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

Summary record of the 417th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 26 June 2024, at 3 p.m.

Chair: Mr. Niang (Senegal)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

1. *The agenda was adopted.*

Election of officers

2. **The Chair** invited the Committee to consider the nomination of Mr. Soberón Guzmán (Cuba) for the post of Vice-Chair.

3. *Mr. Soberón Guzmán was elected by acclamation.*

4. **Mr. Gala López** (Cuba) said that his delegation would continue to strive, through the Committee and the United Nations, for a genuine peace process in the Middle East. Nothing could justify the genocide currently being committed against the Palestinian people; Cuba rejected the disproportionate use of force by Israel against Palestinian civilians in the Occupied Territory, in particular the Gaza Strip, in flagrant violation of the Charter of the United Nations and international humanitarian law. The indiscriminate bombardment of the people of Gaza and the forced displacement of Palestinians must end, as must the impunity with which the Government of Israel acted. That impunity could be explained only by the Government's confidence that it would not be held accountable. It was unacceptable that the Security Council had not enforced its own resolutions in order to end the crimes of Israel, the occupying Power, crimes in which the United States of America had historically been complicit through the repeated use of its power of veto, thereby undermining peace and security, and stability, in the region.

5. In support of legitimate international efforts to end the genocide, his Government had decided, in accordance with article 63 of the Statute of the International Court of Justice and its obligations as a Contracting Party to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (the Genocide Convention), to intervene as a third State in the proceedings instituted by South Africa against Israel before the Court, by presenting its interpretation of the provisions of the Convention that Israel had breached in the Gaza Strip.

6. Cuba would continue to support a broad, just and lasting solution that would allow the Palestinians to exercise their right to self-determination in an independent sovereign State, with its capital in East Jerusalem, within the 1967 borders, a solution that would also uphold the right of return for refugees. Genocide, apartheid, forced displacement and collective punishment had no place in the modern world and must

not be tolerated by the international community. Justice must prevail, as must respect for the Charter and international law.

Update by the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations

7. **Mr. Mansour** (Observer for the State of Palestine) said that, as a result of collective efforts to end the aggression against the Palestinian people in the Occupied Territory, particularly the atrocities and genocidal war in the Gaza Strip, the Security Council and the General Assembly had adopted a number of resolutions. A permanent ceasefire, however, had not been achieved, and the Palestinian people did not have the humanitarian assistance that they required, particularly in Gaza. The forced transfer of people, which constituted a crime against humanity, was ongoing, and Gazans were unable to return to their homes.

8. The Security Council had recently adopted its resolution [2735 \(2024\)](#), in which it had welcomed a proposal for an initial six-week ceasefire with an exchange of prisoners and hostages, to be followed by a permanent end to hostilities and the full withdrawal of Israel from Gaza. The State of Palestine called upon those Committee members who were also members of the Council to find ways of implementing the resolution immediately, and thanked the delegations of Egypt and Qatar for their help in that regard. The United States was also playing an active role, together with those two countries and Israel, in beginning the implementation of the resolution.

9. The State of Palestine had united the members of the Arab Group, OIC, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, the Group of African States, and the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, as well as European States, behind its objectives of ending the war, ensuring that humanitarian assistance was available in Gaza at the required scale and stopping forced transfer. The Committee must now maintain the pressure to repair Palestinians' lives and rebuild Gaza.

10. As part of the Committee's efforts to encourage countries to recognize the State of Palestine and admit it to full membership of the United Nations, he and the Chair, with representatives of Cuba and Nicaragua, had travelled to a number of Caribbean countries in April and May 2024. As a result, Barbados, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, and the Bahamas had recognized the State of Palestine, which was now recognized by all Caribbean countries. The Committee and some of those countries had requested the Secretary-General in writing to inform all Member States of those countries'

ambassador-level diplomatic relationship with the State of Palestine.

11. Until recently, only one Western European country, Sweden, had recognized the State of Palestine. Following the recognition of Palestine by all Caribbean countries, however, Spain, Ireland, Norway, Slovenia and Armenia had also recognized it. In July 2024, a group of representatives of the Committee would travel to Indonesia to discuss the establishment of mechanisms to promote the recognition of the State of Palestine by Asia-Pacific countries, particularly New Zealand, Australia, Japan and the Republic of Korea. Those countries – of which two, Japan and the Republic of Korea, were members of the Security Council – had voted in favour of General Assembly resolution [ES-10/23](#), in which the Assembly had recommended that the Council reconsider the membership of the State of Palestine in the United Nations. Recognition of the State of Palestine by those countries would bring the total number of countries that recognized Palestine to more than 150, and would make it more difficult for the United States to use its power of veto to deny the Palestinians their right to be admitted as a Member State.

12. If the State of Palestine were granted full membership, the political process of implementing the global consensus on the two-State solution could begin with negotiations on the end of the occupation, the withdrawal of Israel and the independence of the State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem as its capital. Consensus had almost been achieved in the Assembly on the noble objective of peace in the Middle East through the fulfilment of the Palestinian people's inalienable rights.

Briefing on the request for an advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice regarding the legal consequences arising from the policies and practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem

13. **Mr. Reichler** (Counsel to the State of Palestine in the request for an advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice regarding the legal consequences arising from the policies and practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem) said that three major cases concerning the State of Palestine were currently before international tribunals. In the first case, before the International Court of Justice, South Africa had accused Israel, under the Genocide Convention, of committing genocide in Gaza since its invasion in October 2023. Several States, including Mexico, Colombia, Libya, Nicaragua and the State of Palestine, had intervened in that case, and others

would be able to do so until shortly before the oral hearings, which would be held in several years' time. In the second case, the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court had applied for arrest warrants for leaders of Israel and Hamas over accusations of war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in Gaza since October 2023.

14. He was representing the State of Palestine in the third case, namely, the request for an advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice regarding the legal consequences arising from the policies and practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. The scope of that case, which had been initiated in December 2022 by the General Assembly in its resolution [77/247](#), was much broader than the scope of the other two cases, in that it concerned not only Gaza but the entire Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem and the West Bank; its time frame was much longer, extending from at least as far back as June 1967 to the present; and it covered a broader range of actions, including egregious human rights violations such as war crimes and genocide. The case related to the entire occupation, including the illegal presence of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the annexation of that Territory, the establishment of illegal Israeli settlements throughout East Jerusalem and the West Bank, and the implementation of a system of racial discrimination between Israeli Jewish settlers in the Occupied Territory, who enjoyed the full rights of Israeli citizenship, and indigenous Palestinians, who enjoyed no internationally guaranteed human rights. One legal system had been established for the settlers and another for the Palestinians; the situation could only be described as apartheid.

15. The General Assembly, in its resolution [77/247](#), had asked the Court to render an advisory opinion on the legality of the prolonged occupation, settlement and annexation of, and the conduct of Israel in, the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and on the related legal consequences. In 2023, the Court had conducted the written phase of the proceedings, which had been open to participation by all States Members of the United Nations and international organizations; a record number of States had submitted written statements. In February 2024, the Court had conducted oral hearings, in which 50 States and international organizations had participated, another record. The hearings had been concluded on 26 February 2024 and the Court had begun its deliberations. It was reasonable to anticipate that the advisory opinion would be issued in July 2024, given that the Court's previous such opinion, in the case involving Mauritius, on the legality of the ongoing occupation and administration of the Chagos

Archipelago by the United Kingdom, had been issued exactly five months after the close of the oral hearings. The Court was also likely to issue its opinion before the summer recess, so that the case did not continue into its autumn session.

16. With regard to the substance of the case, the point of view of the State of Palestine, and of almost all the States and international organizations that had participated in the proceedings, was that the Israeli occupation indisputably violated the peremptory norms of international law. It constituted unlawful acquisition of territory by force, in violation of Article 2 (4) of the Charter, since it had become permanent, it included the annexation and settlement of the Occupied Territory, and it was enforced by military means. The occupation had also deprived the Palestinian people of their fundamental right to self-determination, which was impossible under military occupation. In addition, the occupation constituted systematic racial discrimination and apartheid, and denied the Palestinian people the fundamental human rights to which they were entitled under international law.

17. The Secretary-General, as well as United Nations fact-finding missions and special rapporteurs, had issued a large number of reports in which the violation of those peremptory norms had been demonstrated. The Court normally attached great weight to the authoritative reports of United Nations institutions and entities, and was expected to do so in giving its advisory opinion. In addition, the Security Council and the General Assembly had, in scores of resolutions related to the occupation, established beyond doubt the illegal annexation of Palestinian territory, the denial of Palestinian self-determination, and the wholesale and systematic violation of fundamental human rights, through which the occupation was sustained.

18. The General Assembly had, in its resolution [77/126](#), recognized that the occupation of a territory was to be a temporary, de facto situation, whereby the occupying Power could neither claim possession of nor exert its sovereignty over the territory it occupied. As Switzerland had explained in its written statement to the Court, the law of occupation rested on the idea that occupation was only a temporary situation; the occupying Power did not acquire sovereignty over the territory it occupied, must maintain the status quo ante and must not take measures that would result in permanent changes. A permanent occupation was, by definition, not a lawful occupation but an unlawful acquisition of territory by force.

19. The permanence of the 57-year Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory was demonstrated by the de jure

and de facto annexation of East Jerusalem and the rest of the West Bank; the Israeli claims of sovereignty over those areas, which Israel considered to be integral parts of the State of Israel; the establishment of hundreds of permanent Israeli settlements inhabited by over 700,000 people, who had been promised by successive Governments of Israel that they would never be removed; and the large number of official statements and documents in which Israeli officials had openly declared their intention to incorporate all the Occupied Territory east of the Green Line into the State of Israel, as a permanent part of a single Jewish State extending from the River Jordan to the Mediterranean Sea. Those statements included the claims that the West Bank had not been seized from a sovereign State recognized by international law, and that Israel had a right to impose its sovereignty over it; that the country's sovereignty must be extended within the borders of the West Bank, and that the Green Line was fictitious, created a distorted reality and must be erased; and that Israel was in the Occupied Palestinian Territory to stay, and that the national ambition for a Jewish State from the river to the sea was an accomplished fact that was not open to discussion or negotiation.

20. Israel had begun the annexation of the Occupied Palestinian Territory in 1967 by passing laws in which it had formally annexed East Jerusalem, including large areas of the West Bank surrounding the Holy City itself. The Minister of Defence of Israel at that time had declared that the Israel Defense Forces had liberated Jerusalem and had returned to their most sacred shrine, never to part from it again. In 1990, the Israeli Cabinet had notified the Secretary-General that Jerusalem was not, in any part, occupied territory; it was the sovereign capital of Israel.

21. Israel had been no less clear in declaring the permanence of its occupation in the rest of the West Bank, where more than 500,000 Israeli Jewish settlers had been implanted, with the support of every Government of Israel since 1967. As the Secretary-General had stated in his report on Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan ([A/70/351](#)), occupation was supposed to be temporary because the annexation or acquisition of territory by force was strictly prohibited under international law. In the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, the establishment and maintenance of the settlements amounted to a slow but steady annexation of the Occupied Palestinian Territory. In open defiance of that statement, the Prime Minister of Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu, had announced in 2019 that the time had come to apply Israeli sovereignty over the Jordan Valley and to arrange the status of all Jewish

communities in the West Bank; those communities would be part of the State of Israel. At the end of 2022, the coalition agreement between the political parties that formed the current Government of Israel had contained a pledge that the Prime Minister would promote policies through which Israeli sovereignty would be applied in the West Bank.

22. The General Assembly, in its resolution [77/126](#), had reaffirmed 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 constituted a breach of international law. The Assembly had also expressed its grave concern at recent Israeli statements calling for the annexation of areas in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and had condemned the annexation of land, whether de facto or through national legislation. Israel had disregarded that resolution, just as it had disregarded scores of previous resolutions in which the Assembly and the Security Council had declared the annexation of any part of the Occupied Palestinian Territory illegal.

23. The Secretary-General, in his report on Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan ([A/78/554](#)), had concluded that the policies of the current Government of Israel were aligned, to an unprecedented extent, with the goals of the Israeli settler movement to expand long-term control over the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and, in practice, to further integrate those areas into the territory of the State of Israel.

24. Given the evidence, which included admissions made by the State of Israel against its own interests, it was understandable that 47 States and international organizations had participated in the oral hearings in February in support of the Palestinian position that the occupation was unlawful and must end. Switzerland had argued that the United Nations had consistently reaffirmed the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force and had condemned Israeli measures aimed at modifying the demographic composition, character and status of Jerusalem and the Occupied Palestinian Territories as a whole. France had stated that the status of occupying Power conferred no legal entitlement justifying annexation and that the passage of time was insufficient, in terms of the acquisition of territory by force, to render lawful a situation that was gravely unlawful.

25. The African Union had invited the Court to conclude that the prolonged Israeli occupation was in itself unlawful. The policies and practices associated

with it amounted to de facto and de jure annexation of the Palestinian territories, which violated the prohibition of the acquisition of territory by force. Brazil had observed that the inherently temporary nature of occupation was the basic distinction between occupation and annexation; the policies and practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory rendered the occupation unlawful as a whole, as it was tantamount to the acquisition of territory by force. Japan had emphasized that, as the Court had clarified in its advisory opinion concerning the legal consequences of the construction of a wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the illegality of the acquisition of territory by force was a corollary of the prohibition of the use of force in accordance with Article 2 (4) of the Charter.

26. Israel had not appeared at the oral hearings, although it had previously submitted a written statement. Of the 52 participants in the oral hearings, 5 did not support the view that the occupation was unlawful. None, however, argued that the occupation was lawful; rather, the position of those five States, in particular the United States and the United Kingdom, was that the Court should not answer the questions put by the General Assembly on the grounds that, if it did so, it would prejudice the conduct of negotiations on a final settlement.

27. Many other States had rejected that position on the grounds that no negotiations on final status issues or a comprehensive settlement had been held for more than a decade; how could any clarification by the Court of the parties' legal rights and obligations interfere with negotiations if none were being held? Those States had also pointed out that the reason for the absence of negotiations was the refusal of Israel to negotiate with the State of Palestine, and that there was, in any case, nothing to negotiate, since Mr. Netanyahu had repeatedly affirmed that his Government would never accept the existence of a Palestinian State.

28. In addition, those other States had argued that the clarification of the parties' legal rights and obligations by the Court, as the world's highest judicial authority, could only help the negotiations. The Security Council and the General Assembly, in their resolutions on the two-State solution, had called for a negotiated settlement in conformity with international law, as had the Council of the League of Arab States in the Arab Peace Initiative; the Court was the appropriate institution to state the requirements of international law.

29. Those other States had also argued that the Court's previous advisory opinion, issued in February 2019, had facilitated rather than prejudiced negotiations. In that case, the Court had been faced with the same objections,

on the part of the same actors, to the issuance of an advisory opinion on the legality of the prolonged colonization, occupation and administration, by the United Kingdom, of the Chagos Archipelago, an integral part of sovereign territory of Mauritius. The Court had nevertheless answered the questions before it and had concluded that that occupation was a violation of international law that must be ended as rapidly as possible. Subsequently, the General Assembly had, in its resolution [73/295](#), demanded that the United Kingdom withdraw from the Archipelago within six months. Following initiatives by various Member States, the United Kingdom had agreed to hold negotiations on the withdrawal with Mauritius. Those negotiations were progressing. That outcome contradicted the argument that the Court's advisory opinions were prejudicial to successful negotiations.

30. All the States that had submitted written statements in the case of the legal consequences arising from the policies and practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including the five States that had urged the Court not to issue an advisory opinion, had agreed on the need for a two-State solution, namely, an independent sovereign Palestinian State existing side by side with the State of Israel, in peace and security, with full self-determination for the Palestinian people. That agreement was a major achievement; he expected that it would be underscored by the Court in the advisory opinion and hoped that it would further motivate the United Nations to take action.

31. The General Assembly, in its resolution [73/295](#), had welcomed the Court's advisory opinion in the Mauritius case and had affirmed that the failure of the United Kingdom to decolonize the Chagos Archipelago was illegal, as was the ongoing United Kingdom administration of that part of Mauritius. The Court had left to the Assembly the arrangements for terminating that administration, and it was the Assembly that had decided that the United Kingdom must withdraw within six months. The Assembly had also called upon all Member States to cooperate with the United Nations to ensure the termination of the United Kingdom presence in the Archipelago as rapidly as possible, and to refrain from any action that would impede or delay that process. The Assembly had called upon the United Nations and its specialized agencies to recognize that the Archipelago formed an integral part of Mauritius, and had called upon all other international, regional and intergovernmental organizations to recognize Mauritian sovereignty over the Archipelago and refrain from impeding the exercise of that sovereignty.

32. An Assembly resolution issued following the Court's expected advisory opinion on the legal

consequences arising from the policies and practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory could include similar measures, including the establishment of a date for the end of the occupation, if the Court followed the precedent set in in the Mauritius case and found that, by law, the occupation must be terminated as rapidly as possible. The United Nations and individual States should take additional action to promote the universal recognition of the State of Palestine and ensure that it was admitted to membership of the Organization. The Assembly resolution should be adopted and the additional actions should be taken as soon as possible, ideally as early as September 2024.

33. **Mr. Yıldız** (Türkiye) said that his country had had submitted a written statement and participated in the oral hearings in the case regarding the legal consequences arising from the policies and practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Given the insistence of the Government of Israel on continuing the war and the need to uphold the rights of the Palestinian people, Türkiye was also preparing to file an application to intervene in the case of the application of the Genocide Convention in Gaza.

34. **Mr. Gertze** (Namibia) said that his country had been occupied by the apartheid South African regime from 1915 to 1990. Its case had also been brought before the Court and, as a result, Namibia was among the strongest advocates of the Court's role in such matters. The many attempts to come up with piecemeal solutions to the occupation of Namibia by South Africa had been unacceptable to the people of Namibia, which had embarked on a military struggle to complement its diplomatic efforts before ultimately winning its right to self-determination. The struggle of the people of Palestine would be the struggle of the people of Namibia until the Palestinians obtained independence, freedom and justice.

35. Although the Court's advisory opinions influenced global perceptions, they were not enforceable. He wondered what could be done to achieve an outcome that would be binding on the parties, given that people worldwide were losing confidence in the multilateral system's ability to solve problems. The advisory opinion on the Chagos Archipelago had been issued a long time previously, but the related negotiations had not yet been concluded. He asked how, if the Court issued a favourable advisory opinion on the legal consequences arising from the policies and practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the United Nations could ensure that people would not lose hope in the search for a solution, given that that search would remain in the hands of the parties, as it had for the previous 57 years. The Organization must find a way of

renewing the international community's confidence in the ability of the multilateral system to enforce its outcomes. It must also be borne in mind that, despite the overwhelming support within the United Nations for a two-State solution and the many Security Council resolutions on the matter, Member States had on occasion been informed that those resolutions were not binding.

36. **Mr. Reichler** (Counsel to the State of Palestine in the request for an advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice regarding the legal consequences arising from the policies and practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem) said that the war being waged by Israel in Gaza was exacerbating the fundamental illegality of that country's treatment of Palestine. That treatment was one of the oldest problems facing the international community, while the Palestinian cause was one of the most just, noble and urgent causes.

37. Although the advisory opinions of the International Court of Justice were not technically binding, they constituted authoritative statements of international law by the world's highest judicial authority. States were therefore bound by those opinions in accordance with their Charter obligations, as the International Tribunal on the Law of the Sea had stated in its decision on the significance of the advisory opinion of the Court in the case of the Chagos Archipelago.

38. Although enforcement had always been a problem in international law, the vast majority of judgments of international tribunals were in fact complied with. The situation of Israel and Palestine was uniquely problematic in that one of the parties had indicated by its conduct that it was not interested in complying with international law. If the current Government remained in power, it was unlikely that Israel would comply even with a binding judgment in the case regarding the application of the Genocide Convention in Gaza.

39. International law, however, could also be enforced by collective action. The international community should establish conditions in which a recalcitrant State felt that it would serve its best interests by complying with the rule of law. Certain States were acting individually to recognize the State of Palestine, insist that it be admitted to the United Nations, and deprive Israel of anything that could be used to perpetuate the illegal occupation, including by curtailing trade with and arms shipments to that country.

40. It was to be hoped that the mindset that currently prevailed in Israel would change over time. An international community that was committed to the rule

of law, fundamental human rights, self-determination and the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people must make it clear to the leaders of Israel that their best interests were served by a two-State solution. It was often said, including by some Israelis, that Israel would never be secure until it reached a settlement with the State of Palestine. Those Israelis were not currently in power, but the international community could change the balance over time through consistent, effective action. That was its only and best hope.

41. **Mr. Mansour** (Observer for the State of Palestine) said that the enforceability of international legal decisions had always been a difficult matter. The cases brought before the International Court of Justice in relation to Namibia, the wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the application of the Genocide Convention and the Chagos Archipelago, however, had shown that an advisory opinion of the Court on the legal consequences arising from the policies and practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory would add another dimension to the Palestinians' struggle. The objective of Namibian independence had been achieved, although, like the end of apartheid in South Africa, it had often appeared to be more remote than the objective of upholding the Palestinian peoples' rights. The State of Palestine had learned from the experience of Namibia and of South Africa; such struggles were never easy, despite the resilience of the peoples concerned.

42. For a decade, the State of Palestine had prepared for the proceedings on the legal consequences arising from the policies and practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. With the help of the Committee, it had held numerous seminars and brainstorming sessions on the Court's composition, and on the timing and scope of the proceedings, with the advice of lawyers and the participation of States that had previously had recourse to the Court. In 2022, the State of Palestine had decided that the time was right to propose that the General Assembly put the two questions to the Court.

43. When the Court issued its advisory opinion, the State of Palestine would study it in conjunction with General Assembly resolution [73/295](#), on the case involving the Chagos Archipelago. Although several years had elapsed since the end of the six-month period stipulated in the resolution for the withdrawal of the United Kingdom administration from the Archipelago, the fact that the United Kingdom had agreed to open negotiations on the matter had in itself been a significant development. The State of Palestine would try and ensure, through the broadest possible consultation, that any time periods stipulated by the Assembly for the end of the Israeli occupation were respected.

44. The case regarding the legal consequences arising from the policies and practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, in addition to the case brought by South Africa on the application of the Genocide Convention, were new ways of applying as much political pressure as possible in order to end the Israeli occupation. The Palestinian independence would result not from a resolution but rather from the accumulated work of the international tribunals, the Committee, the General Assembly and the Security Council, combined with all other available resources. He thanked the many countries that had submitted written statements and participated in the oral hearings, and that would stand with the State of Palestine in the subsequent stages of the case.

Update on the activities of the Committee

45. **The Chair** said that the Committee had convened a conference of civil society organizations working on the question of Palestine, with the theme “Building bridges with international civil society to address the ongoing Nakba”, at the United Nations Office at Geneva on 3 and 4 April 2024. A representative of the Bureau had also delivered a statement at the quarterly Security Council open debate on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question, on 18 April.

46. A delegation of the Bureau had visited Trinidad and Tobago on 22 and 23 April, and Guyana from 24 to 26 April. During the visit, it had met with the Secretary-General of the Caribbean Community. He thanked the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, and the Government of Guyana, for hosting the delegation, and the Division for Palestinian Rights for facilitating the smooth execution of the programme of events.

47. On 5 May, he and the Observer for the State of Palestine had attended the fifteenth Islamic Summit Conference of Heads of State or Government in Banjul. On 23 April and 28 May, the Bureau had issued press releases on the recognition of the State of Palestine by Member States and the situation in Gaza.

48. The Committee and OIC would hold the 2024 Symposium on the Question of Jerusalem, on the theme “Jerusalem and the Gaza war: Palestinian identity and existence under threat of erasure”, in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, on 1 July. The Bureau would then meet representatives of the Government of Saudi Arabia in Riyadh on 2 July, before visiting Indonesia on 4 and 5 July.

49. The Division for Palestinian Rights had continued to disseminate a quarterly newsletter on the activities of the Committee, a monthly bulletin containing all United Nations documents on the question of Palestine, and a

weekly newsletter on the work of non-governmental organizations in Palestine, Israel and elsewhere. He urged Committee members to subscribe to the social media channels and mailing lists managed by the Division in order to receive the latest information on United Nations activities in support of Palestine.

Other matters

50. **The Chair** said that the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) had been globally acknowledged for providing critical humanitarian aid in Gaza, and a dependable lifeline for Palestine refugees and regional stability. Given the Agency’s urgent need for political and financial backing, he appealed to Committee members to endorse the statement of shared commitments on UNRWA, an initiative that had been launched by Jordan, Kuwait and Slovenia, and that currently had 55 signatories. The impact of the initiative would be significantly enhanced if Committee members endorsed it by 12 July, the date of the annual UNRWA pledging conference, to be held in New York.

The meeting rose at 4.50 p.m.