



# General Assembly

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## Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People

### Summary record of the 410th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 22 February 2023, at 10 a.m.

*Temporary Chair:* Mr. Guterres . . . . . (Secretary-General of the United Nations)

*Chair:* Mr. Niang . . . . . (Senegal)

### Contents

Adoption of the agenda

Election of officers

Statement by the Secretary-General

Statement by the Chair

Statement by the Observer for the State of Palestine

Adoption of the programme of work for 2023

Recent and upcoming Committee activities

Statements by members and observers of the Committee

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*The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.*

### **Adoption of the agenda (A/AC.183/2023/L.1)**

1. *The agenda was adopted.*

### **Election of officers**

2. **The Temporary Chair** invited the Committee to consider nominations for the posts of Chair, Vice-Chairs and Rapporteur of the Committee.

3. The following nominations had been received by the secretariat of the Committee: Mr. Niang (Senegal) for election as Chair; and Mr. Pedroso Cuesta (Cuba), Mr. Nasir (Indonesia), Mr. Gertze (Namibia) and Mr. Hermida Castillo (Nicaragua) for election as Vice-Chairs. The Committee was still in consultation about the vacant post of Rapporteur and one post of Vice-Chair.

4. *Mr. Pedroso Cuesta (Cuba), Mr. Nasir (Indonesia), Mr. Gertze (Namibia), Mr. Hermida Castillo (Nicaragua) and Mr. Niang (Senegal) were elected by acclamation.*

5. *Mr. Niang (Senegal) took the Chair.*

### **Statement by the Secretary-General**

6. **The Secretary-General** said that the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory was at its most combustible in years, with deadly cycles of violence steadily accelerating, tensions extremely high and the peace process stalled. Just that morning, an operation by Israeli security forces and the ensuing clash in Nablus had left 10 Palestinians dead and injured more than 80. The situation in Jerusalem/Al-Quds was becoming more fragile amidst provocations and acts of violence in and around the holy sites, radiating instability across the region and beyond.

7. The position of the United Nations was clear: the status of Jerusalem could not be altered by unilateral actions, the city's demographic and historical character must be preserved, and the status quo at its holy sites must be upheld, in line with the special custodianship role of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

8. The year 2022 had been the deadliest year for Palestinians since the tracking of fatalities had begun in 2005. In 2023, violence raged on without reprieve. Across the occupied West Bank and Gaza, hopelessness was spreading, feeding anger and despair, and each new settlement was another roadblock on the path to peace. All settlement activity, which was illegal under international law, must stop. At the same time, incitement to violence was a dead end, and all must reject terrorism, which was unjustifiable. Preventing

further escalation, reducing tensions and restoring calm were the immediate priority.

9. He decried the alarming punitive measures recently taken by Israel against the Palestinian Authority following the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 77/247 seeking an International Court of Justice advisory opinion on the occupation. Such measures risked further destabilizing the Palestinian Authority at a time when a dire fiscal crisis was already undermining its ability to provide services and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) faced the impossible task of meeting soaring needs with stagnating funding. The Agency, a vital lifeline for Palestinians, nevertheless remained remarkably resilient, high-performing and cost-effective. He urged all donors to live up to their commitments to provide UNRWA with predictable and sustained funding to enable it to fulfil its critical mission.

10. Noting the importance of easing the movement of goods and people in and out of the Gaza Strip, he reiterated his call to work towards a full lifting of the debilitating closures, in line with Security Council resolution 1860 (2009).

11. While the ultimate goals of ending the occupation and realizing a two-State solution remained unchanged, current trends on the ground indicated that time did not favour those goals. The longer meaningful political negotiations remained stalled, the farther out of reach those goals would slip. Regional and international partners must therefore work with greater urgency and determination to help Palestinians and Israelis restore a credible political horizon. The outlines of the solution, laid out in United Nations resolutions, international law and bilateral agreements, were clear; what was needed was the political will and courage to make difficult choices for peace. He pledged to continue working to support the goal of a just, comprehensive and lasting peace that ended the occupation, ensured two States – Israel and an independent, viable and sovereign Palestinian State, living side by side within secure and recognized borders, with Jerusalem as the capital of both States – and granted Palestinians and Israelis equal measures of democracy, opportunity and dignity.

### **Statement by the Chair**

12. **The Chair** said that his country, Senegal, remained committed to fulfilling the Committee's mandate of working to realize the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. He expressed appreciation for the remarkable work of the Division for Palestinian Rights and urged it to continue raising public awareness

of the Committee's work, to ensure that the Palestinian cause remained a priority.

13. The year 2022 had been particularly difficult for the Palestinian people, with the highest number of Palestinians killed in any year since the United Nations had begun recording death tolls in 2005. Hundreds of thousands of Palestinian civilians had been displaced by the Israeli occupation, under which illegal policies and practices persisted. The establishment of settlements, destruction of Palestinian property, deliberate demographic change and other such acts constituted a grave violation of the Palestinian people's right to an independent, sovereign State of Palestine. The level of violence throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, remained alarmingly high in 2023, against the backdrop of heightened political tensions and a stalled peace process. The illegal unilateral measures and incitement in the holy sites of Jerusalem and elsewhere must cease in order to preserve the historic status quo of those sites, under the guardianship of Jordan. In that context, the Committee welcomed the unanimous adoption by the Security Council of a presidential statement ([S/PRST/2023/1](#)) on 20 February 2023 condemning illegal settlement policies, and urged the Council to take effective measures to reverse the current trend.

14. The best way to achieve sustainable peace and security was for the parties to renounce all forms of violence and fait accompli policies and to return to the negotiating table, with a view to reaching a comprehensive solution that guaranteed the right of each party to a sovereign State. International engagement in support of the two-State solution must be translated into action. The peace process should be relaunched, with the issues of settlements, the status of Jerusalem, refugees, security and the situation in Gaza squarely on the table. All parties must abstain from unilateral acts that undermined the possibility of relaunching the peace process.

15. The Committee, which was firmly committed to achieving a peaceful solution to the question of Palestine, condemned all forms of violence and incitement to hatred, regardless of the perpetrators or their motives. It called on Israel and the international community to ensure that the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to live in freedom and dignity in an independent and sovereign State, were respected.

16. The Committee urged Member States to support UNRWA, which continued to face financial difficulties, in order to show international solidarity to Palestine

refugees, in particular in the areas of education, health care, humanitarian assistance and development.

#### **Statement by the Observer for the State of Palestine**

17. **Mr. Mansour** (Observer for the State of Palestine) said that that very morning, another massacre against the Palestinian people in Nablus, which was supposedly under the total control of the Palestinian Authority and its security forces, had claimed the lives of 10 civilians, bringing the total number of casualties since the beginning of 2023 to 61. His delegation strongly condemned the atrocities being perpetrated throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, as well as the occupying Israeli forces' failure to give ambulances access quickly enough to save lives. In its recent presidential statement, the Security Council had stressed the need to protect civilians and allow humanitarian organizations unimpeded access to evacuate the dead and injured.

18. The Palestinian people called for an end to the occupation, the implementation of all resolutions relating to protection of Palestinian civilians, the disarmament of settlers and a temporary international presence throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory. All United Nations mechanisms in the Occupied Palestinian Territory – which was under the total control of the Palestinian Authority and which Israeli forces did not have the right to raid and terrorize at will – should be expanded. The Organization must stand by the Palestinian people, and the occupying Power must be held responsible for its violations under the Charter of the United Nations, as would be done for any other entity in violation of its cardinal principles.

19. The Palestinian people and leadership were increasingly frustrated that the Organization set out appropriate provisions in its resolutions but subsequently failed to implement them. The illegal policies of the ruthless, far-right Israeli Government had driven the occupied Palestinian people to the verge of a massive eruption.

20. The international community must take practical measures to protect Palestinian civilians and oppose the legalization of settlement outposts to ensure that the Israeli Government would take international mechanisms seriously instead of continuing to violate international law and inflict further suffering on Palestinians living under Israeli occupation.

#### **Adoption of the programme of work for 2023** ([A/AC.183/2023/L.3](#))

21. **The Chair**, introducing the draft programme of work for 2023 ([A/AC.183/2023/L.3](#)), said that section I

of the document outlined the mandates of the Committee and the Division for Palestinian Rights, as set out in General Assembly resolutions 77/22 and 77/23, respectively. Section II contained an overview of the activities of the Committee and the Division for Palestinian Rights, including the mobilization of the diplomatic community, raising awareness of the question of Palestine, cooperation with intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and United Nations system entities, and the capacity-building programme for staff of the Government of the State of Palestine. Section III dealt with the continuing review and assessment of the programme of work.

22. He took it that the Committee wished to adopt the draft programme of work.

23. *It was so decided.*

### Recent and upcoming Committee activities

24. **The Chair** said that a number of events had been held in New York and overseas in observance of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, held on 29 November 2022. He welcomed the messages of solidarity received from Heads of State and Government. A virtual exhibit titled “Palestine Through its People: Portraits of Palestinians”, dedicated to the memory of the late Shireen Abu Akleh, had been launched. The exhibit had shed light on the struggles of individual Palestinians, both in a personal dimension and as part of the Palestinian people’s ongoing quest for freedom and justice.

25. On 30 November 2022, the General Assembly had adopted resolutions 77/22, 77/23, 77/24 and 77/25 on the question of Palestine, with overwhelming support from Member States. The General Assembly had called on the Division for Palestinian Rights to devote its 2023 activities to the commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Nakbah.

26. On 18 January 2023, a statement had been delivered on behalf of the Committee at the Security Council’s quarterly open debate on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question. In the statement, the Committee had expressed deep dismay at the recent provocations at the holy sites in Jerusalem and increasing concern at the political dynamics and rising tensions. The Committee had also reiterated its preparedness to help garner the support needed to advance the peace process, with a view to ending the Israeli occupation. The Division for Palestinian Rights issued monthly bulletins on action by the United Nations system and intergovernmental organizations relevant to the question of Palestine, weekly information notes on activities carried out by non-governmental

organizations, and annual compilations of United Nations reports and resolutions on the question of Palestine, which were available on the website of the Committee.

27. The Bureau had continued its outreach to Member States to advocate a just and lasting solution to the question of Palestine. In February 2023 it had met with new Security Council members to exchange ideas on how to support efforts to resume peace negotiations between Israel and Palestine. He encouraged new delegates to attend the upcoming annual briefing on the Committee’s mandate and programme of work. The Committee planned to hold a virtual event on the margins of the annual session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

### Statements by members and observers of the Committee

28. **Mr. Mahmoud** (Observer for Egypt) said that Israeli settlement practices and attempts to change the demographic composition in the Occupied Palestinian Territory had recently caused tensions to escalate, further undermining the two-State solution. The alarming developments included attacks on Palestinian civilians, including children, using live ammunition; the increase in settler violence against Palestinians; raids on Palestinian cities and the destruction of Palestinian homes and buildings.

29. Despite the rise in flagrant violations, the Palestinian people remained remarkably resilient. Egypt firmly supported the exercise of that people’s legitimate rights and all steps taken to that end, including the request for an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice under General Assembly resolution 77/247. The Committee had a vital role to play in maintaining the question of Palestine on the agenda of the international community until the Palestinian people was able to exercise its right to self-determination and establish an independent State within the 4 June 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

30. **Mr. Sabbagh** (Observer for the Syrian Arab Republic) said that for more than seven decades, Israel, the occupying Power, had prevented the Palestinian people from exercising their rights and had perpetrated grave violations that amounted to crimes against humanity and war crimes. Israeli aggression against Palestinians as well as Syrians in the occupied Syrian Golan was causing unprecedented levels of regional instability. The Syrian Arab Republic supported all efforts to implement the relevant United Nations resolutions on the question of Palestine, put an end to the occupying Power’s crimes and hold it accountable.

He reaffirmed the Palestinian people's inalienable right to self-determination, the establishment of an independent State on the totality of its territory, with Jerusalem as its capital, full membership in the United Nations and the return of refugees to their homes, in line with General Assembly resolution 194 (III).

31. **Mr. Ladeb** (Tunisia) said that his delegation reiterated its support for the mandate of the Committee and its efforts to enable the Palestinian people to exercise their inalienable rights, in particular the right to self-determination. His delegation supported the end of the Israeli occupation and the establishment of a sovereign State of Palestine within the 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

32. The role of the Committee took on greater importance in the light of the alarming developments in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The Committee's policy of openness in its interactions with Member States, international and regional organizations, civil society organizations and organizations representing women and young people had helped to raise international awareness of the just Palestinian cause and the serious violations of international law committed by the occupying Power, including its discriminatory and repressive practices and its violations of holy sites in Jerusalem. The Committee's ongoing commitment to the capacity-building programme for Palestinians and its efforts to expand the scope of the programme were also noteworthy.

33. Tunisia hailed the timely adoption by the Security Council of a presidential statement (S/PRST/2023/1) in which it had affirmed that the continued Israeli settlement activities were dangerously imperilling the viability of the two-State solution. Efforts to mobilize support for UNRWA must also continue, given the Agency's pivotal role in alleviating the suffering of Palestine refugees and fostering regional stability.

34. **Ms. Özgür** (Türkiye) said that Türkiye condemned the announcement made by the Israeli authorities on 12 February 2023 regarding the legalization of nine outposts located in the West Bank, a decision that was illegal even under Israeli law, and regarding the expansion of illegal settlements. Such unilateral steps further exacerbated tensions in the region and increased civilian casualties in the West Bank, severely undermining progress towards lasting peace. Türkiye called on Israel to cease such acts, which might reignite violence in the region and contravene international law and United Nations parameters, resulting in the perpetuation of tensions and the risk of escalation. Ending the occupation was a prerequisite for any solution.

35. It was regrettable that 2022 had been the deadliest year since the United Nations had begun to record civilian fatalities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory in 2005. The international community must not turn a blind eye to that situation. The presidential statement adopted by the Security Council at its 9263rd meeting (S/PRST/2023/1) was significant in that regard. The continued violations of the sanctity and status of Haram al-Sharif, including the provocations carried out at the Aqsa Mosque, were unacceptable and gave cause for concern about the future. The status of Haram al-Sharif must remain above domestic political considerations. Türkiye stood in solidarity with the Palestinian people and was committed to finding a comprehensive and lasting solution to the conflict.

36. **Mr. Gertze** (Namibia) said that, as was demonstrated by the events that had occurred on the morning of 22 February 2023, the situation of the Palestinian people was dire, as they continued to be victimized and face ever-worsening misery. The Government and people of Namibia stood beside the Palestinian people in their struggle and attached great importance to the work of the Committee. Four out of his Government's five foreign policy priorities, namely, promoting international cooperation, peace and security, creating and maintaining just and mutually beneficial relations, fostering respect for international law and treaty obligations, and encouraging the peaceful settlement of international disputes, attested to its commitment to the Committee's work. The programme of work for 2023 included steps to advance progress on the question of Palestine, and he hoped that those steps would enable the Committee to boldly pursue its mandate, which remained realistic, implementable, and rooted in justice and international law.

37. The Committee had been entrusted with the responsibility to assist the peoples of Israel and Palestine in resolving their differences. However, despite the adoption of resolutions and decisions aimed at enabling the Committee to promote respect for the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, to assist in ending the Israeli occupation and to mobilize international support for the Palestinian people, there was no end in sight to the conflict. The recent brutal attack on Nablus was a reminder of the persistent misery inflicted on the Palestinian people by the occupying Power. While welcoming the Security Council resolutions and presidential statements calling for full respect for international humanitarian law, including the protection of the civilian population, his delegation was cognizant of the urgency, volatility and desperateness of the situation.



38. The year 2023 would be of historic consequence as Governments sought to revitalize cooperation and ensure that no one was left behind; the Palestinian people had already been left behind. His delegation hoped that the people of Israel and Palestine could live together in peace, enabling the region to focus its energies, resources and talents on development and progress. His delegation agreed with the Secretary-General that there was no plan B to the two-State solution, a view also shared by the majority of Member States. A political dialogue addressing the historic injustice of the occupation, based on the pre-1967 borders, international law and the relevant United Nations resolutions, was the only way to ensure peaceful relations between Israel and Palestine. Peace would not be achieved without renewed political processes and engagement.

39. Namibia was fully committed to the cause of the Palestinian people, who must be able to exercise their inalienable rights in an independent State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem as its capital. Palestine must be allowed to take up its rightful place among the global community of nations and become a member of the United Nations and its specialized agencies.

40. **Mr. Nasir** (Indonesia) said that the recent events mentioned by the representative of Palestine highlighted the difficulty of the Committee's work. Indonesia was nevertheless committed to supporting the Committee in its efforts to assist the Palestinian people in establishing a State that was independent and a full Member of the United Nations.

41. Indonesia appreciated the Secretary-General's commitment to ensuring a just and lasting solution to the question of Palestine. The response by the Security Council, at its 9263rd meeting, to the latest development in the Occupied Palestinian Territory was also encouraging, as it showed that the international community was focusing on conflicts outside Europe. The situation nevertheless remained deeply troubling, as 2022 had been the deadliest year on record for the Palestinian people, and 2023 appeared to be on track to break that record. The continuing illegal policies and unilateral measures imposed by the occupying Power would make the lives of Palestinians in the Occupied Palestinian Territory increasingly difficult and dangerous. The measures taken by the occupying Power had made life for the Palestinian people hell on Earth, increasing tensions and violence, and hindering progress towards a two-State solution.

42. The work of the Committee and concrete responses by the international community were therefore more critical than ever. Indonesia welcomed

the adoption of the programme of work, which must strengthen the Committee's engagement and mobilize the international community to promote respect for the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including by supporting the rendering by the International Court of Justice of an advisory opinion concerning the illegal occupation.

43. **Mr. Pérez Ayestarán** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) said that his delegation welcomed the Secretary-General's participation in the current meeting, as it demonstrated the importance the Organization attached to the question of Palestine and the need to revive the peace process in order to put an end to that long-standing tragedy. His delegation agreed with the Secretary-General that time was running short in that regard, and expressed condolences to the delegation of the State of Palestine for the contemptible events that had occurred in Nablus.

44. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela supported the independence, inalienable right to self-determination and legitimate national aspirations of the Palestinian people, and would continue to advance progress towards the establishment of a free, independent and sovereign State of Palestine, within the pre-1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital. The two-State solution was the only way – and the way that was the most just, lasting and broadly supported by the international community – to put an end to the conflict.

45. His delegation supported the call made recently by the Secretary-General for increased efforts in 2023 to make peace a global reality. Steps must be taken to reduce tensions, avoid escalation, and promote an environment conducive to the resumption of political dialogue and of credible, serious and direct negotiations aimed at achieving a just, comprehensive and lasting peace based on the two-State solution, with Israel and Palestine living side by side in peace and security.

46. In the more than 75 years since the partition of Palestine and the commencement of the Nakbah, the heroic people of Palestine had resisted with bravery and dignity the colonial aggression, military brutality and criminal apartheid policies perpetuated with impunity by the occupying Power. His delegation was greatly concerned at the deteriorating situation on the ground, including violations of the status quo at holy sites, while the suffering of the Palestinian people continued as a result of violent attacks by the Israeli occupation forces. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela called on the occupying Power to comply with its obligations under the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and Security Council, put an end to its systematic violations of international law and to its colonial and apartheid

policies, stop perpetrating crimes against humanity and war crimes against the Palestinian people, and refrain from unilateral acts, including those aimed at altering the status of Jerusalem and the demography of the occupied territories as a whole.

47. It was time to adopt measures aimed at providing international protection to the Palestinian civilian population and ensuring that those responsible for the heinous crimes committed were brought to justice at the international level. The acceleration of Israeli aggression must not lead to a point of no return. The international community must therefore put an end to the situation of international impunity that had been facilitated over time by the Government of a permanent member of the Security Council and encouraged the crimes of the occupying Power.

48. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela welcomed the programme of work for 2023, including the reference to support for the rendering of an advisory opinion by the International Court of Justice. His delegation would continue to participate constructively in the Committee's work. As emphasized by the representative of Palestine at the 9263rd meeting of the Security Council, efforts to address the situation must be aimed at promoting freedom, not occupation; coexistence, not supremacy; and peace, not apartheid. It was necessary to preserve the two-State solution in order to achieve a peaceful, comprehensive, just and lasting settlement to the question of Palestine and to enable Palestine to become a full Member of the United Nations.

49. **Mr. Jardali** (Observer for Lebanon) said that the activities organized by the Committee had helped to keep the Palestinian question in the spotlight. The high-level General Assembly event to commemorate the forthcoming seventy-fifth anniversary of the Nakbah would provide an important opportunity to raise awareness of the suffering endured by the Palestinian people for 75 years, suffering that was compounded by the Israeli occupation authorities' repression of that people, erasure of its identity and theft of its land. Nevertheless, the Palestinian people remained determined to recover its land and inalienable rights until the two-State solution was achieved.

50. Despite international efforts, the reality on the ground for Palestinians continued to deteriorate. Israeli military campaigns of aggression in Gaza and the expansionist settlement policy of Israel were coupled with disregard for international law and international humanitarian law. The only way forward in the Middle East was through a just and comprehensive peace based on international legality, the relevant United Nations

resolutions, including Security Council resolution [2334 \(2016\)](#), and the Arab Peace Initiative, an end to the occupation by Israel of all Arab lands, and the establishment of a State of Palestine within the 4 June 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

51. **Ms. Gui Dan** (China) said that the Committee was to be commended for actively implementing its mandate, raising the international community's awareness of the question of Palestine, supporting the exercise of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, and promoting a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement. Since the beginning of 2023, a series of negative events had transpired in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, undermining peace and stability. Violence in the West Bank had intensified, resulting in numerous civilian casualties, including children; the sanctity of and historical status quo at the holy sites in Jerusalem had been repeatedly violated; and escalating Israeli settlement activity had led to widespread condemnation and concern.

52. At its 9263rd meeting, the Security Council had issued its first presidential statement on the question of Palestine in nearly nine years ([S/PRST/2023/1](#)), in which it reaffirmed its commitment to a two-State solution and expressed strong opposition to unilateral measures that impeded peace, including the construction and expansion of settlements. That statement, drafted on the initiative of the United Arab Emirates, was an important step towards managing the crisis and reflected the determination of the vast majority of Security Council members to implement the two-State solution. China appreciated the efforts of the United Arab Emirates in that regard.

53. The main reason for the frequent exacerbation of Israeli-Palestinian tensions was the stagnation of peace talks and the continued postponement of the implementation of the two-State solution. There could be no excuse for delays or inaction, in view of the historical injustices faced by the Palestinian people. The international community must promote the resumption of the peace talks as a matter of urgency and take substantive steps to advance the two-State solution on the basis of the relevant United Nations resolutions. The Security Council must also fulfil its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations with respect to the question of Palestine.

54. China attached great importance to the question of Palestine; its President had frequently put forward proposals for the settlement of the question and had, for the past 10 years, sent messages of support to the United Nations in connection with meetings held in observance of the International Day of Solidarity with the

Palestinian People. China staunchly supported the just cause of the Palestinian people to restore their legitimate national rights and was committed to achieving an early, just and lasting settlement to the question of Palestine.

55. **Mr. Abdelaziz** (Observer for the League of Arab States) said that the question of Palestine remained the defining issue for Arab and Islamic peoples and Governments. The League of Arab States stood with Palestine against attacks on the Aqsa Mosque and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Protection must be provided to the Palestinian people, Israel must be held responsible for violating international resolutions denouncing the arming of settlers, and the current Israeli Government's actions must be addressed.

56. The League of Arab States condemned the recent legalization of nine settlement outposts and the addition of 11,000 settlement units and stressed the need to implement Security Council resolution [2334 \(2016\)](#), its most recent resolution on the question of Palestine. The Council should adopt a new resolution on the issue in order to generate the momentum needed. Moreover, all international summits should include a call in their outcome documents for the implementation of the two-State solution.

57. Noting the divergent treatment of questions related to the occupation of land by force in the cases of Ukraine and Palestine, he underscored that such violations must be addressed on a basis of equality, justice and accountability wherever they were perpetrated. In addition, Member States should provide in a timely manner all available evidence and legal precedents to the International Court of Justice, which had invited submissions of written opinions in response to the questions set forth in General Assembly resolution [77/247](#). The effort to persuade more countries to recognize the State of Palestine and have full United Nations membership granted to it must continue. Lastly, there was a need to establish a political framework by revitalizing the international Quartet and holding the conference that President Mahmoud Abbas had been calling for since 2018, as well as to continue working to establish a State of Palestine within the 1967 borders, with Jerusalem as its capital.

58. **Ms. Zin Zawawi** (Malaysia) said that the Committee's efforts to support the peace process and mobilize assistance for the Palestinian people were invaluable, given the challenges they faced. An end to the protracted suffering of the Palestinian people in their pursuit of their inalienable right to an independent State was long overdue. Malaysia stood in unwavering solidarity with the people of Palestine. The internationally recognized two-State solution, with East Jerusalem as

the capital of Palestine, based on the pre-1967 borders, could be achieved if the international community, especially the members of the Security Council, intensified its efforts to implement the solution. Malaysia remained committed to advancing the work of UNRWA, including through predictable funding, and would continue to support the Committee's work and respect for the Palestinian people's inalienable rights to self-determination, national independence and sovereignty.

59. **Mr. Pieris** (Observer for Sri Lanka) said that the world was suffering from a famine of peace, as evidenced by the discussions of the Committee and of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories, which he chaired. The international community's inability to reach a mutually acceptable solution reflected poorly on it. Sri Lanka would strongly support the Committee's efforts to achieve peace.

60. His delegation prayed that, one day, all peoples and religions could peacefully coexist in the holy land of Palestine, that Palestine refugees could return home, and that, together with their Jewish neighbours, the Palestinian people could restore their history and re-establish their land as a place of many cultures and true equality. Sri Lanka also prayed that, with the assistance of the international community, the Palestinian people would be able to live free from violence and oppression.

61. **Mr. Pedroso Cuesta** (Cuba) said that, given the prevailing uncertainty, he could not, in good conscience, state that the dialogue process provided for in successive General Assembly and Security Council resolutions was within reach. The recognition of the global famine of peace extended in only one direction, rather than in all necessary directions. In that regard, the seventeenth plenary meeting of the General Assembly, to be held on 22 February 2023 as part of its eleventh emergency special session, would be fruitless, as it was inauthentic and reflected that one-sided view of peace, highlighting the double standard applied in the United Nations to the treatment of conflicts and situations affecting international peace and security.

62. Despite the many General Assembly and Security Council resolutions concerning the right of the Palestinian people to establish a State within the pre-1967 borders, the work of the Security Council on the question of Palestine had been hijacked, with the Council now focused solely on one issue, at the expense of other more long-standing issues. If the Council was incapable of fulfilling its Charter mandate to resolve the



question of Palestine, the General Assembly must be urged to take action in that regard. There was no further time to lose.

63. While welcome, the presidential statement adopted by the Security Council at its 9263rd meeting was incommensurate with the atrocious crimes committed against the Palestinian people in recent months, crimes that were being perpetrated in full view of the international community, although they were not being addressed in the press and Western Governments were not speaking out against them. Cuba would continue to support the cause of the Palestinian people and all initiatives that advanced the Committee's objectives.

64. **Mr. Hmoud** (Observer for Jordan) said that the question of Palestine was at a critical juncture. A collective stand must be taken against the most extreme rightist Israeli Government in the country's history in order to uphold the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. The Committee had a crucial role to play in spreading awareness of the question of Palestine, in view of the attempts by Israeli and international media outlets to depict the defenceless Palestinian people as the aggressor and Israel as the victim. The recent, shocking remarks by the permanent representative of Israel justifying the killing by Israel of Palestinian children underscored the pressing need to bring the truth of the issue to light. The forthcoming commemoration of the Nakbah in May 2023 would provide an important opportunity for efforts to that end.

65. He urged the Committee to invite members to send written submissions to the International Court of Justice ahead of the inevitable push by a group of countries on the Court to present arguments against the rights of the Palestinian people. The delegation of the Observer State of Palestine could assist States with a sound strategic legal approach to elucidating pertinent questions in their submissions.

66. With regard to the question of Jerusalem, there was a need to draw international attention to and oppose the attempt by Israel to erase the Islamic, Christian and Arab identity of the city and Judaize its holy sites. To the extent possible, Jordan endeavoured to perform its role of Hashemite custodianship through the Jerusalem Waqf and Al-Aqsa Mosque Affairs Department, organizing movement to and from holy sites amidst constant Israeli raids. The extremist Israeli Government had made it clear that it intended for such incursions to continue until the temporal and spatial division of the Aqsa Mosque was achieved.

67. **Mr. Hermida Castillo** (Nicaragua) said that his delegation recognized the steps taken by the Committee to implement the mandate entrusted to it by the General

Assembly. The information shared by the representatives of Palestine and other delegations regarding the worsening situation of the Palestinian people was troubling and painful. The Committee must increase its efforts to support the fulfilment of the Palestinian people's historic dreams and put an end to the long-standing injustice they faced.

68. Nicaragua would always stand in solidarity with Palestine. Their friendship had spanned many decades, and Nicaragua fondly remembered the first visit of the leader of the Palestine Liberation Organization to Managua following the success of the popular Sandinista revolution. He thanked the Division for Palestinian Rights for helping the Committee to fulfil its mandate to support the Palestinian people's struggle to achieve peace and the two-State solution, with the establishment of the State of Palestine within the pre-1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

69. **Ms. Abdelhady** (Observer for the State of Palestine) said that her delegation was deeply grateful to Committee members for their principled, compassionate and sincere words of support for the Palestinian people, their human rights, accountability, and the equal implementation of international law in order to protect vulnerable civilians who had long suffered owing to the illegal colonial occupation and apartheid regime of Israel, to promote justice for the Palestinian people and to achieve peace. The Palestinian people were, once again, suffering painful, ongoing grief for the loss of lives, including of many children, and the devastation inflicted on the Palestinian people for generations, a situation that had resulted in lost hope. The words of Committee members had therefore come at a critical time and would be conveyed to the people of Palestine. The Committee must continue its efforts to translate words into tangible steps to promote accountability, including in conjunction with the Security Council, the General Assembly, the International Court of Justice, the International Criminal Court, Member States and civil society. Such steps were essential to enabling the international community to uphold its obligations under international law and its moral obligation to respond to the inhumanity faced by the Palestinian people.

70. **Mr. Mansour** (Observer for the State of Palestine) said that, on instructions from the Palestinian leadership, he had met with the President of the Security Council in order to provide her with the latest information regarding the massacre that had occurred on the morning of 22 February 2023 and to transmit to her the request of the Palestinian people and their leadership for the implementation of the resolutions of the Security Council, including its most recent presidential statement

(S/PRST/2023/1), and of General Assembly resolutions 77/25, 77/122, 77/126 and 77/247. He would also participate in an ambassadorial-level meeting with representatives of the Arab States in order to discuss the matter.

71. The international community must continue to exert pressure on the ruthless, extremist Government of Israel, as it was determined to destabilize the entire region. Should it succeed in doing so, it would have only itself to blame for the consequences. The Palestinian people would remain steadfast in their struggle to exercise their inalienable rights. His delegation would share with the Committee a copy of the letter that it planned to send to the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council regarding the crimes committed against the Palestinian people in Nablus.

72. His delegation requested Committee members to submit written statements as part of the proceedings before the International Court of Justice following the request for an advisory opinion. His delegation stood ready to advise them on the subjects on which to focus such submissions, and its legal team was preparing a template for the submissions, which it would share with the Committee. His delegation would also provide lawyers for countries that wished to submit written statements but were unable to cover the associated legal costs. Written statements must be submitted by 25 July 2023 and written comments on the statements of other participants by 22 October 2023. The Court would then indicate when States would be allowed to make oral statements, before delivering the advisory opinion. The participation of Committee members in the proceedings was critical to advancing the cause of the Palestinian people.

73. **Mr. Mabhongo** (South Africa) said that South Africa intended to make a submission as part of the advisory proceedings before the International Court of Justice. His delegation condemned the crimes against humanity perpetrated against the people of Palestine, for whom apartheid had become a daily reality and who remained trapped in a death spiral, a situation that was unacceptable. At its 9263rd meeting, the Security Council had had an opportunity to move away from the lethargic approach that had characterized its consideration of the issue for the past seven decades; the presidential statement issued at that meeting, while significant, was inadequate. South Africa would support the people of Palestine and shared the view of other delegations regarding the important role of the Committee.

*The meeting rose at 12.10 p.m.*