



High-Level International Conference for the Peaceful Settlement of the Question of Palestine and the Implementation of the Two- State Solution

**Delivered by H.E. Ambassador James Larsen, Permanent
Representative to the United Nations**

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Thank you, Chair.

Australia thanks the Republic of France and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for their leadership in co-chairing this Conference.

We thank the Working Group Chairs for their efforts towards achieving tangible progress towards a two-state solution.

77 years ago the global community envisioned two states – the State of Israel and the State of Palestine.



Australia shares the frustration of the great majority of countries that a Palestinian state still does not exist.

A two-state solution remains the only hope of breaking the endless cycle of violence.

The only hope of a just and enduring peace, for Israelis and Palestinians alike.

On 29 July, Australia and 14 countries released the “New York Call” which makes clear that recognition of a State of Palestine is an essential step to a two-state solution.

The statement is upfront about the challenges we face, including with the terrorist group Hamas.



It expresses our determination to work on an architecture for the "day after" to guarantee the disarmament of Hamas and its exclusion from Palestinian governance.

And we acknowledge the support from the Arab League and other key countries in the region to end Hamas' grip on Gaza.

Australia welcomes the important commitments made by the Palestinian Authority:

- condemning the 7 October terrorist attacks
- calling for the liberation of hostages and the disarmament of Hamas
- committing to terminate the prisoner payment system
- committing to schooling reform
- committing to calling elections within a year to trigger generational renewal; and
- accepting the principle of a demilitarised Palestinian state.



These are significant steps that demonstrate the Palestinian Authority is seeking to play its part as a partner for peace.

Australia will continue to support the Palestinian Authority as it pursues the path of reform, including through our capacity building and governance initiatives.

Chair,

Australia is gravely concerned by actions of the Israeli Government, which are undermining the prospects of two states – including relentless settlement expansion and ongoing impunity for settler violence.

We call on Israel to engage on the question of Palestinian statehood. The world is moving and a two-state solution is essential for Israel's long-term security. Chair,



Australia will continue on our path towards recognition, and we urge the whole international community to do the same.

We will keep working with other countries to make a two-state solution a reality.

Mr President,

We cannot forget that while we gather a humanitarian catastrophe is taking place in Gaza.

The situation has gone beyond the world's worst fears.

Australia is a part of the international call on Israel to immediately comply with its obligations under international law, including removing restrictions on aid and allowing the UN and humanitarian actors to do their life saving work.



Israel's excuses and explanations are untenable and without credibility.

We reaffirm our call for an immediate return to a ceasefire in Gaza, which offers the best hope of ending the suffering of Gazans and returning the hostages to their families.

Australia is committed to a future where both the Israeli and Palestinian peoples can live in peace and safety, within secure and internationally-recognised borders.

Until that day, every effort must be made here and now to safeguard innocent life and end the unacceptable suffering and starvation of the people of Gaza.

Thank you.

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