



# General Assembly

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## Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People

### Summary record of the 334th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 27 July 2011, at 10.30 a.m.

*Chair:* Mr. Diallo ..... (Senegal)

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*The meeting was called to order at 10.40 a.m.*

### **Adoption of the agenda**

1. *The agenda was adopted.*

### **Update on developments since the previous meeting of the Committee**

2. **The Chair**, summarizing some of the activities and development that had taken place since the Committee's previous meeting, said that, on 23 June, Mr. Pascoe, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, had briefed the Security Council on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question. On 28 June, the United States Senate had passed a resolution threatening to suspend financial assistance to the Palestinian Authority if it went ahead with its September bid for statehood at the United Nations.

3. On 28 and 29 June, the Committee had convened the United Nations International Meeting in Support of the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process in Brussels. From 28 to 30 June, the thirty-eighth session of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Organization of the Islamic Conference had been held in Astana; Mr. Daou (Mali), who had represented the Committee at the meeting, would provide a briefing at a later date.

4. On 5 July, the Government of Israel had published tenders for the construction of some 400 housing units in settlements in the West Bank. On 7 July, the United States House of Representatives had passed a resolution "[reiterating] its strong opposition to any attempt to establish or seek recognition of a Palestinian state outside of an agreement negotiated between Israel and the Palestinians" and "[urging] the administration to consider suspending assistance to the Palestinian Authority pending a review of the unity agreement". On 11 July, the Quartet principals had met in Washington, D.C., but had issued no statement.

5. On 12 and 13 July, the Department of Public Information had held the nineteenth annual International Media Seminar on Peace in the Middle East in Budapest; as Chair of the Committee, he had sent a message, a copy of which had been distributed to the members of the Committee.

6. Over the past month, the Palestinian leadership had continued its efforts to gain international recognition of Palestine as a State on the basis of the

1967 borders and to ask for the international community's support of the Palestine request for membership in the United Nations. The Syrian Arab Republic had recently recognized the State of Palestine. The Governments of Azerbaijan, Iceland, Norway, Spain and Turkey had confirmed their support for Palestine's request for membership in the Organization. Norway and Iceland had also raised the status of the Palestinian diplomatic representation in their respective countries.

7. On 26 July, the Security Council had held an open debate on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question.

### **The situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and developments in the political process**

8. **Mr. Mansour** (Observer for Palestine) said that he had briefed the Security Council on 26 July 2011 on the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, in particular with regard to the increased settlement activity, the plight of Palestinian political prisoners in Israeli prisons, and the immoral blockade of the Gaza Strip. He had been to the Occupied Territory twice in the last month: each time, he had enjoyed a constructive, informative discussion with the Minister for Prisoners' Affairs and activists in that Ministry on the intensification of the Israeli repression in the Occupied Territory and the suffering of Palestinian political prisoners. He had reiterated the Committee's continued concern at the prisoners' plight and its efforts to advance their cause internationally. He had also drawn their attention to the Committee Bureau's decision to hold another meeting in Geneva on the question of prisoners, possibly in 2012. The Ministry had expressed its desire to continue strengthening its relationship with the Committee and had informed him of messages of gratitude from Palestinian political prisoners in Israeli prisons to the Committee for advancing their cause.

9. Recently, he had visited the village of Bil'in, whose residents' non-violent protests had resulted in the re-routing of the wall being built by Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. He had met with the Popular Committee there, encouraging its members to continue their efforts to dismantle the wall, in accordance with the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice.

10. His delegation continued its efforts towards the recognition of Palestine as an independent State beginning with the sixty-sixth session of the United Nations General Assembly. In that connection, it was important to recognize and consolidate the accomplishments made by the Palestinian people, namely, the completion of a two-year State-building programme headed by Mr. Fayyad, Prime Minister of the Palestinian Authority. The Palestinian Authority had delivered on its end of the agreement with the international community, which provided for the building of Palestinian State institutions, the end of the Israeli occupation, and the independence of Palestine; it was now ready to govern as an independent, middle-income State. It was now time for the international community to help end occupation and to recognize Palestine as an independent State. Over 120 countries had invested in peace through the recognition of the State of Palestine. There were, clearly, major obstacles in Palestine's path to statehood, however: if the country that constituted the greatest obstacle continued to deny Palestine the right to join the community of nations, his delegation would turn to its other options, the first of which would be to continue negotiation of the peace process.

**Report of the Chair on the United Nations International Meeting in Support of the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process, Brussels, 28 and 29 June 2011**

11. **The Chair** said that the United Nations International Meeting in Support of the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process had been held in Brussels on 28 and 29 June 2011. The Meeting had been attended by representatives of Governments, Palestine, inter-governmental organizations, United Nations entities, civil society organizations and the media, as well as a delegation from the Committee.

12. Participants had stressed the need for the parties to resume direct negotiations. The representative of the European Union had said it was important for the Quartet to be guided by the principles outlined by United States President Obama in his statement of 19 May 2011 and for the inter-Palestinian reconciliation to lead to the formation of a transitional Government.

13. In plenary meetings, 14 experts had given presentations on steps taken by Europe to promote peace between Israelis and Palestinians. Highlighting the urgent need to bring about a two-State solution,

participants had enquired as to the outcome of negotiations in the event that Palestine was recognized and admitted as a State into the United Nations. It had been noted by some that the negotiations and the membership of Palestine as a Member State were not mutually exclusive; the right to self-determination was an inalienable right of the Palestinian people and therefore itself was not negotiable.

14. Concern had been expressed regarding the time frame for making the two-State solution a reality. It had been noted that there was no consensus within the European Union regarding the recognition of the State of Palestine and that the decision to recognize it should be made by each member individually. Participants had stressed that Palestinians should not constitute an exception to receiving support from the European community for the legitimate democratic aspirations of the Middle East.

15. While urging donors to continue providing humanitarian aid to the Palestinian people, many participants had said that Europe should attempt to influence Israel, including through its trade policy, to respect international law. The crucial role of national parliaments, the European Parliament and civil society in promoting the rights of the Palestinian people had been emphasized. A copy of the conclusions of the Meeting had been distributed to Committee members.

16. In addition to participating in the Meeting, the Committee's representatives had held consultations with civil society organizations. Those organizations had welcomed the work of the Committee and asked it to continue its efforts to help civil society strengthen its coordination internationally and with the Palestinian Authority.

17. The Committee's representatives had also held meetings with officials of the Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and of European institutions. Those meetings had focused on the urgent need to achieve a two-State solution. The Committee's representatives had urged the adoption of practical measures at the national and European levels with a view to restarting permanent status negotiations and promoting the establishment of the State of Palestine.

18. *The Committee took note of the report.*

**Other matters**

19. **Mr. Ferdous** (Department of Public Information) said that the media seminar on peace in the Middle East organized by the Department of Public Information and held in Budapest on 12 and 13 July 2011 had drawn some 100 participants, including policymakers from Israel and the Palestinian Authority, representatives of the international media, and members of academia and civil society. The media seminar had examined the sweeping political changes in the Middle East and North Africa and the growing role of new media such as Twitter and Facebook in fostering political change. In addition to opening statements by the Secretary-General and the Chair of the Committee, a total of five panels had been held on a range of topics, including the standstill in the Middle East peace process and ways to overcome it, and the role of culture and media in promoting understanding between Israelis and Palestinians. The meeting had ended with a statement by the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information. International media coverage of the seminar had been very positive. He thanked the Chair and the secretariat of the Committee, as well as the Permanent Observer for Palestine, for their support and guidance in making the seminar a success.

20. Referring to the project of the Department of Public Information to update its permanent exhibit on the question of Palestine and the United Nations, he said that a copy of the updated text and revised design had been forwarded to the Committee secretariat for review. On the basis of the comments received, a revised version of that text would be submitted shortly. He hoped that, as in the past, the Department could count on the support of the Committee in providing seed money for local language translations of the exhibit, preferably in time for the observance of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People on 29 November 2011.

*The meeting rose at 11.25 a.m.*