Statement by the President of UN Security Council,

Mark Lyall Grant

Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People

International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People

November 29, 2010

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Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People for inviting me to address this meeting in my capacity as President of the Security Council for November. We are here to mark the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. In June 2009, the Quartet affirmed its determination to actively and vigorously seek a comprehensive resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict on the basis of UN Security Council resolutions 242, 338, 1397, 1515, 1850, the Madrid Principles, including land for peace, the roadmap, the Arab Peace Initiative and the agreements previously reached between the parties.

The Security Council remains fully committed to a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East based on the vision of two states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security with mutually agreed and recognized borders.

In September, the Quartet reaffirmed its full commitment to its previous statements, which provide that negotiations should lead to an agreement that ends the occupation that began in 1967 and results in the emergence of an independent, democratic, contiguous and viable Palestinian state living side by side in peace and security with Israel and its other neighbors.

Throughout the past year, the Council has continued to receive regular briefings from the Secretary-General Special Coordinator and the Department of Political Affairs and to hold open debates. These meetings have covered a range of issues and opinions. First, Council members have underscored that the only viable solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is an agreement negotiated between the parties, and reemphasized that only a two-state solution with an independent and viable Palestinian state living side by side in peace and security with Israel and its other neighbors can bring peace to the region.

Second, Council members have urged the parties to avoid any unilateral and provocative actions and have called for all international partners to promote an atmosphere of cooperation between the parties and throughout the region. As the Quartet has said, unilateral actions by either party, including settlement activity, cannot prejudge the outcome of negotiations and will not be recognized by the international community.

Third, transformative change on the ground is integral to peace. Council members have welcomed the Palestinian Authority state-building plan, which demonstrates the Palestinian Authority’s commitment to an independent state that provides opportunity, justice and security to the Palestinian people and is a responsible neighbor to all states in the region.

Fourth, Council members continue to view the situation in Gaza with concern. In June 2010, the Council agreed a statement following the tragic Gaza flotilla incident which stressed that the situation in Gaza was not sustainable. We emphasize the importance of full implementation of Security Council Resolutions 1850 and 1860, and in that context stress the need for a sustained and regular flow of goods and people to Gaza as well as unimpeded provision and distribution of humanitarian assistance throughout Gaza.

As the Quartet reaffirmed in September 2010, the current situation in Gaza is not in the interests of Palestinians or Israelis. The Quartet welcomed the shift in Israel’s Gaza policy since June 2010 and called for further efforts by all concerned to ensure the unimpeded flow of humanitarian aid, commercial goods and persons to and from Gaza and to address Israel’s legitimate security concerns.

Finally, all Council members have commended the laudable efforts of humanitarian organizations and agencies on the ground, particularly the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East and its staff. We encourage all members of the international community to support the Agency with financial contributions. Looking ahead, the Security Council remains seized of the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question, and will continue to consider the issue on a regular basis.

In conclusion, allow me to assure all of you of the commitment of the Security Council to the ultimate goal of achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East and to the realization of the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people for an independent and democratic state. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.