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Chair: Mr. Bhattarai (Nepal)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

Agenda item 51: Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories ([A/69/128](#), [A/69/316](#), [A/69/327](#), [A/69/347](#), [A/69/348](#) and [A/69/355](#))

1. **Mr. Haniff** (Malaysia), speaking as Vice-Chair of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories and introducing its report ([A/69/355](#)) examining the human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the occupied Syrian Golan, said that the report contained information gathered during the Special Committee's mission to the region in June 2014 and through consultations with Member States. Regrettably, the Government of Israel, as in previous years, had failed to respond to requests to meet with the Special Committee and allow access to the Occupied Palestinian Territory. However, the Special Committee had sought information from a wide range of sources, including United Nations officials, representatives of non-governmental organizations, and victims and witnesses of Israeli violations from within and outside Israel and the occupied territories.

2. The Special Committee was appalled by the unprecedented scale of destruction unleashed by Israel upon the people of Gaza, who had already been suffering from critical shortages of fuel, electricity, food, water and sanitation and from chronic unemployment as a result of the seven-year blockade imposed by Israel. More than 1,500 Palestinian civilians, including 519 children, had been killed in July and August 2014, and civilian deaths represented 69 per cent of all Palestinian fatalities, a ratio that could not be dismissed as "collateral damage". An additional 11,100 people had been injured, many of them permanently. The homes of one third of the population of Gaza had been damaged and an estimated 20,000 housing units had been completely destroyed or rendered uninhabitable.

3. The conflict between Israel, Hamas and Palestinian armed groups in Gaza in 2014 had been the third of its kind in only six years. The Special Committee welcomed the Human Rights Council's establishment of an independent international commission of inquiry and urged Israel to cooperate with it. The international community should honour the

generous pledges made at the October 2014 international donor conference in Cairo so that reconstruction could begin. Israel must implement the Gaza reconstruction mechanism in good faith, and the international community must continue to press Israel to lift the blockade.

4. The situation of Palestinian detainees, including women and children, remained a serious concern. More than 5,200 Palestinian detainees were held in Israeli custody, while 191 Palestinians, including eight members of the Legislative Council, were held under administrative detention without charge or trial. Administrative detention was only exceptionally permitted under international law, yet the number of administrative detainees in the Occupied Palestinian Territory had doubled between mid-June and the end of August 2014. Ill-treatment, torture and medical neglect of detainees also remained a serious issue. Detainees had been subjected to solitary confinement, verbal assaults on their religion, sleep deprivation, random inspections at any time of day or night and being forced to stand naked. Israeli doctors prescribed only painkillers for detainees with serious illnesses such as kidney failure, heart disease or cancer. Of the 500 to 700 Palestinian children arrested and detained every year, an estimated 76 per cent reportedly endured some form of abuse or physical violence. The Special Committee's findings suggested that many recommendations made in the previous year's United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) report on children in Israeli military detention remained unimplemented.

5. Other issues covered in the Special Committee's report included the ongoing construction of the separation wall, the infringement of Palestinian rights in East Jerusalem, the confiscation of Palestinians' agricultural land, settler violence, the use of live ammunition and excessive force by Israeli security forces, and the lack of serious effort by Israeli authorities to ensure accountability.

6. The Special Committee had also noted the routine demolition of homes and the forcible transfer of Palestinian Bedouin and herder communities residing in the Jerusalem periphery. It had heard disturbing reports of Israeli interference in the provision of international humanitarian assistance especially targeted at the Bedouin communities; that should be of serious concern to international donors.

7. As in previous years, the Special Committee had reported on the role of companies that did business with settlements and profited from their maintenance or construction or the exploitation of natural resources in the occupied West Bank or the occupied Syrian Golan. There was a growing awareness among companies of the potential financial, legal and reputational risks of doing business in occupied territories. The Special Committee had reported specifically on four companies: the Israeli cosmetics company Ahava and the multinational companies HeidelbergCement, G4S and Genie Energy. It had sought to contact the companies prior to the presentation of the report to allow them to clarify information received through briefings and submissions. In a letter dated 14 October 2014, the management of Ahava stated that, since 2011, the company had mined the Dead Sea mud used in its products solely in Massada, which was within the internationally recognized borders of Israel. The Special Committee had not yet had the opportunity to verify those claims. In a response dated 5 November 2014, G4S maintained that its services, such as those relating to security systems used in Israeli prisons and equipment used at Israeli checkpoints in the West Bank, did not contribute to human rights violations. However, it also indicated that those service contracts would not be extended upon their expiration over the next few years.

8. The Special Committee reiterated the high risk that corporate involvement in settlements could have negative human rights impacts, and urged companies to act with heightened due diligence without delay. It also called upon Member States to review national policies, legislation, regulations and enforcement measures related to business activity to ensure that they effectively prevented and addressed the risk of human rights abuses in conflict-affected areas. With respect to the occupied Syrian Golan, the report drew attention to Israeli and multinational companies' exploitation of natural resources such as water, wind, gas and oil and an Israeli Government-approved project to develop 30,000 dunums of land in order to establish 750 farming estates.

9. The Special Committee had found that the human rights situation in the occupied territories continued to deteriorate. The collapse of the United States-brokered negotiations in April 2014, along with new announcements of settlement tenders and construction,

had once again diminished hopes for peace and further undermined the two-State solution. If not addressed, tensions in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and renewed provocations around holy sites in Jerusalem could ignite another round of deadly violence. Sustainable peace and security for both Israelis and Palestinians could be achieved only if the root causes of the conflict were addressed.

10. **Mr. Šimonović** (Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights), introducing five reports of the Secretary-General under agenda item 51, said that the report on the work of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories ([A/69/128](#)) outlined the activities of the Special Committee and the Department of Public Information in support of the Special Committee's work.

11. The report on the applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949, to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the other occupied Arab territories ([A/69/316](#)) summarized the replies received from Colombia, Cuba and Qatar to a request for information on the steps taken or envisaged to implement General Assembly resolution 68/81.

12. The report on Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan ([A/69/348](#)) contained information from a variety of sources, including the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), other United Nations entities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the media. The report focused on the creation and expansion of settlements by way of control of land through agriculture, archaeological excavations and designation of national parks; the forcible transfer of Palestinian Bedouin and herder communities in the Jerusalem periphery and the Jordan Valley; the Israeli Government's failure to maintain public order and lack of accountability for settler violence; and Israeli settlement activities in the occupied Syrian Golan.

13. The report of the Secretary-General on Israeli practices affecting the human rights of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem ([A/69/347](#)), was based on OHCHR

monitoring and information-gathering activities, and contained information from other United Nations entities, Israeli and Palestinian NGOs, and media sources. The report included an assessment of the impact of the wall in the light of the International Court of Justice advisory opinion of 9 July 2004, Israel's practice of administrative detention, the human rights situation in Gaza, and accountability for reported excessive use of force by security forces. It also provided an update on institution-building efforts in Palestine.

14. The final report, on the occupied Syrian Golan (A/69/327), was a compilation of the replies received from the Syrian Arab Republic, Algeria, Colombia, Cuba and Slovakia to a request for information on steps taken to implement General Assembly resolution 68/84.

15. **Ms. Abdelhady-Nasser** (Observer for the State of Palestine) said that 2014 marked the tenth anniversary of the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the *Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory*. Although the illegality of the wall and settlements had been clearly established, Israel had continued to build them, fragmenting Palestinian land and forcibly displacing Palestinians. She asked the Vice-Chair of the Special Committee to elaborate on the numerous human rights violations caused by such illegal colonization activities.

16. **Mr. Anwar** (Pakistan) said that, contrary to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other international legal instruments, 500 to 700 Palestinian children were held in Israeli prisons and detention centres each year. He asked what the conditions of their arrest and detention were, how those conditions impacted their physical and psychological well-being and what the Special Committee recommended in that regard.

17. **Mr. Elshandawily** (Egypt) asked what follow-up measures were planned with regard to the replies received from the companies mentioned in the Special Committee's report.

18. **Mr. Forés Rodríguez** (Cuba) said that, in the last six years, Israel had attacked the Gaza Strip three times, most recently in the summer of 2014. The casualty, injury, displacement and destruction figures were unprecedented and the humanitarian situation was worse than stated in the Secretary-General's report (A/69/347). He asked what measures should be taken

most urgently, in the Special Committee's view, to address that disaster, both from a humanitarian standpoint and in terms of international political actions.

19. **Mr. Motanyane** (Lesotho) said that, year after year, the international community had heard about the Israeli authorities' non-cooperation with the Special Committee. He asked what reasons, if any, had been given for such non-cooperation and whether the Special Committee found them legitimate. He also asked what it would take for Israel to cooperate.

20. **Mr. Haniff** (Malaysia), speaking as Vice-Chair of the Special Committee, said that the expansion of settlements and the wall were at the root of many of the daily human rights violations suffered by Palestinians in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The wall prevented Palestinians from exercising not only their right to freedom of movement, but also other human rights such as the right to work, education, health, an adequate standard of living and development. Palestinian families, particularly Bedouin refugee families, continued to be forcibly displaced from their homes and lands as the wall's route cut into their communities and the occupying Power seized their properties. Ultimately, the wall had implications for the Palestinian right to self-determination.

21. Israel must cease construction of the wall and dismantle the parts of it that were situated within the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, and must make reparation, including restitution and compensation to victims. The illegality of the wall and settlements in the Territory had been established 10 years earlier by the International Court of Justice, but the situation remained unchanged. The international community's position on the illegality and illegitimacy of settlement construction had been clearly expressed in the Security Council in recent weeks. He reiterated the Special Committee's call for the international community to fulfil its legal obligations, as set out in the 2004 International Court of Justice advisory opinion, not to recognize the illegal situation resulting from the construction of the wall and not to render aid or assistance in maintaining that situation, and to ensure Israel's compliance with international humanitarian law.

22. Palestinian children in detention were particularly vulnerable during the period from arrest to

interrogation. Parents were rarely allowed to be present during interrogation. Access to lawyers prior to interrogation was equally rare, and children were often forced to sign confessions in Hebrew, which they did not understand. Many Palestinian children were reportedly transferred to interrogation and detention centres in Israel, in violation of article 49 of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War (Fourth Geneva Convention). The Special Committee had heard of many cases of children subjected to night-time raids and arrest; physical violence; verbal abuse, humiliation and intimidation; strip-searching; and denial of adequate food and water. The physical and psychological effects of such treatment included post-traumatic stress disorder, depression and sleep disorders, among other problems.

23. In its 2013 report (A/68/379), the Special Committee had highlighted a UNICEF report on children in Israeli military detention. It continued to hold the view that not enough had been done to implement that report's recommendations. Military Order 1676, which had changed the age of majority for Palestinians from 16 to 18, had had only a marginal impact on interrogation and arrest procedures and did not apply to sentencing provisions. The Special Committee urged Israel to allow all Palestinian children to have access to a lawyer of their choice prior to interrogation; to prohibit the solitary confinement of minors; and to ensure that all credible reports of torture and ill-treatment, including of children, were investigated promptly, in line with international standards.

24. With regard to business practices, the Special Committee had requested information from four companies and had received only two replies to date; it would verify the facts in relation to those replies. It would also follow up with the other two companies with a view to reflecting their replies in its next report.

25. With regard to Israel's non-cooperation, the Special Committee's requests to meet with Israeli representatives and to visit the occupied territories had been denied every year. The Special Committee called on Israel to cooperate so that it could obtain a better assessment of the situation. It had sometimes been accused of producing biased reports. In order to ensure objectivity, the Israeli Government should cooperate with it so that it could obtain access and gather information from various authorities, including those

of Israel, and prepare reports that reflected the views of both parties.

26. With respect to Gaza, a concerted international effort was urgently needed to reverse the effects of the blockade and repeated Israeli military operations. The blockade constituted a form of collective punishment and contravened article 33 of the Fourth Geneva Convention. The enforcement of access-restricted areas by the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) continued to result in Palestinians' injuries and deaths, and the restriction of access to agricultural and fishing areas undermined Palestinian livelihoods. In particular, the Special Committee recommended that Israel should, at a minimum, bring its policy and practice into line with the 20-nautical-mile fishing limit agreed under the Oslo Accords.

27. The Special Committee's priority recommendations to the international community regarding Gaza were set out in paragraph 97 (a) and (b) of its report (A/69/355): they concerned the provision of humanitarian and reconstruction assistance, the contribution of additional funds to United Nations agencies, and immediate steps to ensure the free movement of humanitarian goods and persons in humanitarian cases. In that regard, the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process had recently confirmed that work had begun under the temporary Gaza reconstruction mechanism, with an immediate focus on urgent shelter repairs.

28. Given that hostilities in Gaza had still been ongoing at the time of writing of the report, the Special Committee had found it premature to draw any conclusions concerning violations of international law. However, the report of the independent international commission of inquiry mandated by the Human Rights Council to investigate violations of international law in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, particularly in Gaza, since June 2014 would be a significant first step towards ensuring accountability.

29. **Mr. Šimonović** (Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights) said that the international community must live up to the generous pledges made at the donor conference held in Cairo in October 2014 because of the dire need for resources. Israel, Palestine and the United Nations must ensure that the Gaza reconstruction mechanism operated smoothly and without delay and that adequate humanitarian

assistance, medical supplies and construction materials could enter the enclave.

30. **Mr. Dehghani** (Islamic Republic of Iran) asked how long it would take the independent international commission of inquiry to investigate the crimes committed by Israel in Gaza during the recent war.

31. **Mr. Šimonović** (Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights) replied that the commission of inquiry had been established and that it was to report to the Human Rights Council in March 2015.

32. **Ms. Abdelhady-Nasser** (Observer for the State of Palestine) said that there was a human rights crisis in Palestine. Every aspect of life was infringed upon and every human right was being violated as Israel continued to subjugate the Palestinian people and entrench its occupation. Although 2014 had begun with renewed peace efforts under United States sponsorship, peace prospects had gravely diminished in the wake of Israel's war against the Gaza Strip and the intensification of its destructive colonization campaign in the West Bank, particularly in occupied East Jerusalem.

33. Israel and its military forces and settlers continued to systematically violate the Palestinian people's rights to life, self-determination, property, food, housing, water, education, health care, livelihood, development, family life, freedom of movement and freedom of worship. The occupying Power's escalation of violence, repressive measures, provocation and incitement were inflicting widespread hardship, impairing the fabric of Palestinian society, destroying the viability of its State, aggravating tensions, destroying trust and obstructing all peace efforts.

34. Gross human rights violations and breaches of international humanitarian law amounting to war crimes had been committed by Israel in its July-August 2014 military aggression. The occupying forces had killed more than 2,000 Palestinians, the majority of them civilians, and had injured more than 11,000, including 3,000 children. Some 1,500 children had been orphaned and more than 373,000 traumatized children required psychosocial support. More than half a million people had been displaced at the height of the aggression; that had been the largest displacement of the Palestinian civilian population since 1967. More than 80,000 homes had been damaged, rendering 108,000 people homeless. Seventy-five hospitals and

medical facilities and more than 100 United Nations facilities had been damaged in Israeli strikes. Infrastructure such as water and waste networks and economic and industrial properties, as well as public institutions and historical sites, had also been damaged.

35. In the meantime, the illegal Israeli blockade of Gaza had continued to imprison and isolate the entire population and to suffocate socioeconomic life. Extraordinary efforts would be required to heal the wounds of grieving families and reconstruct the destroyed homes and infrastructure vital for civilian life. Beyond that, it was crucial to ensure accountability for those human rights violations and crimes committed by the occupying Power, as justice was essential for healing and for any future reconciliation between the Palestinian and Israeli peoples.

36. The picture was equally grim in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, where Israeli occupying forces continued to use lethal force, including in non-violent demonstrations. Daily Israeli military raids in the West Bank continued to cause casualties. Daily, violent arrests, of Palestinian men and boys in particular, were destroying thousands of lives. In the summer of 2014 alone, 1,500 Palestinians had been arbitrarily arrested and detained in the West Bank. Some 500 to 700 Palestinian children were imprisoned each year. Currently, more than 6,000 Palestinians remained in Israeli prisons and detention centres.

37. Israel had continued and intensified its illegal settlement colonization campaign even during the peace negotiations. More than 23,000 new settlement units had been announced or planned by Israeli officials in the last year, including 1,600 new units in the last 10 days. Exploitation of natural resources, another massive violation closely linked to Israeli settlement-building, also continued unabated. Those activities had been a major cause of the occupying Power's forced displacement of hundreds of Palestinian civilians and were directly connected to the continued destruction of Palestinian property. Extremist Israeli settlers continued to perpetrate violence and terror, causing death and injury, destroying and vandalizing Palestinian homes and property, burning olive trees, killing and stealing livestock and contaminating water supplies and agricultural lands. Their apparent aim was to intimidate Palestinians in order to gain control of certain geographic locations with the support of the Israeli

Government, which bore the ultimate responsibility for those crimes. In occupied East Jerusalem, Israel continued its illegal attempts to alter the demographic composition, character and status of the city, negating Palestinian rights. Plans had been made for the construction of thousands of settlement units and continued seizure of Palestinian homes by extremist settlers.

38. Reckless and relentless provocations by Israeli officials and extremists, particularly at Al-Haram Al-Sharif, were aggravating religious sensitivities and threatening to ignite another cycle of violence. As the situation had dramatically escalated in recent days, her delegation called for immediate attention and action by the international community, particularly the Security Council.

39. Despite the gravity of the situation, her Government had not given up on peace, and called upon the international community to shoulder its responsibilities in order to salvage what little prospect remained of achieving it. Israel, the occupying Power, must cease immediately and completely all its illegal policies and practices in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem; scrupulously abide by all its legal obligations; and be held accountable for its violations. The status quo was unsustainable; peace would remain elusive if the current conditions persisted. The State of Palestine was ready to uphold its obligations and commitments to make peace a reality. Given that it lacked a real partner for peace, the role of the international community and, in particular, of the Security Council was vital. Her delegation reiterated its appeal for the international community's support in that noble endeavour.

40. **Mr. Dehghani** (Islamic Republic of Iran), speaking on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, said that the Special Committee's finding that Israel's policies and practices continued to violate the fundamental human rights and dignity of the Palestinian people and other Arabs living under occupation was a matter of serious concern. The Movement condemned Israel's recent attack on the Gaza Strip, which had caused many civilian deaths, massive displacement and large-scale destruction of United Nations and other essential facilities, resulting in a humanitarian disaster for the people of Gaza. In that regard, the Movement welcomed the decision of the Human Rights Council to carry out an independent inquiry into all violations of international law resulting

from the attack, and called upon Israel to promptly and unconditionally end its illegal blockade of Gaza.

41. The Movement condemned the continued detention of a staggering number of Palestinian prisoners, many of whom were children and some of whom were detained without charge, in prisons and detention centres in Israel and the West Bank. As called for in the Declaration on Palestine Political Prisoners, adopted in August 2012 at the Sixteenth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, and as reiterated at the Seventeenth Ministerial Conference of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, all such prisoners should be immediately released and their plight should be addressed by the international community.

42. Israel's illegal settlement construction was proceeding apace across the West Bank, facilitated by other illegal measures, including land confiscation. Israeli provocation and incitement had intensified, in particular at holy sites, and settler violence continued to contribute to the displacement of Palestinians. Such activities undermined the contiguity of the West Bank and the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people. The international community, notably the Security Council, must take urgent action to compel Israel to cease its settlement campaign in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and abide by all of its obligations under international law.

43. With reference to the Syrian Golan, the Movement reaffirmed that all the unlawful actions committed by Israel constituted a clear violation of international law, the Charter of the United Nations, Security Council resolution 497 (1981) and the Fourth Geneva Convention. Israel should abide by that resolution and withdraw completely to the borders of 4 June 1967.

44. The Movement reaffirmed its unwavering commitment to a just and comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict, to the immediate restoration of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to exercise self-determination and sovereignty in an independent State, and to a just solution for Palestine refugees on the basis of General Assembly resolution 194 (III).

45. **Mr. Al-Mouallimi** (Saudi Arabia), speaking on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), said that the report of the Special Committee showed that Israel was making a mockery of the

international community by continuing its illegal practices, which included the inhumane blockade of Gaza, construction of the apartheid wall, excessive use of force against innocent Palestinian civilians, forced displacement, demolition of homes and confiscation of property. In addition, Israel detained Palestinians without charge and deliberately refrained from punishing settler violence. OIC condemned the recent escalation of violence in East Jerusalem as a result of Israeli incitement and provocation, including the unlawful closure of the Al-Aqsa Mosque and the invasion of Al-Haram Al-Sharif by Israeli soldiers, and held Israel fully responsible for all repercussions resulting from its illegal practices in occupied territories. OIC further condemned Israel's attempts to impose facts on the ground by continuing to expand its settlements; such practices were in flagrant violation of international law and constituted the main obstacle to achieving the two State solution.

46. OIC expressed its appreciation to all States that had prohibited their citizens from doing business with Israeli settlers. It also welcomed the bold decision of Sweden to recognize the State of Palestine and encouraged other States to do likewise, based on the pre-1967 borders and with Jerusalem as its capital.

47. The recent increase in settler violence against Palestinians was a source of great concern; OIC urged the Israeli authorities to bring the perpetrators of such violence to justice and called for the leaders of extremist settler groups to be listed as terrorists and criminals wanted for trial in international courts.

48. The brutal war that Israel had waged on Gaza in July and August 2014 had left yet another stain on the collective conscience of the international community, which had stood by and watched as United Nations facilities and other buildings had been destroyed and thousands of Palestinians had been killed, injured and displaced. International protection must immediately be afforded to the Palestinian people and an independent international commission of inquiry must be established to investigate all Israeli violations of international law in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. OIC welcomed the convening of the October 2014 international donor conference for the reconstruction of Gaza.

49. In conclusion, OIC called on the international community to support efforts to set a deadline for Israel to end its occupation of Palestine and of Arab

land, withdraw to the borders of 4 June 1967 and grant Palestine its independence, in accordance with the principles of the two State solution.

50. **Mr. Vrailas** (Observer for the European Union), speaking also on behalf of the candidate country Serbia and, in addition, Ukraine, said that bringing an end to the Arab-Israeli conflict remained one of the European Union's main priorities. The current crisis in the region continued to deteriorate, making it more urgent than ever to achieve progress towards a peaceful settlement to the conflict. Considering that a hypothetical one State solution would not be compatible with the aspirations of either party, the European Union urged the parties to work towards a peaceful two State solution through meaningful negotiations based on clearly defined parameters and time limits. It was willing to support the resumption of such negotiations in cooperation with the parties and international partners, especially the United States.

51. The European Union strongly deplored the plans recently announced by Israel to continue settlement expansion, which could call Israel's commitment to the peace process into question. Israel must dismantle all outposts erected since March 2001 and put an end to all settlement activity, including so-called natural growth, in the West Bank, including in East Jerusalem.

52. The European Union condemned continuing settler violence and the increase in violent incidents perpetrated by both sides as a result of heightened tensions. It was deeply concerned about the use of live fire by Israeli forces against Palestinians, and urged investigation into all suspected cases of excessive use of force. It called on all parties to refrain from all forms of provocation, in particular from stoking religious tensions. Leaders on both sides should take every opportunity to promote peace, and Israelis and Palestinians should work together to combat all forms of terror and incitement.

53. The European Union had never recognized the annexation of East Jerusalem. Negotiations must be held to resolve the status of Jerusalem as the future capital of two States, and the Israeli Government must cease all discriminatory treatment of Palestinians in East Jerusalem.

54. The Government of Israel should develop improved mechanisms for managing land, infrastructure and administrative processes in Area C, where living conditions were deteriorating as a result

of illegal demolitions, evictions and forced transfers, including of Bedouin communities. The European Union would continue to support economic and infrastructure development in Area C, in accordance with the five-year joint Action Plan adopted in the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy. The European Union deplored continued incursions by Israeli forces into Area A, which jeopardized the internationally recognized success of Palestinian institution-building efforts.

55. The European Union strongly condemned both the indiscriminate firing of rockets into Israel by Hamas and militant groups in the Gaza Strip and the disproportionate Israeli military response to those attacks. It further condemned calls on civilians in Gaza to act as human shields, the shelling of United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) schools in Gaza and the placing of rockets in UNRWA schools; civilians must be protected and international law must be observed at all times. All alleged violations of international law by both sides must be investigated according to international standards and the perpetrators must be held accountable. To that end, the Israeli authorities were urged to provide the Human Rights Council commission of inquiry with full access to Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

56. The European Union welcomed the ceasefire that had been in place since 26 August 2014 and urged all parties to abide by a durable ceasefire and bring about substantial change in the unsustainable situation in the Gaza Strip. The Palestinian Authority must assume its full governmental responsibilities in Gaza, the Government of Israel must lift all restrictions on social and economic development, and terrorist groups must be permanently disarmed. With regard to human rights, it was imperative that Israel should cooperate fully with the special procedures of the Human Rights Council and with OHCHR by giving them constant, unrestricted access to the occupied territories.

57. The European Union remained concerned about the number of individuals held in administrative detention by Israel for excessively long periods, and called on Israel to bring formal charges against all current detainees and provide them with a fair trial. Reports indicated that large numbers of Palestinian children were being detained and mistreated by the Israeli authorities. While commendable progress had been made on the implementation of the

recommendations contained in the 2013 UNICEF report on children in Israeli military detention, much remained to be done; the Israeli authorities must make clear that the rights of children in military custody were to be upheld at all times. Children should be detained only as a last resort and should always be provided with the safeguards to which they were entitled.

58. In conclusion, the European Union would do everything in its power to advance a lasting and just solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict. It reiterated its offer to both parties of a package of European political, economic and security support and a special privileged partnership with the European Union if a final peace agreement was reached.

59. **Mr. Atlasi** (Morocco) said that the report of the Special Committee clearly documented Israel's persistent flouting of the Fourth Geneva Convention and international law through the extensive construction of settlements, the Judaization of Jerusalem, denial of Palestine refugees' right of return, confiscation of property and agricultural land, forced displacement of Palestinians, including Bedouin groups, and failure to punish acts of violence committed by settlers against Palestinians in full view of Israeli forces. Israel's continued expansion of its settlements during the peace talks that had been initiated in 2013 under the auspices of the United States was incontestable evidence that Israel was not genuinely seeking to achieve a peaceful two-State solution. His delegation condemned Israel's use of archaeological excavation as a tactic to seize land for settlements, and deplored the invasion of Al-Aqsa Mosque the previous day, when Israeli forces had attacked dozens of Palestinians with rubber bullets and sound bombs; that was a grave insult to Muslims worldwide and a brazen violation of international law.

60. He expressed concern at the inflammatory statements recently made by the Government of Israel in an attempt to undermine the legal status of Jerusalem as an integral part of the Palestinian Territory occupied by Israel in 1967, and condemned Israel's attempts to progressively take full control of Al-Haram Al-Sharif, as well as its systematic attacks on the Al-Aqsa Mosque and worshippers who prayed there. Morocco strongly condemned Israel's aggressive behaviour and attempts to Judaize Jerusalem, which violated Security Council resolutions and served to stoke religious tensions and breed extremism. It further

condemned Israel's most recent attack on Gaza, during which over 2,000 innocent civilians had been killed, hundreds of families had been made homeless, UNRWA facilities had been targeted and some of the Agency's staff had been killed. As a result of the attack, the humanitarian situation of Palestine refugees was likely to deteriorate further still.

61. The Government of Morocco was unflinching in its support of the Arab Peace Initiative and of all efforts to achieve peace through the establishment of an independent State of Palestine on the basis of the pre-1967 borders and with East Jerusalem as its capital.

62. **Mr. Acosta Álvarez** (Cuba) said that Israel's lack of cooperation continued to impede the Special Committee's work, which must continue until the complete termination of the Israeli occupation of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967. The recent deterioration of the situation in the Middle East and the most recent crimes committed by Israel had shaken global public opinion. Cuba strongly condemned the massacre, injury and forced displacement of thousands of Palestinians and the widespread destruction caused by the occupying Power, which had worsened an already serious humanitarian crisis in Gaza. His delegation fully supported the Palestinian initiative to seek a Security Council resolution delineating a time frame for an end to the Israeli occupation that had begun in 1967 and restoring the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to self-determination in an independent State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem as its capital, on the basis of the pre-1967 borders.

63. He called on the Israeli Government to put an immediate end to its continued illegal settlement activity in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including its destruction and seizure of land and forced displacement of Palestinian families. Israel's aggressive colonial policies and practices flouted United Nations resolutions and international law and jeopardized regional and international peace and security. Urgent support from the international community was needed to address the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Gaza. Cuba reaffirmed its unwavering support for the Palestinian people and called for an end to the prolonged and unlawful Israeli occupation of Palestine, the immediate and unconditional lifting of the cruel and illegal Gaza

blockade and the opening of border crossings and checkpoints. Greater efforts were needed to resolve the dire situation of Palestine refugees, in accordance with the norms and principles of international law and the relevant resolutions of the United Nations. The only way to implement a meaningful political process and bring about lasting peace was to end the colonization policy, free Palestinian prisoners and recognize the legitimate and inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

64. **Mr. Proaño** (Ecuador) said that for years, the United Nations and the international community had devoted significant resources and efforts to addressing the worrying situation in the Middle East, the core of which remained the conflict between Israel and Palestine. A lasting solution to that conflict would be a decisive step towards stability, security and peace in the region, and would promote reconciliation, development and well-being among all peoples of the world. That required vision and will on the part of both sides. A lasting solution to the question of Palestine was rooted in the recognition of an independent, democratic, sovereign, contiguous and viable State of Palestine, living side by side with Israel in peace and security. It also required an end to the military occupation and full exercise of self-determination and sovereignty in Palestine, with the definitive demarcation of its territory based on the pre-1967 borders and with East Jerusalem as its capital, the right of return for expelled Palestinians, and the lifting of the blockade and rebuilding of Gaza.

65. Ecuador rejected violence, regardless of where it originated, and therefore condemned the attacks perpetrated in Israel, one of which had caused the death of a young Ecuadorian woman. However, his country's position was clear: there were underlying issues that required an urgent and lasting solution and a change to the current status quo, which, beyond its legal and ethical implications, had reached a new low. The Secretary-General's report (A/69/347) highlighted the many human rights violations committed by Israel, which, as the occupying Power, had explicit obligations under international human rights and humanitarian law. Ecuador therefore emphasized the importance of the recommendations to the Government of Israel contained in that report, in particular those urging it to comply with the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice; lift the blockade; rescind all policies and practices that led to the forced eviction and/or forcible transfer of civilians; conduct

investigations to end impunity for unlawful killing or injury, torture or cruel treatment; and release all detainees held in administrative detention and end the administrative detention regime.

66. **Mr. Hamed** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that although Israel's occupation of Arab land was threatening regional stability more than ever before, the international community was turning a blind eye to Israel's policies of aggression and settlement expansion. The recent Israeli attack on Gaza, during which Israel had dropped bombs indiscriminately, ruthlessly killing innocent civilians, was merely the latest addition to Israel's long list of violations of international law. Those States that continued to support Israel and make excuses for its actions shared responsibility for the consequences of its illegal practices. It was outrageous that Israel had been allowed to continue its occupation of the Palestinian Territory for so many decades, during which countless lives had been lost, settlements had been built, holy sites had been desecrated, Syrians and Palestinians had been detained, an apartheid wall had been built and the Israeli authorities had stood by while settlers committed acts of racist violence against Arabs. It was high time the world woke up and took decisive action to end the tragedy of the Israeli occupation.

67. In the Syrian Golan, which had been occupied by Israel for almost half a century, Syrian citizens were systematically subjected to human rights violations that included arbitrary arrest and restriction of their freedom of movement. Israel continued its frenzied settlement-building campaigns, refused to provide international organizations with maps of the minefields it had sown, deprived Syrian citizens of their natural resources, denied them medical treatment in an attempt to blackmail them into accepting Israeli national identity, and refused them access to the Syrian education system.

68. His delegation stressed the need to implement the recommendations contained in the report of the Special Committee, especially those concerning the need for Israel to end its occupation of all Arab lands, immediately halt all settlement expansion activity and comply with Security Council resolution 497 (1981), whereby Israel's annexation of the Syrian Golan had been declared null and void.

69. As a result of Israel's continued aggression, tension in the region was extremely high and threatened to have consequences further afield. The United Nations must do its part to put an end to Israel's

savage practices and compel it to withdraw to the pre-1967 borders, in compliance with Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 228 (1966) and 497 (1981).

70. **Mr. Sriyono** (Indonesia) said that the Secretary-General's report (A/69/347) further confirmed the grim realities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. His delegation was deeply disturbed at the continued deterioration of the socioeconomic conditions endured by Palestinians. Israel continued to ignore the landmark International Court of Justice advisory opinion: since 2004, the wall had tripled in length; illegal land acquisition and restrictions of Palestinians' rights had become routine; illegal settlements had grown unchecked; the Gaza blockade had further exacerbated the critical humanitarian situation; and Israeli security forces had used excessive force but rarely faced consequences for killing or injuring Palestinians.

71. Indonesia welcomed the steps taken by the Government of Palestine to place human rights at the centre of its development agenda, as evidenced by Palestine's recent accession to various human rights treaties, and commended the efforts of OHCHR to build human rights capacity in Palestinian institutions. The recommendations for Israel outlined in the report were critical. His delegation joined others in demanding that Israel should comply with the advisory opinion, lift the blockade and respect international humanitarian law. The international community should also demand accountability through relevant international mechanisms and support the implementation of the mandates of the Human Rights Council's commission of inquiry. Furthermore, his delegation urged the United Nations to respond favourably to the Palestinian request for international protection so as to prevent future aggression.

72. **Mr. Masood Khan** (Pakistan), strongly condemning the recent sacrilegious storming of the Al-Aqsa Mosque and the attack against Palestinian worshippers there, which had triggered protest and clashes and imperilled the fragile calm, said that his country supported the recommendations made in the Secretary-General's reports, as their implementation could improve the plight of the Palestinians living under foreign occupation and in abject poverty. The already dire situation had worsened since the Special Committee's visit to the region in June 2014. In addition to systematic violations of human rights, unabated settler violence and soaring unemployment, 50 days of shelling had left over 2,000 Palestinians dead. The peace process had collapsed owing to

Israel's intransigence, settlements had more than doubled in the biggest land grab in three decades, and provocations and violence around the Temple Mount/Al-Haram Al-Sharif had multiplied, all in a year designated as the International Year of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.

73. In order to break the "build-destroy, build-destroy cycle" referred to by the Secretary-General during his October 2014 visit to Gaza, the Security Council must show leadership by adopting the draft resolution calling for a clear road map for ending the occupation and restoring Palestinian freedom. Clear timelines and benchmarks must be included as part of the peace process. Sweden had just decided to recognize the State of Palestine, and more countries were preparing to follow suit; it was time for the Council to work towards the same objective. A just, sustainable and equitable resolution of the Middle East conflict must be based on an independent, contiguous and viable State of Palestine, based on the pre-1967 borders, with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital. A long-term solution would also require the withdrawal of occupation forces from all Arab lands, including Lebanon and the Syrian Golan.

74. UNRWA must receive sufficient funding in order to perform its critical tasks in support of Palestine refugees, particularly in the light of its increased responsibilities resulting from the violence in Gaza. It was extremely important that donors should fulfil expeditiously the pledges they had made in Cairo for rebuilding Gaza. He reiterated Pakistan's unstinting support for the Palestinian people in their continuing quest for self-determination, peace, an independent State and economic development.

75. **Mr. Llorenty Solíz** (Plurinational State of Bolivia) said that in July and August 2014 humanity had witnessed the cruel massacre of a civilian population by an occupying Power, in flagrant violation of international law. Israel had committed numerous atrocities, bordering on genocide, against the Palestinian people, all with the complicit silence of the Security Council owing to its lack of decisiveness and failure to adopt a resolution to end the occupation. The arbitrarily built and illegal wall, which extended more than 700 kilometres around East Jerusalem, restricted Palestinians' freedom of movement and access to health care, education, employment opportunities and arable land. While Palestine valiantly resisted Israeli aggression, seeking lasting peace by respecting all initiatives to bring the military occupation to an end and implement a two-State solution based on the pre-

1967 borders, Israel continued its policy of asserting control over the Occupied Palestinian Territory through illegal practices.

76. His delegation strongly condemned the continued confiscation of civilian property and the various other human rights violations committed by extremist Israeli settlers in East Jerusalem, which had resulted in the displacement of hundreds of families. Israel's policy of requiring permits for the circulation of medicines and humanitarian aid was another violation that severely hindered the socioeconomic development of Palestine. It was unacceptable that thousands of Palestinians, including women and children, were still incarcerated in appalling conditions and had been refused due process, medical care and family visits.

77. The international community must stop talking about the situation in Palestine and start taking the necessary action to put a definitive end to Israel's indiscriminate and incessant attacks against the Palestinian people, which amounted to violations of the type set out in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. The most sacred principles of humanity were on the side of the Palestinian people. The Plurinational State of Bolivia would continue to support the Palestinian people and an independent and sovereign State of Palestine, based on the pre-1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital, in line with the relevant United Nations resolutions.

78. **Ms. Yelcin** (Turkey), reiterating Turkey's long-standing commitment to peace, stability, security and democracy in the region, with respect for fundamental human rights and freedoms, said that harmful Israeli policies and practices, human rights violations, disrespectful and illegal acts targeting holy sites, and military raids should cease. In that regard, her delegation strongly condemned the incursion of Israeli extremists into Al-Haram Al-Sharif and the Israeli police's disregard for the spiritual value attached to the Al-Aqsa Mosque. The clear violation of the sanctity of the site had added a new and much more serious dimension to Israel's provocations. Its flagrant violations of fundamental human rights, particularly freedom of worship and belief, and its lack of respect for sacred Muslim sites were unacceptable and should not be tolerated.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.