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MINISTRY OF FOREIGN
AFFAIRS
PALESTINE LIBERATION
ORGANIZATION**



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**Statement
By**

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**On the
Occasion of the General Debate
Of the
59th Session of the United Nations
General Assembly**

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Mr. President,

Let me begin by congratulating you, Mr. Jean Ping, on your election as President of the 59th session of the General Assembly. We are confident that you will conduct the proceedings of this session with great competence.

I would like to pay tribute to your predecessor, Mr. JULIAN ROBERT HUNTE, who presided ably over the 58th session of the General Assembly.

I should at this moment express my deep appreciation for the efforts of H.E. the Secretary General to harmonize international relations and ensure respect for the principles of the Charter and laws with a view to strengthening International peace and Security. His statement before this Assembly marks a landmark in the quest for the prevalence of law and respect for the role of the United Nations in International conflicts.

Mr. President,

In my statement I shall focus on the turbulent situation in the Middle East and precisely on the core of the conflict in the Middle East.

Mr. President

The situation in the region of Western Asia or the Middle East is in turmoil. To add damage to the already existing grave situation as a result of Israel's policies and practices in occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories, The Occupation of Iraq was based on unfounded pretext. The total absence of law and order are the general pattern of life in occupied Iraq. The continuous occupation is wreaking havoc in the economic and social aspects of life. We urge the competent institutions namely the UN General Assembly and the Security Council to take necessary and appropriate measures to ensure Iraq's independence and sovereignty as soon as possible.

Mr. President,

Israel is the only nuclear power in the Middle East. It is about the fourth strongest army in the world, is a war sophisticated arms developer and dealer with no ethical or moral constraints and with no human rights concerns. The Israeli government can therefore do anything it wants, acting like a high tech military-expert rogue state which has become tremendously useful for the United States since it has located itself strategically right in the centre of the global arms industry. Counting on the support of the U.S.A Israel breaks moral and international laws with impunity.

The daily assaults on Palestinian peaceful towns and villages, the demolishing of homes and houses, the bulldozing and uprooting of age-old fruit bearing trees- olives and citrus, targeted killings, assassinations, closures and the imposition of a state of siege and curfews and the use of excessively disproportionate firepower that resulted, so far, in more than 3200 deaths and thousands of injuries are common knowledge. The allegation by Israel that it is self defence is totally rejected. It is the Palestinians under occupation, with their meager means of combat are the party exercising the right to self- defence. Almost 8000 Palestinians are held without trial in detention under merciless conditions and when they protest against such conditions, the Israel minister boasts "let them go on hunger strike until they die".

To top all methods of obstruction to achieve peace Israel holds in confinement our democratically elected President, Yaser Arafat, and announce that they find no partner to negotiate peace with. If not with the democratically elected President then with whom are the negotiations for settlement and peace to be negotiated ? Unless Israel, and others of the same mind, wish to see a continuation of the status quo or deal with an imposed non-democratically elected group or persons.

Mr. President,

A performance – based on Roadmap was unanimously adopted by the Security Council (1515). We have accepted the road map as, in our opinion, it augured well.

The Roadmap envisaged a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict which solution "will be achieved through an end to violence and terrorism and when the Palestinians become able to build a practicing democracy and through Israel's readiness to do what is necessary for a democratic Palestinian state to be established".

The Palestinians through their representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization embraced the Roadmap and considered that it offers another opportunity contributing towards the end of the conflict. We hope that the Quartet will seriously assume the noble task of realising the destination of the Roadmap.

Acts of state-terrorism was Israel's response to the performance- based Roadmap. And to be more precise the 2000 pound bomb was dropped after the Palestinians have scrupulously observed an unannounced cease-fire. Israel still adheres to the 14 reservations it has on the Roadmap. The nebulous ideas and intentions revealed in the exchange of letters between President Bush and Prime Minister Sharon on the matter of the commitments to the Roadmap are far from encouraging and holding the Roadmap and Security Council resolution 1515 in limbo if not total neglect and refusal.

In his letter of assurances to Prime Minister Sharon, dated April 14, 2004 President Bush reiterates that "The United States supports the establishment of a Palestinian State that is viable, contiguous, sovereign and independent so that the Palestinian people can build their own future in accordance with [his] vision set forth in the Roadmap."

But when President Bush addresses the reality on the ground he assures Israel that "it is unrealistic to expect that the outcome of final negotiations will be a full and complete return to the armistice lines of 1949".

He admits that part of a final peace settlement, Israel must have secure and recognized borders, which should emerge from negotiations between the parties in accordance with UN Security Council resolutions 242 and 338, But Mr. Bush and Mr. Sharon do not identify topographically the SECURE and RECOGNIZED borders of Israel.

Mr. President

In the said letter of assurances President Bush stresses that "the United States is strongly committed to Israel's security and well-being as a Jewish state".

He does not Concern himself in the security of the so-called provisional state of Palestine. He seems to be oblivious to the fact that twenty present (20%) of the citizens of Israel are non-Jewish and that, Israel has not as yet defined who is a Jew. This concept will inevitably lead to the creation of a racist society within the Israeli political entity.

To ensure the success of the Roadmap and the targeted destination, that is a final and comprehensive settlement of the Israeli Palestinian conflict by 2005, the plan also requires that Israel " freezes all settlement activity and withdraws from Palestinian areas occupied since September 28. 2000.

Commenting on the meeting between President Bush and Prime Minister Sharon, Javier Solana, EU High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy, on 15 April 2004, announced : "The EU remains firmly committed to a negotiated settlement resulting in two VIABLE, SOVEREIGN and INDEPENDENT states is the only way to achieve a permanent peace and an end to the occupation that began in 1967, in the framework of comprehensive peace in the Middle East. EU Heads of State and government recently indicated that they would NOT recognize any change to the pre 1967 borders other

than those arrived at by agreement between the parties A permanent settlement must also include an agreed, just fair and realistic solution to the refugee issue".

In order to deviate further away from the direct route to the tamed destination Sharon declared that he was absolutely determined to carry out DISENGAGEMENT in Gaza despite the Political problems within his own party, Likud, because the party believes that the disengagement conflicts with the Zionist aims of creeping annexation of Palestinian territory. Sharon's plan creates a situation where Israel will have to leave the settlements BUT WILL STILL CONTROL everything that enters and exists Gaza. It will tightly seal off Gaza and block the only outlet for the Palestinian in Gaza from crossing into and from neighbouring Egypt.

All this aroused the concerns of the International Community as expressed in a number of meetings of the UN General Assembly. Israel did not heed to the request by the UN General Assembly which fact did, by necessity, call for an Advisory Opinion by the International Court of Justice on "what are the legal consequences arising from the construction of the wall being built by Israel, the occupying Power, in the occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, as described in the report of the Secretary General, considering the rules and principles of international law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, and relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions".

The General Assembly by an overwhelming majority of 150 votes acknowledged the Court's Advisory Opinion of 9 July 2004. The representatives of the Governments of the USA and Israel were among the 6 others who voted in the negative.

Mr. President,

I wish to avail myself of this opportunity to express our great appreciation for the learned opinion of the honorable judges.

Of direct relevance to this Session of the UN General Assembly, I wish to quote the following Opinions 'All States are under an obligation not to recognize the illegal situation resulting from the construction of the wall and not to render aid or assistance in maintaining the situation created by such construction'.

"The United Nations and especially the General Assembly and the Security Council should consider what further action is required to bring to an end the illegal situation resulting from the construction of the wall and the associated regime taking due account of the present Advisory Opinion".

Mr. President,

In order to restore faith and confidence in and efficacy of the UN Organization and its Charter, I make an appeal that the Opinion of the Court be heeded and that action-oriented resolutions, including concrete mechanisms for implementation, be adopted and carried out.

Mr. president,

The Palestinian people and leadership have demonstrated good will and accepted in good faith the provisions of the Roadmap and other proposals that lead to the termination of Israeli occupation of our Palestinian territory so that we can all live in peace and security and stability in the Middle East. What is needed is the other party, Israel, to commit itself in word and in action to respond.

Thank you