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The International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People

Mr. Chairman, Ambassador Diallo, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, I'm honored to address this meeting on behalf of the nonaligned movement on the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. Once again, we would like to show our solidarity with the Palestinian people and to reflect on the tragedy of that people in the context of the illegal occupation of its territory by Israel.

We reaffirm or resolve to redouble efforts to peacefully, justly, and comprehensively resolve the question of Palestine, including the adverse situation of its refugees in accordance with the rules and principles of international law and relevant United Nations resolutions.

The nonaligned movement has historically raised its voice in numerous international forums to support the Palestinian people in their just claim for a sovereign and independent state with East Jerusalem as its capital. In this context, the heads of state or government of the nonaligned movement at the 16th Summit of Movement in Tehran on August, 2012 again reviewed the serious situation in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, and reiterated their grave concern regarding the suffering of the Palestinian people under the prolonged and brutal Israeli military occupation.

Likewise, they rejected the ongoing deprivation of their inalienable rights, including the right to self-determination and the return of the Palestinian refugees to their territories, as well as the full enjoyment of their sovereign and independent state. The nonaligned movement appreciates the efforts of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, his Excellency Mr. Ban Ki Moon, and the efforts and initiatives of the Committee of the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and its chairman, His Excellency Ambassador Diallo, aimed at the implementation of United Nations resolutions regarding the question of Palestine.

Unfortunately, despite the hard efforts made by the United Nations, which we appreciate, in order to address the tragedy of the Palestinian people, whether through the assistance provided by UNRWA or through the various recommendations and resolutions adopted by the General assembly and the Security Council, Israel, the occupying power, continues to reject these resolutions as if it is a state above the law.

It is regrettable but Israel has persisted with policies that are prejudicial to negotiations on the core issues, namely the status of Jerusalem, settlements, refugees, security and water. This has in turn exacerbated conditions on the ground, undermined confidence, deepened mistrust, and obstructed the resumption of the peace process.

Israel has continued with its illegal campaign aimed at altering the demographic composition, legal status, character of and geographic nature of the occupied Palestinian territories, including East Jerusalem, so as to facilitate de facto annexation of more Palestinian land.

Israel has also continued to commit other violations which include the imposition of collective punishment, violating the human rights of Palestinian civilian population, the mass imprisonment of Palestinians and administrative detention, routine demolition of homes and resulting displacement of Palestinians and causing constant humiliation, hardship and instability.

The situation is most dire in the Gaza Strip where about 1.7 million Palestinians remain imprisoned by the Israeli blockade, imposed by land, air, and sea. The latest Israeli military campaign against the Palestinian people, particularly in the Gaza Strip that were carried out during the eight-day of November 14-21 of 2012 resulted reportedly in the killing of more than 160 Palestinians, including women and children, and wounding about 1,200 Palestinian people and considers it as the grave breaches of international law, including international humanitarian law, particularly the Fourth Geneva Convention and relevant United Nations resolutions.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, while expressing alarm about the intensification of Israel's settlement activities, the nonaligned movement stresses that a full cessation of all Israeli settlement activities is in compliance with international humanitarian law and is necessary for fostering an environment conducive for salvaging the two-state solution based on the 1967 borders.

The nonaligned movement calls for urgent action and practical measures by the international community, in particular by the Security Council, to compel the occupying power to cease completely it's illegal and destructive settlement campaign in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, and to abide by all of its obligations under international law, including the fourth Geneva Convention, UN resolutions, the advisory opinions, and its obligations under the roadmap in this regard.

The movement reiterates its serious concern about the dangerous impasse in the Middle East peace process and calls for immediate and practical efforts to advance a fair and credible peace process based on the relevant United Nations resolutions, including Security Council resolutions, the Madrid terms of reference, including the principle of land for peace, the Arab peace initiative and the roadmap.

We stress that the peace process must ensure an end to the occupation of the Palestinian territory and the other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967, including East Jerusalem, the exercise by the Palestinian people of their right to self-determination in an independent, sovereign, and viable state of Palestine with East Jerusalem as its capital, and a just solution for the plight of the Palestinian refugees based on General Assembly resolution 194.

In this regard, the nonaligned movement committee on Palestine has welcomed all efforts and initiatives aimed at realizing the two-state solution and justice for Palestinian people and it stresses the importance of the developments to accord observer state status to Palestine, expressing the hope that this multilateral, peaceful initiative, consistent with the United Nations resolutions regarding the question of Palestine, including with regard to the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, and the international consensus on the two-state solution will positively contribute to salvaging the prospects for peace.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, the nonaligned movement reiterates once again its strong support and solidarity with the Palestinian people and reaffirms its unwavering commitment to the immediate restoration of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to exercise its self-determination and sovereignty in its independent state of Palestine with East Jerusalem as its capital.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.