*Unofficial Transcript*

NAMIBIA

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Mr. President, let me add my voice and join distinguished speakers who spoke before me in extending Namibia's appreciation to the UN Secretary General and also His Excellency, Mr. Abdou Salam Diallo, permanent representative of Senegal and Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People for their report contained in the documents before us.

Namibia fully concurs with observations, as well as the recommendations contained in both reports. While my delegations align themselves with the statement made by his Excellency Nassir Abdulaziz, the distinguished permanent representative of Egypt on behalf of the NAM and His Excellency, Mr. Abdou Salam Diallo, Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. Allow me also to make an additional comment on behalf of my country, Namibia.

Mr. President, yesterday in this very hall, we had a distinguished delegate acknowledging how hurtful the truth is. However, I would like to add that the truth is only hurtful to those who try to hide it or are in denial of the reality. The truth is like a beacon which illuminates away the darkness of falsehood and deception. It exposes lies spread to cover the nakedness of injustice.

History has taught us valuable lessons that those who spread injustice often bury their heads in the sifting sand of denial, pretending not to see injustice, but each time they lift their heads, they are confronted by reality. Hence, they revert to denial more.

Yesterday morning, we had a solemn meeting to observe the International Day of Solidarity with the people of Palestine. Sixty-four years ago, the General Assembly adopted resolution 181, which partitioned Palestine in two states. The state of Israel was created through a resolution adopted by the General Assembly, yet the people of Palestine opted to use the same rule and they are told it is counterproductive to peace process, which has been in any case stalled since last year.

At this occasion every year, the international community reiterates its full support for the Palestinian people for the exercise of their inalienable rights towards establishing a sovereign and independent state based on a two-state solution. Relevant Security Council and the General Assembly resolution, the Madrid principles, the Arab peace initiative and the roadmap.

I take this opportunity to reaffirm our unwavering solidarity and support for the rights of the people of Palestine to self determination and the independent state of Palestine, which should take its rightful place among the sovereign family of nations.

On 23, September of this year, the people of Palestine took a step to move closer to their most cherished dream, that of establishing a sovereign state of Palestine. They apply for full membership of the United Nations in accordance with relevant procedures enshrined in the charter of this organization. Ironically, it is disappointing that the application for full membership by Palestine has not been treated with the sense of urgency it deserves.

It is also regrettable that there is a lack of consensus among Security Council members to recommend Palestine's membership to the General Assembly. The main reason for the Security Council paralysis on this issue is inconceivable. If and when Palestine becomes a member state of the United Nations, it will assume responsibility and obligation enshrined in the charter of this organization.

When President Mahmoud Abbas announced that Palestine had applied for membership from this very podium, the people of Palestine rejoiced with high expectation, hoping that the United Nations was going to accept their application. It is our firm belief or conviction that freedom is indispensable for human progress. It's not a privilege for the few.

While the international community applauded sweeping change and profound change in the Middle East this year, the people of Palestine continue to face uncertainty under occupation and economic hardship. The international community cannot welcome sweeping change in the same region and at the same time remain unresponsive to the genuine desire of the people of Palestine to enjoy better standards of life in a viable state of their own, free from occupation and hardship.

We deplore the action of the Israeli government in withholding the Palestinian tax revenue, which appears to be the punishment for Palestine's admission into UNESCO. Palestine's admission to UNESCO is a fulfillment of legitimate desire and aspiration for the people of Palestine and a sovereign decision of member states in the exercise of their right and free will.

Mr. President, Israeli occupation of Palestine remains a major source of perpetrating the suffering of Palestine and relegates them to refugee status. Israel, the occupying power, continues with the illegal construction of settlement and the demolitions of Palestinian homes, as well as construction of apartheid wall of separation in total disregard to a recent opinion of the International Court of Justice.

These acts are inconsistent with international law and pose a clear and present danger to peace and stability, as well as an impediment to the peace process. We therefore condemn any action that frustrates genuine effort to achieve durable peace between Israel and Palestine. However, the Israeli authority as occupying power must demonstrate beyond any reasonable doubt that they are committed to peace and must refrain from counterproductive actions that are likely to impact negatively on the peace process.

Namibia shares the conviction that achieving a just, lasting and comprehensive settlement on the question of Palestine, the core of the Arab/Israel conflict, is imperative for the attainment of peace and stability in the Middle East. We have therefore come here today to express our support for the restart of the Middle East peace process based on relevant Security Council resolutions, the Madrid terms of reference, including the principles of land for peace, the roadmap and the Arab peace initiative, as well as the arrangement made in good faith between the people of Palestine and Israel.

However, for the peace negotiation to succeed, it requires two committed, willing partners to carry it through to its logical conclusion. While we express our support for the resumption of peace process, the process should not be turned into a perpetual orbit with no destination. Yesterday, the very same delegate I mentioned earlier told the General Assembly that the resolutions we adopt each year or each time have been copied and pasted over the years. If that is the case, perhaps it is occupation which has been perpetually copied and pasted over and over again.

If there are no changes in the occupation and the plight of Palestine people continue to face a mortal danger, we will continue to adopt resolutions that correspond with the reality of the situation.

Mr. President, time and again, my delegation has repeatedly acknowledged that Israel, like any other country on earth, is duly entitled to adequate security. However, in the pursuit of security, Israelis should not violate human rights and extinguish the rays of hope for the people of Palestine. It is our firmly held conviction that the only way Israel can guarantee its security is through the creation of the state of Palestine, which will exist side by side with Israel inside the internationally recognized borders.

The people of Palestine, just like any other people on earth, have a right to their land and the creation of a viable state. Equally, Namibia believes that the right to self determination is a fundamental human right, which for too long has been denied to the people of Palestine. They continue to look up to the United Nations to give them hope so that they can join all of us in declaring that we, the people of the United Nations, are determined to promote social progress and better standard of life in larger freedom. If we fail to heed to the voice of the people of Palestine, history will reserve a harsh judgment on our collective failure. I thank you, Mr. President.