



**SPECIAL MEETING TO MARK 40 YEARS OF OCCUPATION BY ISRAEL OF THE
PALESTINIAN TERRITORY**

STATEMENT

BY

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(Check against delivery)

African Union, through her voice and through the present message of the Chairperson of the Commission, pays tribute to this Committee to have consecrated this week to mark the 40th anniversary of the Israel occupation of the Palestinian territory. We reiterate, right from the start and without any reserve, our perfect solidarity with the oppressed brother, great in his sacrifice as in his dignity.

This anniversary is not like so many others that are celebrated in joy and with feastivity. This anniversary calls upon us to resolve and bow in the memory of those that succumbed in the untiring fight for justice and liberty. This anniversary calls upon us to meditate, to carry out necessary introspection, but also to take up the duty of expression.

40 years of occupation, for us Africans that have suffered the ills of colonization, it is after all, years of despair and frustration. No single word would be eloquent enough to describe the suffering lived in daily by men, women, children, whose only fault was to be born on a soil blessed by the Gods but envied by men. 40 years, 14600 days and nights of agony, the ravages, pillage, spoliation, torture, killings, despite the declaration of cessation of hostilities in June 1967. A profound declaration crusted in our memories, source of thousands of hope and thousand deceptions.

40 years occupation, it is also 40 years of the international community, through the adoption of multiple resolutions. I wish to cite here Resolution 242 adopted by the Security Council in 1967, Resolution 338 in 1973, and Resolution 1397 in 2002. I will also mention here, among others, the Arab Peace and the Quartet Road Map Initiatives. To all these initiatives, the African Union reiterates its firm attachment and calls for their effective implementation.

As, unfortunately, these 40 years have also been witness to the powerlessness of the International Community to enforce the world order and justice as a whole. As we all have seen and know, the international laws, the human rights, have been violated and are to this day, amplify to infinity the Israeli-Palestine conflict.

These forty years have been specially marked by the confiscation by the Israeli colonies of thousands of Palestinian areas, including East Jerusalem, in violation of the 4th Geneva Convention and its first additional protocol. The majority of the United Nations Organs, particularly the Security Council, General Assembly, the International Court of Justice, affirm the illegitimacy of these colonies and have called for them to be dismantled.

As we talk about the dialogue among civilizations, at the time that general mobilization is required, faced with new challenges that threaten humanity, such as the climate change or the AIDS pandemic, a Wall was erected in 2003, bringing with it the overall cleavage between two peoples and the powerlessness of our international system to put an end to such an aberration.

Despite the advisory notice of July 9, 2004 issued by the International Court of Justice, despite the vehement condemnation by the majority of the member states, this Wall of discord persists, and with its 500 control posts and dense network of barricades, transformed the Palestinian territory into an immense virtual open air prison.

It goes without saying that this unprecedented places the people in deplorable humanitarian and socio-economic situations and in unacceptable situations that restrictions their movement.

African Union reiterates its unfailing commitment to fight the colonial practices that have revolved and go against the current of history. Faithful as always to the principles that characterize and to its fundamental values, the African Union as, before it, the Organization of African Unity, have not ceased to condemn all forms of repression, aggression and injustice, through its resolutions and pertinent decisions.

The answer does not lie in a military solution to the Israeli-Palestine conflict. Only, a global solution and a peaceful settlement of the matter, based on the incessant implementation of the international laws, the respect of the international legitimacy, the application of the principle of peace for the land, could reasonably lead to a sustainable solution.

Today, a solemn appeal is sent to the government of Israel to cease all financial blockage and to accept the transfer of the legitimate funds to the people of Palestine.

A solemn appeal is sent to the Security Council to seek for practical measures to bring the government of Israel to conform, as soon as possible, to its resolutions.

A solemn appeal is sent to all the international community to conjugated efforts in view of the advent of the two states, Israel and Palestine, live side by side in harmony; Together, lets us act so that the Middle East opens its doors to a new era where finally Peace and Justice reign.

In conclusion, let us make an ardent wish that the next celebrations in this venue, will be, not to commemorate another year of occupation, but to usher in the liberation so much waited for by the Palestinian people.

I thank you.