

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

29 June 2025

(Check against delivery)

Esteemed co-chairs, excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

I thank you for convening this important conference on the Peaceful Settlement of the Question of Palestine and the Implementation of the Two-State Solution. The tragic events on and since 7 October 2023 have – once again – painfully demonstrated that there can be no sustainable peace in the Middle East without a just and lasting solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The conflict and the occupation have lasted for far too long. It is finally time for the international community to assume its responsibility to assist the parties in arriving to a solution that guarantees the security and rights of both peoples, and the stability of the region. This conference is an important step in that direction, and I commend the Republic of France and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for their vision and leadership at this critical moment.

Excellencies,

To create a foundation for a lasting peace, the legitimate rights of both Israelis and Palestinians must be secured. Both peoples have the right to live in peace and security as well as freely determine their political status and pursue their economic, social and cultural development. The only sustainable way to achieve this is a negotiated two-state solution based on the pre-1967 borders. The solution must meet Israeli and Palestinian security needs and Palestinian aspirations for statehood and sovereignty, end the occupation that began in 1967, and resolve all permanent status issues.

Excellencies,

the path to peace is not easy, but the time to take the first steps towards it is now. It requires:

Firstly, an urgent unconditional and permanent ceasefire in Gaza, and the unconditional release of all hostages taken by Hamas and other groups. The Israeli government must immediately lift restrictions on the flow of aid, to meet the needs of the civilian population. These need to happen immediately. The humanitarian situation in Gaza has gone beyond comprehension. The war in Gaza must end now.

Secondly, we must further strengthen the Palestinian Authority, which has for decades stood for a peaceful approach to the two-state solution. This requires a clear political horizon for the Palestinians to determine their own affairs in an independent State of Palestine, living side by side in peace and security and mutual recognition with the State of Israel. This also requires ensuring that the Palestinian Authority has the financial means to develop the Palestinian society, including through freeing the clearance revenues that belong to it. We also need a credible process that brings the entire occupied Palestinian territory - Gaza and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem - under a unified Palestinian Authority.

Thirdly, no peace can be sustainable and lasting unless Israel's security is fully ensured. Hamas must be disarmed. The process towards a two-state solution must also bring about further recognitions of the State of Israel by countries in the region, and beyond.

In parallel, it is paramount to refrain from measures that undermine the viability of a two-state solution. Continued settlement construction, the absence of accountability for acts of violence, and restrictions on the Palestinian Authority's ability to function effectively, all contribute to mistrust and instability.

A lasting peace requires that all parties take meaningful steps to uphold international law and foster conditions conducive to dialogue, cooperation and mutual security.

Excellencies,

Finland is firmly committed to the two-state solution. We have been supporting Palestinian state-building efforts both politically and through development cooperation for decades. It is time to take concrete steps towards implementing the two-state solution for the benefit of Palestinians, Israelis and the entire Middle East region. Finland stands ready to do its part.