*Unofficial Transcript by Human Rights Voices*

November 29, 2016

**Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, Special meeting in Observance of the “International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People”**

League of Arab States: I would like to express my appreciation to Mr. Peter Thomson, the President of the General Assembly, and I would like also to pay tribute to Mr. Riyad Mansour, the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine. Ladies and gentlemen, dear participants, this day represents a painful memory for the Palestinian people; a plight that has been lived by the Palestinian people since the 25th of November, 1947, when the General Assembly adopted Resolution 181 that partitioned the Palestinian land – this land where the Palestinian people have lived since the dawn of history until this land was occupied by the Israelis. Since then the lives of the Palestinian has turned into a daily suffering as a result of this occupation that has, since the Nakba in 1948, has been committing a fully fledged ethnic cleansing crime against the indigenous Palestinian people.

Ladies and gentlemen, in stressing the just question of Palestine and the support of the international community to the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, in particular self-determination and the establishment of its independent Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital, the General Assembly decided in 1977 to declare this day as an international day of solidarity with the Palestinian people. This solidarity has continued and expanded year after year. It was culminated – it’s culminated in the adoption of the General Assembly resolution – this historic resolution on the 29th of November, 2012. This resolution provided Palestine a non-member observer status. This reflects the determination of the international community to end the occupation by Israel of the Palestinian territory since June 1967, and to achieve peace and justice. This resolution has placed responsibility on the world countries and permanent members of the Security Council to achieve justice and equality for the Palestinian people and to compel Israel, the occupying power, to heed the calls of peace and ending occupation of the territories of the State of Palestine. This is also aimed at enabling the state to exercise its independence and sovereignty. In this context, the Palestinian endeavors to obtain fully-fledged membership at the UN remains a rightful demand in accordance with the principles of international law and international legitimacy. It is an endeavor that is supported by all the Member States of the Arab League.

Ladies and gentlemen, the Palestinian people have accepted the two-state solution out of a genuine desire to achieve peace, coexistence, and prosperity for the Palestinians and the Israelis equally, and also for all the peoples of the region. It is also based on the firm belief of the Arab League and the need to end the Arab-Israeli – the decade-long Arab and Israeli conflict. Therefore, the Arab Summit held in Beirut in 2002 approved the Arab Peace Initiative. This includes implementation of Israeli withdrawal from all Arab and Palestinian occupied territories since the 5th of June, 1967, the establishment of the independent Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital, finding a just solution to the Palestinian refugee problem, in accordance with General Assembly Resolution 194.

All the countries of the world welcomed this initiative; however, Israel continues to reject it. It also rejects the two-state solution. It persists in its violations and racist practices and perpetration of occupation through expanded settlement in circumventive Palestinian villages and towns where the separation wall, attacks against Muslim and Christian holy sites, demolition of houses, setting up military barriers in the West Bank, also in position of this unjust blockade on Gaza for almost 10 years.

There is also the suffering of Palestinian prisoners and detainees in Israeli captivity. This includes tragic situations that would destroy their lives and the lives of their families who are looking for a glimmer of hope that would revive normalcy in their lives.

Ladies and gentlemen, Israel practices flagrant violation of the international law and it also violates the rights of the Palestinian people. However, the international community is rewarding Israel when it gives it access to its organs and committees through obtaining an unpermanent seat in the Security Council for 2019 and 2020. This has also been reflected in the Israeli success to obtain chairmanship of the Sixth Committee. This is contradictory and illogical in light of the Israeli violations and disregard of international norms and instruments. The Arab League has condemned the chairmanship of Israel of the Sixth Committee. We also call for standing firmly against its pursuit to obtain an unpermanent seat at the Security Council. This pursuit is in contradiction with the simplest laws of logic and justice. Occupation as it stands and where it is should be ended and should not be rewarded through being member at a UN organ mandated to maintain international peace and security and achieving just and equality.

Ladies and gentlemen, since the General Assembly adopted in 1977 its resolution to proclaim the 29th of November as International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, since that day we are meeting, we are holding events of solidarity with the Palestinian people to give it motivation to endure the injustice visited on these Palestinian people by Israel, but what Palestinians need today is that the solidarity was to turn into empirical measures and implementation measures in order to compel Israel to respond to the requirements of peace. Only then the international community will be happy with its success in ending an occupation of seven decades, and it would also celebrate amiability and solidarity with the Palestinian people. This would also render the values of amiability, peace, and coexistence victorious over hate and aggression. This means that 2017 will be the year of ending occupation in accordance with the decision of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.

In closing, I would like to salute the positions of your respective countries and the position of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. I would like also to salute its members for their sincere efforts. We reiterate, once again, our support to these constructive efforts and our willingness to cooperate with all the activities of the Committee so that 2017 becomes the year of ending Israeli occupation and providing independence and sovereignty to the state of Palestinian.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.