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Mission permanente de la Suisse  
auprès des Nations Unies à New York

Seul le texte prononcé fait foi

**62<sup>ème</sup> Session de l'Assemblée générale des Nations Unies  
Plénière**

**Point 17 à l'ordre du jour**

**La situation au Moyen-Orient**

**Déclaration prononcée par**

**S.E. M. Peter Maurer**

**Représentant Permanent de la Suisse  
auprès des Nations Unies**

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**62<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly of the United Nations  
Plenary**

**Agenda Item 17**

**The situation in the Middle East**

**Statement by**

**H.E. Mr. Peter Maurer**

**Permanent Representative of Switzerland  
to the United Nations**

**New York, le 30 novembre 2007**

Mr President,

Switzerland welcomes the results of the Annapolis Conference, specifically the commitment of the parties to resume negotiations on a final settlement of the conflict by the end of 2008 as well as the reaffirmation of the obligations set out in the Road Map and the acceptance to create a monitoring mechanism under the aegis of the United States. We hope that the process the parties have embarked upon will bring the expected results. It is crucial that the parties to the conflict fulfil the commitments they have entered into, or which they reaffirmed, and that they keep the channel of dialogue and negotiation open in all circumstances. The aim is to make reality the right of Israel to live in peace within secure and internationally recognised borders and the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and to establish a viable Palestinian state.

This having been said the Annapolis process will only be able to win support on both sides and to succeed if it leads to a tangible improvement in the everyday lives of Palestinians and Israelis. In this context, we wish to mention that:

- The political process will win credibility through a parallel process of economic recovery of a similar scope. We therefore welcome the plan of the Quartet's special Envoy, Tony Blair, and the donors' Conference, which will take place in Paris on 17 December 2007;
- All discussions must be inclusive. We therefore call for the resumption of the intra-Palestinian dialogue to allow a national consensus to emerge. The political parties must overcome their differences in order to address the hopes for peace of their people. It is only by following this path that the Palestinian Authority will be able to re-establish its authority over the entire Occupied Palestinian Territory, to take the necessary measures to ensure security, good governance and respect for human rights, and to establish itself as a reliable partner capable of implementing the commitments it enters into with regard to the peace process;

- In this context, we are concerned about the economic situation in Gaza. The economic and social situation must receive special attention. The consequences of the total and prolonged closure of the borders on the socio-economic fabric have been terrible, and the announcement of a progressive reduction in the supply of energy augurs very badly. Even if we fully understand the security concerns expressed by Israel and by Egypt and can comprehend that the Palestinian Authority cannot accept the *faits accomplis* presented by armed groups in Gaza, it is nonetheless our common duty to recall the obligations of international law. The Palestinian civilian population of Gaza has the right to as normal a life as possible in keeping with the Geneva Conventions and the international conventions on the protection of human rights. It must not be punished or made hostage of the political situation. Measures taken to ensure security must be as contained as possible and must not be carried out for purely political ends. It is urgent to allow economic life to recover by reopening the border crossing points, in conformity with the Agreement on Movement and Access of 15 November 2005;
- The territorial unity of the Occupied Palestinian Territory – Gaza, the West Bank and East Jerusalem – must be maintained and respected. While the situation in Gaza presents a particular challenge, the situation in the West Bank is also far from satisfactory. Annapolis promises, through its references to the Quartet's Road Map, a number of measures that we hope will be implemented very soon. We would like to recall in particular the freeze on the expansion of settlements, the evacuation of the settler outposts, as well as all measures aimed at relaxing restrictions placed on the movement of people and goods, and at granting international and humanitarian personnel unrestricted freedom of access without risk to their security and without hindrance. The obligations of the Road Map are also applicable in the Gaza Strip.
- The security challenge presented by the regular firing of Qassam rockets at Sderot and other Israeli localities neighbouring Gaza must be acknowledged. These attacks against essentially civilian targets are unacceptable and clear violations of

international humanitarian law. They are a reminder of the importance of the fight against terrorism, which is also an integral part of the Road Map;

- It is essential that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict be resolved. The conflict is at the centre of the whole Middle East issue, and the effects of it extend far beyond the region. At the same time, the other conflicts between Israel and its neighbours - whose origins are a consequence of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict - must not be forgotten. Until these conflicts are resolved, the region will never find the stability that is not only in its own interest but in that of the whole world. We therefore hope that the efforts of the international community will also embrace the concerns of Syria and Lebanon in the near future.

Mr President,

I would like to conclude with some thoughts on Lebanon. A possible solution to the crisis seems to be emerging. We encourage the people of Lebanon to overcome their differences, because such a step will lead to the election of a president and to the restoration of functioning institutions in the country. Internal problems are certainly at the root of the tense and precarious situation in Lebanon, but the situation in part also reflects unresolved conflicts throughout the region. We urge all powers with interests in Lebanon to exercise a positive influence, with the aim of strengthening the unity of the country. The involvement of many States, including Switzerland, in helping the Lebanese people emerge from this deadlock demonstrates the importance of this country and the need to respect its integrity. We can only look forward to a future rapprochement, and we remain available to facilitate the process if such is the wish of the people of Lebanon.

Thank you, Mr President.