65th General Assembly

Statement by Qatari Representative

Situation in the Middle East/Question of Palestine

November 30, 2010

QATAR: Mr. President, at the outset I would like to extend my thanks to you for holding this meeting on the situation in the Middle East, including the question of Palestine. Despite the serious efforts exerted by the international community, including through the quartet and the state sponsoring the peace process to press ahead with this process, which at the beginning gave rise to the conduct of indirect negotiations and the launching of direct negotiations between the Israeli and Palestinian sides, yet the intransigence by the Israeli side and its persistence in the construction of settlements and its disregard for international appeals calling upon it to stop this with a view to encouraging the negotiating process precluded the achievement of any tangible progress so far.

The Arab states demonstrated the serious wish for peace and provided for an atmosphere conducive to peace negotiations. This will not continue ad infinitum. Mr. President, it is quite clear that military occupation is the main reason for the problem and it will not provide security for Israel. It is the worst violation of human rights against a defenseless and persecuted people on the pretext of combating violence and terrorism. As a matter of fact, it is one of the radical reasons for terrorism.

The pretext to use military force -- excessive military force on the -- giving reasons of protecting the security of Israel is null and void and the struggle of people for the liberation from foreign occupation cannot be equal to military aggression.

Israeli authorities perpetrate numerous violations against human rights against the Arab population inside the so-called green line. It continues its challenge in defiance of international community, expanding the illegal settlements with a view to annexing further Palestinian territory de facto. This constitutes a blow to international mediation efforts, particularly the efforts made by the quartet.

The state of Qatar, which believes that solving the question of Palestine comes through the existence of two states living in peace side by side is of the view that the Israeli government attempts to expand settlements, particularly around East Jerusalem, thwart the opportunities to achieve the two states on the basis of the 1967 borders. This threatens the contiguity of the Palestinian land, a main pillar of the establishment of the Palestinian state.

The Israeli government tries to justify the expansion of settlements with so-called natural growth. We reject this in full because settlement activities is illegal in the main. That growth is not natural. Israeli public policy encourages settlement over occupied Palestinian territory, particular in East Jerusalem through extending government bonuses and incentives to encourage the transfer of its civilian population to the Palestinian territory, contrary to international law.

We must refer to continued Israeli violations of Lebanese sovereignty and to Security Council resolution 1701 and to Israeli occupation of Lebanese territory in the Syrian Golan. We would like to assert the invalidity of Israel's decision to annex the Golan and the need to return it to Syria, as well as the remaining Lebanese territories to Lebanon.

We wish also to reemphasize the need for complete Israeli pullout from occupied Syrian Golan to the 4, June 1967 line. The international community has to bring pressure to bear on Israel seriously to guarantee respect for Security Council resolution 497, which rejected Israel's decision to annex the Syrian Golan and considered it null and void. Still, that resolution is waiting its implementation by Israel for three decades.

In this connection, we would like to refer to the decision taken by the League of Arab States Council at the Lebanon Summit under the title Occupied Syrian Arab Golan, adopted during the course of the Arab Summit in Doha on 30, March 2009. It emphasizes the need to return the occupied Syrian Golan to Syria for the sake of achieving just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

For stability to prevail in Lebanon, it is necessary to respect and carry out security resolution 1701 by all parties with no discrimination or selectivity. Yet ceaseless Israeli flights over Lebanon constitute the most considerable violations of that resolution in addition to its continued occupation of the Shebaa Farms and El Rugor [?] [00:24:09]. This threatens and thwarts the credibility of the UFL, as well as the ability of the Lebanese government to extend its sovereignty over its territory.

On the other hand, to guarantee the entrenchment of peace, security and stability, we emphasize the need to make the Middle East a nuclear-weapon-free zone. Mr. President, we would like to stress our categorical rejection of the illegal measures taken by Israel in the occupied East Jerusalem and its attempts to alter the Arab identity of the city, its demographic infrastructure, its legal status and religious character. All these attempts are null and void and have no legal effect.

The international community is duty-bound to express its rejection of Israeli government attempts to adversely affect Christian and Islamic holy places, evict, demolishing homes and evicting Arab population, withdrawing their IDs with a view to Judaizing the city. These attempts run counter to Israel's obligations being the occupying power in conformity with international law and run counter to relevant UN resolutions, as well as the basic peaceful solution for the question of Palestine and the Arab/Israeli conflict. In addition, they torpedo international efforts by the Alliance of Civilization.

Mr. President, the achievement of a just, comprehensive and permanent peace in the Middle East region can only be based on the principle of land for peace, as well as the reference points represented in relevant UN resolutions, as well as the Arab peace initiative. Therefore, the Israeli government has to refrain from taking extremist positions and to exploiting the Arab side's sincere intention with a view to ending the Middle East crisis.

In conclusion, I would like to stress the need to involve all categories of the Palestinian people to bring about the success of the peace efforts. The Palestinian brothers have to seriously try to foster the national unity in a manner that serves the interest of the Palestinian people and safeguards the unity of the geographic and political unity of the Palestinian land.

We wish to address a salutation of pride to our brothers, the Palestinians standing against occupation, injustice and persecution. Thank you.