



General Assembly

Tenth Emergency Special session

52nd plenary meeting

Monday, 13 May 2024, 3 p.m.

New York

Official Records

President: Mr. Francis (Trinidad and Tobago)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Lapasov (Uzbekistan), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

Agenda item 5 (continued)

Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Ms. Njie Hydara (Gambia): The Gambia would like to express its profound gratitude and sincere appreciation to the President for reconvening the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, on the illegal Israeli actions in occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the occupied Palestinian territory.

Regrettably, the tenth emergency special session continues to be reconvened to consider the question of Palestine and the plight of the people of Palestine, without a definite end. As we speak, the east of Rafah — where many Gaza refugees had fled because it was the only safe zone for civilians — is besieged by Israeli forces who have entered the Rafah crossing with the intent to obliterate innocent civilians, without regard for the international community's call for a ceasefire in compliance with international law and international humanitarian law. The atrocities by Israel must be condemned and halted.

My delegation renews its call for an immediate and unconditional ceasefire to allow unimpeded humanitarian assistance, including basic human needs, to all affected civilians and to create an environment

conducive to the safe evacuation of civilians, in line with the rules of international law, including international humanitarian law. We sympathize with the families of the thousands of women and children who are affected by contagious diseases and those who are confirmed dead and dying in hospitals, under rubble, and uncared for as a result of the conflict. With more than 36,000 people dead, including United Nations personnel, journalists and volunteer humanitarian aid workers, no one can claim victory here. That ongoing collective punishment is unacceptable. The situation is dire, and the Israeli forces entering Rafah will only exacerbate the conflict and cause a humanitarian catastrophe. The siege must come to an end with an immediate ceasefire.

A lasting solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict can be achieved only by means of peaceful resolution. It is therefore regrettable that, owing to the veto power, the Security Council is continuing to evade its responsibility to save the lives of defenceless people through a permanent ceasefire, which would provide space for peaceful dialogue. The international community owes it to humankind to collectively stand against selective outrage and a hierarchy of compassion that discriminates between peoples, communities and religions, to objectively treat both sides of the conflict fairly and to give peace a chance.

At the root of this ongoing conflict is the long-standing occupation of Palestinian lands and the oppression of the Palestinians. The occupation must end, and the oppression must end. The international community has a duty to invest in peace. As the

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international community, we must renew our willingness to coordinate our efforts aimed at achieving without delay an end to the Israeli occupation that began in 1967, with a view to forging a just, lasting and peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, in accordance with international law, the relevant United Nations resolutions, including Security Council resolution 2334 (2016), the Madrid terms of reference, including the principle of land for peace, and the Arab Peace Initiative of 2002. Our collective efforts to achieve the two-State solution, whereby Israel and Palestine live side by side in peace and security within recognized borders, based on the pre-1967 borders, must remain relentless.

In conclusion, the international community must recognize the State of Palestine as an equal partner of the United Nations with an equal voice and the standing and privileges that every Member State enjoys, and in accordance with Article 4 of the Charter of the United Nations. The Gambia stands with the State of Palestine and voted in favour of resolution ES-10/23. The Gambia's commitment to world peace and security, the promotion and protection of human rights and the progressive development, promotion and implementation of international law remains steadfast and unwavering.

Mr. Kattanga (United Republic of Tanzania): My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Uganda on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/ES-10/PV.50), and I would like to add the following remarks in my national capacity.

The United Republic of Tanzania applauds the President's decision to reconvene the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly in order to deliberate on Palestine's membership in our Organization, the United Nations. This session would have been more jubilant had the Security Council succeeded in recommending Palestine's membership in the United Nations in its meeting on 18 April (see S/PV.9609). Perhaps on 10 May the General Assembly would have been endorsing and welcoming Palestine as the 194th Member of our Organization. Unfortunately, the Security Council denied us that jubilation.

Essentially, this emergency session serves as an opportunity for member States to vent their frustration and dismay at the inability of the Security Council to act on matters of interest to the majority of the

Members of the Organization. It is therefore highly appropriate for the General Assembly to deliberate on this issue, communicate its displeasure and request the Council to reconsider the matter favourably, as it did last Friday (see A/ES-10/PV.49) in its resolution ES-10/23. Furthermore, the General Assembly is right to act, within the ambit of the Charter, to accord rights and privileges to observer States, as it has done for Palestine.

Some would say that the adoption of the resolution will not change the reality on the ground; perhaps it will not. But should the state of violence and insecurity in Israel and Palestine continue in perpetuity? We think it should not. Surely there must be a way to end the state of insecurity and the recurring violence that has caused wanton suffering to both Palestinians and Israelis. We must do more for peace and the attainment of the long-awaited two-State solution.

In conclusion, the voice of the Assembly should not go unheard. All parties concerned with the situation in the Middle East must work towards an inclusive and sustainable peace. We must also redouble our efforts in the context of the reform of the Security Council whereby the limitation of the use of veto is one of the low-hanging fruits to be grabbed at the earliest opportune time.

Mr. Bakhit (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank President Francis for having convened this meeting as part of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly. The delegation of the Sudan aligns itself with the statements made on behalf of the Group of Arab States (see A/ES-10/PV.49), the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (see A/ES-10/PV.50).

The Sudan welcomes resolution ES-10/23, which was adopted by 143 States on 10 May and endorses the acceptance of full membership for the State of Palestine in the United Nations and accordingly, recommends that the Security Council reconsider the matter favourably.

We welcome all mediation and diplomatic efforts aimed at preventing the conflict from spreading and at finding a peaceful solution to that cause. Recognition of the Palestinian State is the very first step towards granting the Palestinian people their legitimate rights that are recognized and guaranteed by international law and the Charter of the United Nations. That recognition would support the two-State solution and the launching of constructive, serious political negotiations leading

to the realization of the demands and ambitions of the Palestinian people.

We live in an ever-changing world with greater awareness of human rights, international humanitarian law and the rights of peoples to self-determination. In that respect, the Sudan reiterates its full support for Palestine's full membership in the United Nations, and we call for a ceasefire and the unhindered delivery of humanitarian, medical and relief aid to the Gaza Strip in a sufficient and sustainable manner.

There is no way to achieve security and stability in the Middle East without ending the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories and enabling the Palestinian people to realize all their legitimate rights, including their right to self-determination, to establish their independent State within the 4 June 1967 borders, with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital, and to live in peace and security according to international legitimacy, Security Council resolutions and other terms of reference. Preventing the enforcement of those resolutions and the recognition of a Palestinian State would only prolong the conflict and lead to more suffering and disasters along with human crises, insecurity and instability in the region.

In conclusion, it is high time to stop injustice and grant the Palestinian people their legitimate rights as recognized by international law and United Nations resolutions.

Mr. Al-Saadi (Yemen) (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank President Francis for having convened this meeting.

My country's delegation aligns itself with the statements made on behalf of the Group of Arab States (see A/ES-10/PV.49), the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/ES-10/PV.50).

The Arab Group submitted resolution ES-10/23, requesting the Security Council to reconsider and accept the admission of the State of Palestine as a full-fledged Member of the United Nations following the use of the veto against the draft resolution introduced by Algeria on behalf of the Arab Group. That draft resolution sets out the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people to the State of Palestine's full membership in the United Nations following decades of injustice and oppression on the part of the Israeli occupying authorities, including denying Palestinians their most basic rights

over more than 75 years of occupation and their right to self-determination and independence.

History will be fair to the positions of all peace- and justice-loving Member States that uphold the principles and the equal rights enshrined in the Charter for all peoples of the world to live in freedom, dignity and independence. Those States voted in favour of resolution ES-10/23 and the rights of the Palestinian people, sending a clear message of unity to the Security Council setting out the international will to support the legitimate rights of the Palestinians.

With the adoption of resolution A/ES-10/23, the General Assembly is sending a clear message that it is no longer acceptable for the Security Council to remain subordinate to the political considerations and narrow interests that ignore the demands of the more than 140 States that have recognized the State of Palestine, or to ignore the human and legal rights to self-determination and to the two-State solution under the relevant resolutions of the Security Council, most recently resolution 2334 (2016), and the resolutions of the General Assembly, which all stipulate the right of the Palestinian people to realize their dignity and their alienable rights and to establish their independent, sovereign Palestinian State within the borders of 4 June 1967, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

From a moral, human and legal point of view, it is unacceptable that the Israeli occupying State continues to commit brutal crimes and massacres on a daily basis against the Palestinian people, the majority of whom are women and children, in flagrant violation of international humanitarian law, international human rights law and all international norms and conventions. It also continues to prevent the delivery of humanitarian assistance and has caused the forced displacement of Palestinians from their territory and homeland. The Israeli occupying State is even threatening a land offensive against the city of Rafah, which is the last refuge of the more than 1.5 million displaced Palestinians. That would lead to an unprecedented humanitarian catastrophe because Israel, the occupying Power, believes that it is above the law and that the international community and especially the Security Council are unable to stop its war, crimes and brutal violations against the Palestinian people and hold it accountable for those crimes.

We reiterate our rejection of the biased policy that tries to cover up for the plans of the Israeli occupying

authorities and to ensure their protection, to the detriment of the more than 35,000 martyrs and 75,000 injured people, the majority of whom are women and children, who have fallen in Gaza in more than five months. We reject the policy of double standards, which is only prolonging this conflict in the light of the flagrant failure to implement any resolution on this subject for the last 75 years. We call once again for the full implementation of resolutions 2712 (2023), 2720 (2023) and 2728 (2024).

In conclusion, we will continue all efforts to ensure that the State of Palestine can be a fully fledged Member of the United Nations according to the resolutions of international legitimacy and the Arab Peace Initiative so that the Security Council can shoulder its responsibility and reach an immediate and lasting ceasefire; guarantee delivery of all humanitarian assistance to Gaza without any hindrance; end the policy of forced displacement against the Palestinian people; provide international protection for Palestinians in all occupied territories; and hold Israel accountable for all the crimes that it has committed against the Palestinian people.

Mr. Costa Chaves (Timor-Leste): I thank President Francis for having resumed this special emergency session.

At the outset, Timor-Leste aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of the Republic of Uganda on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/ES-10/PV.50).

Timor-Leste is a country born of conflict and possesses first-hand experience in peacebuilding and peacekeeping. Under the United Nations multilateral system, Timor-Leste has inherited invaluable insights into the complexities of war and post-war stabilization and reconstruction. Such experience positions Timor-Leste as a strong proponent of global peace and a strong supporter of the international rules-based order.

Timor-Leste deplores the tragic consequences of the conflict that has been ongoing since the 7 October terrorist attack in Israel by Hamas, but the tragic loss of 35,000 Palestinian lives owing to the invasion of Israel should not be overlooked.

Timor-Leste gave careful thought to voting in favour of resolution A/ES-10/23. First and foremost, Timor-Leste believes in the right of self-determination as well as the right to self-defence of each nation on Earth. Secondly, Timor-Leste believes in the international

rules-based order and the United Nations multilateral system, under which Timor-Leste enjoys the freedom it has today.

For those reasons, the importance of Palestine's participation in General Assembly sessions and United Nations conferences is crucial for promoting the much-needed two-State solution and fostering dialogue, mutual understanding and peaceful coexistence between Israel and Palestine.

Given Palestine's long association as an observer with the United Nations, upgrading its status in United Nations platforms, as called for in the resolution, can help Palestine to actively communicate its concerns and perspectives on domestic and regional issues and in turn contribute positively to upholding the rights and security of both Israel and Palestine based on international law and the Charter of the United Nations. Timor-Leste's support for the resolution is firmly grounded in those core principles.

Timor-Leste believes that support for the resolution will contribute to a solution to the unending conflict in the Middle East. Peace can endure — through the promotion of mutual respect, recognition of each other's right to existence and cooperation — enabling peaceful cohabitation between Israelis and Palestinians.

Timor-Leste recognizes the right of the parties to the conflict to defend themselves and their interests. By the same token, Timor-Leste also recognizes the inalienable right of every nation to self-determination and independence. Timor-Leste also advocates for peaceful coexistence based on the relevant United Nations resolutions on a two-State solution.

It is now time for the parties to look forward, release the hostages once and for all, withdraw their military forces from Gaza and allow a genuine peace process to begin.

Recent events in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, including the incursion into Gaza's southern city and the closure of Al Jazeera, have raised significant concerns globally. The escalation of violence and the humanitarian crisis in Gaza demand immediate attention and action from the international community.

In that connection, we call on the parties to the conflict to prioritize the protection of civilians, particularly children and orphans, who are most at risk. The parties involved must commit themselves to

ending the cycle of violence, protecting the vulnerable population and working towards a lasting peace.

Timor-Leste urges all parties to come together in a unified effort and push towards achieving a sustainable ceasefire. Building trust, engaging in meaningful dialogue and pursuing peaceful resolutions are crucial steps towards de-escalating tensions and creating an environment conducive to constructive negotiations.

Timor-Leste stands ready to collaborate with any initiatives that promote genuine dialogue, understanding and reconciliation. It is only through the collective efforts and genuine commitment to peace of the parties in conflict that long-lasting stability and prosperity can be achieved for all.

Ms. DeShong (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines): Saint Vincent and the Grenadines aligns itself with the statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of Dominica on behalf of the Caribbean Community (see A/ES-10/PV.51).

At the outset, allow me to recall one of the fundamental reasons for the existence of this institution: to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. As a primary organ responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security, the Security Council is central to the fulfilment of that objective. Yet with each day that has passed since 7 October, including each failed draft resolution within the Security Council, the fissures within our multilateral order have surfaced, exacerbating further the international community's distrust of the United Nations.

Article 4 of the Charter of the United Nations is explicit in its provision that membership is open to all peace-loving States which accept the obligations contained within the Charter. No State is above that provision, and no State has the right to exploit its privileges to act as a wanton obstruction to the aspirations of another State.

In that vein, we express our disappointment at the use of the veto in the Security Council on 18 April 2024 on the agenda item entitled "Admission of new Members to the United Nations" (see S/PV.9609) to block the legitimate aspirations of the State of Palestine to full membership in the United Nations. That issue is one that underpins the moral conscience of the international community. It is a manifestation of Palestine's pursuit of dignity, sovereignty and the right to self-determination and an independent state of Palestine.

That is why my delegation co-sponsored resolution ES-10/23, which confers upon the State of Palestine additional rights and privileges that would enhance its participation in the work of the General Assembly and the international conferences convened under the auspices of the Assembly or other United Nations organs as well as in United Nations conferences. That initiative brings us one step closer to full membership, but it is still not enough.

The veto is a responsibility and not an unfettered privilege. Its use to advance narrow nationalistic or political agendas at the expense of the well-being of other States runs counter to the Council's duty to discharge its mandate on behalf of the wider membership as per Article 24, paragraph 1, of the Charter of the United Nations. The veto can neither be exercised to subvert the will of the international community nor violate international law.

Now more than ever we need an effective, efficient and responsible Security Council, not a bystander. For too long the Palestinian people have contended with illegal occupation, dispossession and harsh settler colonialist policies that constitute gross violations of international law, including the well-established and legally binding Security Council resolutions. Our delay in recognizing an independent State of Palestine contributes to the toxic status quo that constitutes a root cause of the ongoing conflict. We therefore call on the members of the Security Council to fulfil their duties as the gatekeepers of international peace and security and reconsider favourably Palestine's legitimate request for admission as a full Member to the United Nations.

Within that context, we reaffirm our support for a two-State solution that would ensure that both Israel and Palestine can live side by side in peace and security within recognized borders based on the pre-1967 borders. Every State that has that ambition is also deserving of achieving such.

Ms. Kamboj (India): I thank President Francis for having convened this plenary meeting of the tenth emergency session of the General Assembly.

The conflict in Gaza has been ongoing for over seven months, and the humanitarian crisis that it has triggered has been increasing. There is also the potential for growing instability in the region and beyond. In that context, we view the Council's adoption of resolution 2728 (2024) as a positive step.

India's position on the conflict has been clearly articulated on more than one occasion by our leadership. Allow me to reiterate the key points.

First, the ongoing conflict between Israel and Hamas has led to a large-scale loss of civilian lives, especially women and children. The resulting humanitarian crisis is simply unacceptable. We have as such strongly condemned the deaths of civilians in the conflict. International law and international humanitarian law must be respected by everyone under all circumstances.

Secondly, the terror attacks in Israel on 7 October were shocking and deserve our unequivocal condemnation. There can be no justification for terrorism and hostage-taking. India has a long-standing and uncompromising position against terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, and we demand the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages.

Thirdly, the humanitarian situation in Gaza is dire. It is imperative that humanitarian aid to the people of Gaza be scaled up immediately in order to avert a further deterioration of the situation. We urge all parties to come together in that endeavour. We also welcome the efforts of the United Nations and the international community in that regard. India has provided humanitarian aid to the people of Palestine and will continue to do so. We note the recent facilitation of a greater flow of humanitarian aid into Gaza by the Israeli authorities.

Fourthly, my leadership has repeatedly emphasized that only a two-State solution achieved through direct and meaningful negotiations between both sides on final-status issues will deliver an enduring peace. India is committed to supporting a two-State solution where the Palestinian people are able to live freely in an independent country within secure borders, with due regard for the security needs of Israel. To arrive at a lasting solution, we urge all parties to foster conditions conducive to resuming direct peace negotiations at an early date.

As I conclude, I will state that in keeping with our long-standing position, we support the membership of Palestine in the United Nations and have therefore voted in favour of resolution ES-10/23, adopted last Friday (see A/ES-10/PV.49).

We hope that Palestine's application will be reconsidered by the Security Council in due course and that Palestine's endeavour to become a Member of the United Nations will be endorsed.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item. In accordance with the terms of paragraph 9 of resolution ES-10/23, adopted at the 49th plenary meeting, on 10 May 2024, the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly is temporarily adjourned.

The meeting rose at 3.35 p.m.