a general strike took place in Nablus to protest the incident. Clashes between Palestinian security forces and other armed Palestinians were reported during the man's funeral.

On 16 December, a 25-year-old Israeli was shot and killed by armed Palestinians near the evacuated settlement of Homesh, near Nablus. Two other Israelis were injured in the attack. On

17 December, settlers entered the village of Qaryut, south of Nablus, severely beat a Palestinian man and damaged property. On 19 December, Israeli security forces arrested six Palestinians in the village of Silat Al-Harithiya, near Jenin, on suspicion of involvement in the shooting.

On 19 December, hundreds of settlers attempted to enter the Homesh outpost and set up illegal structures, breaking through Israeli security forces barricades and using violence against Israeli soldiers, including hitting one soldier with a vehicle. On 20 December, Israeli Minister of Defence Benny Gantz condemned violent acts by Israelis against Palestinians and Israeli security forces, saying that such attacks would not be accepted or tolerated.

Some affirmative steps have been taken since the submission of the written report. On 11 December, the Palestinian Central Elections Commission conducted the first round of local council elections in several hundred small communities in the West Bank, with more than 66 per cent of eligible voters participating. More than 25 per cent of the candidates were women, with nine heading electoral lists. Their representation in the local councils will amount to some 22 per cent, close to the minimum legal requirement for at least two seats per council.

On 12 December, the Central Elections Commission announced the start of preparations for a second round of municipal elections in the larger West Bank communities and all local councils in Gaza, set for 26 March. On 14 December, United States and Palestinian officials met virtually to renew the United States-Palestinian economic dialogue — the first such meeting in five years.

I will now turn to several observations concerning, the implementation of the provision of resolution 2334 (2016) during the reporting period. Israeli settlement expansion in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, remains deeply concerning, particularly the consideration of advancements of plans in highly controversial areas crucial to the continuity of a future Palestinian State, including in E-1, Atarot and Givat Hamatos.

Israeli settlements constitute a flagrant violation of the relevant United Nations resolutions and international law, and I call on the Government of Israel to cease the advancement of all settlement activities immediately. I remain concerned about the potential eviction of a number of families from homes that they have lived in for decades in the Sheikh Jarrah and Silwan neighbourhoods of occupied East Jerusalem. I call on Israeli authorities to end the displacement and eviction of Palestinians and approve plans that would enable those communities to build legally and address their development needs.

In this context, I welcome the advancement of plans for several thousand housing units for Palestinians in the occupied East Jerusalem neighbourhood of Al-Isawiya and Area C. I urge Israel to continue regularly advancing such plans and to issue building permits for all previously approved plans for Palestinians in area C and East Jerusalem.

The continuing violence, incitement to violence and attacks against civilians, including acts of terrorism and sexual-related violence exacerbate mistrust and undermine a peaceful resolution to the conflict. There can be no justification for such acts, which must be condemned by all. I reiterate that the violence must stop and all perpetrators must be held accountable.

The deterioration of the security and socioeconomic situations across the occupied Palestinian territory is deeply worrying and the situation must be reversed. It is essential that the parties avoid

unilateral steps that change the realities on the ground, reducing flashpoints and violence across the occupied Palestinian territory. Concerted efforts by all parties — more than we have seen to date — are required to maintain calm, strengthen Palestinian institutions and restore hope. Furthermore, steps by all parties are urgently needed to shore up the economic and institutional stability of the Palestinian Authority, including through the implementation of needed reforms.

I note that the situation in Gaza also remains fragile. While constructive measures initiated during the reporting period are encouraging, further steps are required to solidify the cessation of hostilities and meet the needs of the population in the Strip. For any durable stability, movement and access in and out of the Strip must be improved with a view to the full lifting of the closures in line with resolution 1860 (2009).

I also note the high turnout in the 11 December municipal elections, echoing the level of public engagement leading to the campaign period for planned elections earlier this year. I look forward to the second round of local council elections on 26 March and encourage all parties to respond positively to calls by the Central Elections Commission to allow local elections across the occupied Palestinian territory, including in Gaza.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that the rising level of violence we have seen in recent weeks should be a clear warning to us all. If left unaddressed, the festering conflict drivers described in my briefing today and in the latest written report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 2334 (2016) will drag us into yet another destructive and bloody round of violence. We must act now to prevent that from happening.

Strengthening the Palestinian Authority is critical to maintaining stability on the ground. Financial support is essential, but not enough. I urge positive steps from all parties and necessary reforms that increase the Palestinian Authority's ability to deliver for the Palestinian people. At the same time, negative actions that undermine its authority need to stop.

This has been a year of significant shifts in the political context affecting the conflict, resulting in one of the most challenging set of circumstances to face the Palestinian Authority since its establishment. Nevertheless, I look ahead to next year with the determination that we will find opportunities to reverse the negative trajectories and work towards constructive engagement by the parties, with the support of the international community, to restore the political horizon.

The United Nations remains committed to supporting Palestinians and Israelis in resolving the conflict and ending the occupation through the achievement of a two-State solution in line with the relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions, international law and bilateral agreements. We will continue our intensive engagement with the parties, the Middle East Quartet and regional and international partners to advance that goal.