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The Permanent Mission of Egypt
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**Statement by
H.E. Ambassador Maged Abdelaziz
Permanent Representative of the Arab Republic of Egypt**

**Before
The General Assembly**

Agenda Item (15)

“The Situation in the Middle East”

New York, December 1, 2009

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Mr. President,

The General Assembly considers today the Agenda Item pertaining to "The situation in the Middle East", emphasizing its inherent role in addressing the conflict and constant tension in the Middle East region resulted from Israel's illegal occupation of the Arab occupied territories since 1967 and its refusal to accept the will of the international community and to implement the relevant United Nations resolutions and international law regulations despite all regional and international efforts exerted to reach a lasting and just negotiated solution that allows for achieving a lasting and just peaceful settlement of the Question of Palestine the core of the conflict.

Undoubtedly, the Middle East is experiencing this years an extremely grave phase and a juncture between achieving peace, security and coexistence and more violence, destruction and extremism, due to the deep impasse that faces the political efforts aiming at reaching a negotiated solution based on the existence of a two States on the basis of 1967 borders, and as a result of the new Israeli Government's rejection to recognize the basic terms of reference and the core issues of the peace process and to implement the previous commitment starting from freezing settlement and starting serious negotiations on borders, refugees and all other issues of the final solution adopted by the United Nations and considered for implementation by the Quartet for years and years.

In light of the intransigent positions of the Israeli government, the international community, represented in the General Assembly, is demanded today more than ever to provide political support to efforts aiming at resuming the negotiating process, to emphasize the illegality of acquiring others' territory by force, and to compel Israel to implement its commitments and to enter into serious negotiations on the six core issues, leading to a just, lasting and comprehensive peaceful solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict on all tracks on the basis of the principle of Land for Peace, the Arab Peace Initiative, the Road Map and relevant United Nations resolutions.

To express the international community rejection to Israel's continuing occupation and illegal practices in the occupied Arab territories and to face the grave deterioration in the peace process, the sponsors present this year to the General Assembly under Agenda Item "The Situation in the Middle East" two draft resolutions on a high importance:

The first concerning the city of East Jerusalem, which witnesses an Israeli settlement fierce assault in an attempt to alter its Geographic and Demographic features and to defacto annexed, in order to consolidate its illegal occupation, despite the opposition and denunciation of the international community and the emphasizing of all relevant international resolutions on the illegality of settlement activity and the need to maintain the particular character and status of East Jerusalem as Palestinian Arab occupied territory and the illegality of all actions taken by the successive Israeli governments to change its status before the final solution's negotiations.

The Second draft resolution, is related to the occupied Syrian Golan and come to confirm the will of the international community and to express the continued determination of the General Assembly to end Israel's illegal occupation of the occupied Syrian territories and to achieve the full Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights to the borders of June 4, 1967, and the illegality of the decision of imposing Israeli laws and Israeli settlement on it.

The aim of the two draft resolutions – each in its framework – is to reaffirm Israel's commitments to stop settlement activity and to put an end to its illegal practices in the occupied East Jerusalem, as well as ending its illegal blockade of the Gaza Strip, and accepting to resume negotiations in accordance with a clear terms of reference and within a definite time frame to reach an agreement that allows for the establishment of an independent sovereign and viable Palestinian State with East Jerusalem as its capital on the West Bank and Gaza, and pave the way for a comprehensive settlement of the conflict and end the illegal occupation by Israel of all Arab territories occupied since 1967, including East Jerusalem and the Syrian Golan and the rest of occupied Lebanese territories, in order to achieve comprehensive and just peace and to establish normal relations between the Arabs and Israel according to the Arab Peace Initiative based on the complete withdrawal and settlement of the issue of refugees in exchange for full peace.

Certainly, the goal of comprehensive peace is primarily related to the extent of Israel seriousness to commit to reach the desired settlement, and to take actions to demonstrate that, in forefront, the complete cessation of all settlement activities in the occupied Arab territories on top of which East Jerusalem, to stop building the Separation Wall, to stop deepening divisions between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and to promote endeavors to start a fruitful negotiations to reach settlement on all final status issues. In this regard, the unilateral declaration by Israel to stop building new housing units in the West Bank for a period of ten months is not enough; the need is an end to the occupation of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem and an establishment of a Palestinian State on the full territories occupied by Israel in 1967.

Similarly, we look forward to the resumption of negotiations on the Syrian track and to reach agreement that allows for achieving Israel's full withdrawal from the occupied Syrian Golan to the borders of June 4, 1967, on the basis of all relevant terms of reference and what was accomplished during the previous negotiation rounds, in order to achieve comprehensive peace in the region.

Mr. President,

I have the pleasure to present to the General Assembly today two draft resolutions under Agenda Item 15 entitled "The situation in the Middle East", namely: draft resolution "Jerusalem", and draft resolution "The Syrian Golan".

The first draft resolution reaffirms that the relevant General Assembly and Security Council resolutions remain the main terms of reference for the special status of the Occupied East Jerusalem, which repeatedly confirms the renunciation and repudiation of all legislative, administrative measures and actions undertaken by Israel "the Occupying Power" aimed at the alteration of the character and legal status of the city. Moreover, the draft confirms that any just and comprehensive solution to the question of Jerusalem must include provisions on international guarantees ensuring the freedom of belief and religion to its inhabitants detached from settlement activity, unlawful attempts done by Israel to impose Jewish character on the city and, violations to the right of the Palestinians to worship and repeated aggressions on Al-Aqsa Mosque and threats to its structures.

The second draft resolution on the occupied Syrian Golan reaffirms Security Council resolution 497 of 1981 and underlines the deep concern of the General Assembly regarding Israel's continued noncompliance to its implementation. It also confirms the applicability of The Hague Convention of 1907 and the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 on the Syrian territory occupied since 1967 and the illegitimacy of both the decision to apply Israeli laws on this territory and the settlement activities there. The draft resolution also renews calls upon Israel to withdraw fully from the occupied Syrian Golan to the borders of June 4, 1967, the resumption of direct peace negotiations on the Syrian track and the respect of commitments reached through previous negotiations.

The sponsors of these two draft resolutions believe that the time has come for the international community to deal with the situation of the conflict in the Middle East through a comprehensive approach. Peoples of the region, which still suffer from the scourge of war and aggression, aspire to achieve peace, stability and coexistence. This can not be achieved without a political will and serious commitment from Israel to realize its full withdrawal from all occupied Palestinian and Arab territories, based on the principle of land for peace, international law, all the Arab Peace Initiative and the Road Map, and on the basis of all terms of reference stated in the Madrid principles and relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions.

To achieve all this, the sponsors look forward for the support of all States members of the General Assembly to vote in favor of these two draft resolutions and support the important goals contained therein, in order to reaffirm the firmness of the international will to achieve the set goals and to uphold the lofty objectives and principles of the Charter endorsed through the years by the Member States.

Thank you, Mr. President,