



General Assembly

Distr.: General
8 December 2014
English
Original: Spanish

Sixty-ninth session

Item 36

Question of Palestine**Note verbale dated 24 November 2014 from the Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General**

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Cuba to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and has the honour to transmit herewith a message from Mr. Bruno Eduardo Rodríguez Parrilla, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cuba, in observance of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People (see annex).

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Cuba requests the Secretary-General to have this message circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 36.



Annex to the note verbale dated 24 November 2014 from the Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On behalf of the Cuban people and Government, I have the honour to address the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People on the occasion of the observance of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, during the International Year of Solidarity with the Palestinian People proclaimed by the General Assembly.

This date represents an opportunity to recall the day on which the General Assembly adopted resolution 181 (II), in 1947, on the partition of Palestine. That decision gave rise, the following year, to the tragedy known as the Nakbah, as a result of which more than three quarters of historic Palestine was seized by force, 531 Palestinian towns and villages were destroyed and 85 per cent of the population was expelled or displaced. As a result, some 5 million Palestinian refugees are now scattered throughout the Middle East.

We reaffirm our unequivocal solidarity with the Palestinian people and the firm and decisive support of Cuba for all action aiming to promote recognition of the State of Palestine on the basis of the pre-1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital, as well as its right to admission to full membership in the United Nations.

On 29 November 2012, the General Assembly adopted, by a large majority, the historic decision to accord to Palestine observer State status in the United Nations. The Security Council must take action and accept without further delay the request for recognition as a State Member of the United Nations submitted by Palestine in 2011, in line with the expressed desire of the great majority of States. Otherwise, we believe it will be incumbent on the General Assembly to act swiftly and with determination.

Palestine has demonstrated its commitment to the multilateral system by working with a high degree of responsibility and professionalism in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, to which it was admitted as a full member in 2011. We welcome Palestine's application to accede to 13 international conventions and United Nations treaties.

The Palestinian authorities have made progress in strengthening their State institutions in recent years. Numerous reports of the United Nations and other institutions have recognized the solidity of Palestinian institutions and the capacity of the Palestinians to exercise their sovereignty in an independent State.

Cuba reaffirms its support for the Palestine Liberation Organization, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, and for the Palestinian Authority under the leadership of President Mahmoud Abbas. We recognize the importance of the reconciliation agreement signed on 23 April 2014 and the formation by consensus of a national unity Government for the realization of the just, legitimate national aspirations and rights of the Palestinian people.

Israel's military occupation, and its increased aggression against the Palestinian people, particularly in the Gaza Strip, along with the policy of illegal settlements and other colonizing practices, undermine the viability of a Palestinian

State within the pre-1967 borders and, therefore, the possibility of resolving the conflict in a just and equitable manner.

Cuba strongly condemns the most recent massacre committed by Israel against the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip, which resulted in the death of more than 2,000 Palestinians, most of them children, women and the elderly; injured more than 11,000 people, leaving many of them with permanent disabilities; caused the forced displacement of more than a third of the Palestinian population in Gaza; and destroyed over 5,000 homes, as well as civilian infrastructure including hospitals, schools, mosques and public utilities; thereby worsening the humanitarian crisis in the besieged Gaza Strip, where the situation was already difficult owing to the illegal Israeli blockade and the resulting shortage of supplies of all kinds.

The steady deterioration of the political, economic, social and humanitarian situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, as a result of Israel's persistent illegal policies and practices, including grave violations of human rights and constant war crimes, is of great concern to Cuba and the other members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

Cuba reiterates its strong condemnation of the continued expansion of illegal Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, the most recent example of which was the announcement by the Israeli Government that it had approved the construction of over 2,000 new settler homes in East Jerusalem.

This policy is a grave violation of international law, in particular article 49 of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, which prohibits the occupying Power from transferring parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies; it has a serious impact on the Palestinian population in general and, in particular, on the precarious living conditions of the Palestinian refugees registered in the Occupied Palestinian Territory; and it is contrary to the objectives of the peace process.

The illegal construction and expansion of settlements and the wall; home demolitions; excavations; the confiscation of Palestinian lands; the eviction of Palestinian families in East Jerusalem; the transfer of settlers; the imposition of arbitrary and racist restrictions on movement throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, especially within and around East Jerusalem; and the systematic destruction of the rudimentary Palestinian economic infrastructure; among other illegal acts of incitement, provocation and aggression perpetrated by extremist settlers against the Palestinian population and their holy sites, must end immediately, as called for in many resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly, and in the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the construction of the wall, issued in 2004.

Cuba also calls for an end to the prolonged and illegal Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories, the immediate, unconditional and complete lifting of the cruel and illegal blockade against Gaza and the opening of the border crossings and checkpoints so as to allow unimpeded access of ongoing humanitarian aid and essential goods and supplies, and to facilitate the transit of persons from and to the Gaza Strip.

The international community cannot remain impassive and silent in the face of the abuses and violations against the Palestinian people. The Security Council must

adopt, without further delay, practical measures to ensure that Israel ends its aggression against the Palestinian people, once and for all, and that it is held accountable for the crimes of aggression, collective punishments, arbitrary detentions, mass incarcerations and genocide committed against the Palestinian people. The historical debt to the Palestinian people must be paid.

We reiterate the need to intensify efforts to resolve the dire situation of the Palestinian refugees, in accordance with the norms and principles of international law and the relevant resolutions of the United Nations.

On this significant date, Cuba reiterates that it will not cease to call for comprehensive, just and lasting peace for the Palestinian people and for the peoples of the Middle East in general and strict respect for all their rights. The Arab peoples, without exception, will always be able to rely on the full solidarity of the Cuban people.

(Signed) Bruno **Rodríguez Parrilla**
