

STATEMENT BY

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CHAIRMAN OF THE
COMMITTEE ON THE EXERCISE OF THE INALIENABLE
RIGHTS OF THE PALSTINIAN PEOPLE

ON THE OCCASION OF THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF
SOLIDARITY WITH THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

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Ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the Committee, I should like to express all my great satisfaction and gratitude that you are joining us today on the occasion of the celebration of this important event – the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.

Each year, this Day gives us the welcome opportunity to renew our brotherly solidarity with the Palestinian people and to review past events but also to look ahead to the future that we want to build for Palestine.

This Day also enables us to engage in reflection, which we hope will be fruitful, and to exchange views on the various measures that could be adopted by the international community, the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Quartet, the Secretariat, the United Nations agencies working on site, the Member States and civil society in order to give shape to the vision of a free, independent and prosperous Palestinian State living in peace with Israel.

The whole world still remembers the historic date of 29 November 2012 when, in the presence of the President of the Palestinian Authority, Mahmoud ABBAS, the United Nations General Assembly recognized the statehood of Palestine in resolution 67/19. Sixty-six years after the United Nations promised to grant Palestine the status of an independent State, you will agree that this recognition meets an internationally recognized requirement and corrects an anomaly.

It is time for Palestinian children to stop being hunted down and to be able to breathe the fresh air of freedom, instead of the asphyxiating smell of tear gas.

Their right to life must be fully respected and not be dependent on the whim of anonymous soldiers.

Their parents must be able to look after them without having to wonder whether their home will still be standing tomorrow.

Palestinian farmers must be able to visit their olive groves safely, without fearing that they will be destroyed and burnt down by settlers out of control.

It is time for the inhabitants of Gaza to be able to visit their loved ones on the West Bank from whom they have been unjustly separated by the blockade.

Like the followers of all the revealed religions, the Palestinians should be able to enjoy unfettered freedom of religion and freedom to visit the holy places of Jerusalem.

The Palestinian refugees should be able to leave the overcrowded camps and return to their homes for good.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Let us today make a joint commitment to work hard so that we can welcome the President of the Palestinian Authority in the near future as the Head of a fully sovereign State and a full-fledged member of the United Nations family.

Let us work together to seize what seems to be one of the last opportunities to promote the negotiated solution providing for coexistence of the two States, Palestine and Israel. Time is running out. The negotiating process is endangered by certain policies and particularly by the ongoing establishment of Jewish settlements.

In this connection, I wish to commend the specific and wise measures taken by the European Union to adopt stricter regulations, particularly as regards products from the Jewish settlements. All Governments and international organizations should follow this example and act accordingly.

At the same time, the Palestinian Government must be given aid and assistance to enable it to meet its obligations in the difficult context facing it. We must also help the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East to effectively continue the work that it has been doing for many decades. Lastly, let us encourage the Palestinians to overcome their differences in order to facilitate a lasting peace.

Ladies and gentlemen,

In order to discharge its growing workload more efficiently, our Bureau now has additional members. At the same time, our working group on contacts with civil society has resumed work.

Today we are officially inaugurating the United Nations Platform on the Question of Palestine, an on-line tool allowing coordination of our Committee's work with that of the nongovernmental organizations.

In addition, through the resolutions which I shall be introducing this afternoon in the General Assembly under the item "Question of Palestine", we shall request inter alia that 2014 should be declared "International Year of Solidarity with the Palestinian People". I urge your delegations to demonstrate their solidarity by voting for the four draft resolutions. The success of this international year will depend on the mobilization of Governments, civil society and the whole United Nations.

The Committee will continue to make all necessary efforts to effectively discharge the mandate given to it by the General Assembly until such time as the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people are fully realized. We remain committed and mobilized to achieve a permanent, just and lasting settlement of the conflict, based on the two-State solution, allowing Israel and Palestine to live in peace and security.

Thank you for your attention.