



**DIVISION FOR
PALESTINIAN RIGHTS**

**UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL MEETING
ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE**

*African solidarity with the Palestinian people
for the achievement of their inalienable rights,
including the sovereignty and independence
of the State of Palestine*

United Nations Conference Centre, Addis Ababa, 29 and 30 April 2013

Contents

	<u>Page</u>
Executive summary	3
I. Introduction	4
II. Opening session	4
III. Plenary sessions	8
A. Plenary session I	8
B. Plenary session II	11
C. Plenary session III	14
IV. Closing session	16

Annexes

I. Summary of the Chair	18
II. List of participants	24

Executive summary

The United Nations International Meeting on the Question of Palestine was dedicated in 2013 to reviewing the support provided by African States in the achievement of Palestinian independence and sovereignty, while drawing on their experience in anti-colonial and anti-apartheid struggles, as well as in post-colonial efforts to build effective governments and sustainable economies. The meeting brought together representatives of 49 Governments, members of United Nations and other international organizations, civil society organizations, academic institutions and mass media outlets.

Addressing the meeting on behalf of the Secretary-General, the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa, Carlos Lopes, said that a window of opportunity for renewed engagement had opened following the visits to the region by the President of the United States of America, Barack Obama, and its Secretary of State, John Kerry. He stressed that there was a need for a concerted push for peace in 2013 if the two-State solution were to be salvaged.

Representatives of African States pledged their strong support for the Palestinian people in their quest for independence and self-determination. Joined by international experts and senior Palestinian officials, they reflected on the experience of Africa with regard to decolonization, economic independence and sustainable development, considering the lessons that would be relevant and important for the State of Palestine. The continuing third-party facilitation aimed at resuming negotiations between Israel and the State of Palestine was welcomed. Speakers and participants alike agreed that, to achieve full sovereignty and territorial integrity, the Palestinian people must form a national unity government, warning that divisions served only to weaken and destabilize a nascent State. Experts urged African Governments to share their negotiating and institution-building tactics, create a continent-wide solidarity movement and launch a regional peace initiative to help the Palestinian people in their endeavour to achieve sovereignty and statehood.

Experts said that, over the previous 8 years, the Palestinian boycott, divestment and sanctions campaign had achieved more successes in various parts of the world than had the South African anti-apartheid campaign in 20. While Palestinian solidarity organizations existed in many African countries, they had not yet succeeded in developing a continent-wide solidarity network which could make their activities more effective. Solidarity with the State of Palestine should be further expanded in Africa to include the masses, especially university students and other young people.

Beyond the historic adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 67/19, a difficult path lay ahead for the State of Palestine to gain full membership in the United Nations. In that regard, the further support of African States for the Palestinian people and their leadership, especially as part of the Group of African States and the Non-Aligned Movement at the United Nations, was crucial.

I. Introduction

1. The United Nations International Meeting on the Question of Palestine was held at the United Nations Conference Centre, Addis Ababa, on 29 and 30 April 2013, under the auspices of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and in accordance with the provisions of General Assembly resolutions 67/20 and 67/21. The theme of the meeting was “African solidarity with the Palestinian people for the achievement of their inalienable rights, including the sovereignty and independence of the State of Palestine”.
2. The Committee was represented by a delegation comprising Abdou Salam Diallo (Senegal), Chair; Christopher Grima (Malta), Rapporteur; and Riyad Mansour (State of Palestine). The meeting consisted of an opening session, three plenary sessions and a closing session.
3. The themes of the plenary sessions were: “The situation in Palestine, a State under occupation”; “From colonial yoke to sovereignty: lessons drawn from ending colonization and achieving sovereignty and independence”; and “International efforts aimed at achieving Israeli-Palestinian peace: Africa’s support for Palestinian sovereignty and independence”.
4. Presentations were made by 11 experts, including Palestinian and Israelis. Representatives of 49 Governments, 4 intergovernmental organizations, 7 United Nations bodies and organizations, 6 civil society organizations, 13 media outlets, and special guests and members of the public attended the meeting.
5. The summary of the Chair on the outcomes of the meeting (see annex I) was published soon after its conclusion and is available from the website of the Division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat (www.un.org/depts/dpa/qppl/calendar.htm).

II. Opening session

6. The meeting opened with a message from the **Secretary-General**, delivered by the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa, **Carlos Lopes**, who welcomed the recent visit to the West Bank and Israel by the President of the United States of America, Barack Obama, and the subsequent resumption of United States aid to the cash-strapped Palestinian Authority in the amount of \$500 million. The Secretary-General said that the time had come for concerted action to advance the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. While further encouraged by the subsequent visit in April of the Secretary of State of the United States, John Kerry, to meet the President of the State of Palestine, Mahmoud Abbas, and the Prime Minister of Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu, he had made it clear in meetings with the President of the United States that the United Nations was committed to supporting any serious initiative that presented a credible political horizon.
7. He stressed that both the Palestinian and Israeli leadership must be committed to tackling final status issues constructively and to making a concerted push for peace in 2013 to salvage the two-State solution. He hailed the decision of the Government of Israel on 25 March to resume

the monthly cash transfers of the tax revenues that it collected on behalf of the Palestinian Authority. He called upon donors to expedite aid to the Authority and upon Israel to end its severe curtailment of freedom of movement of the Palestinian people, warning that unfulfilled donor commitments and restrictions on movement and access had hampered gains in state-building and the ability of the Authority to provide services.

8. He expressed concern about the renewed violence in the region, spurred by the situation of Palestinian prisoners and the closure by Israel of key crossings into Gaza, in violation of the ceasefire agreement of November 2012. He stated that Israel must end the closures, especially because much of the enclave's population relied on external aid, and that it must respect the right to peaceful protest. As to the recent deaths of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli custody, an independent authority should promptly investigate prisoner deaths, he said.

9. In conclusion, he stated that the contours of a two-State solution based on the 1967 borders with territorial swaps were well known. There should be a just solution on all final status issues, including agreements on territory, security, settlements and water. He reiterated that he would continue to do his utmost to support and facilitate efforts to achieve a just, lasting and comprehensive negotiated peace.

10. The representative of Ethiopia, **Negash Kibret**, lauded the Committee for the important role that it had played for almost four decades in raising global awareness of the question of Palestine. He considered that the current meeting would contribute further to promoting the genuine cause of the Palestinian people and long-standing solidarity between the people of Palestine and the peoples of Africa. The struggle of African countries for freedom and self-determination had shaped their support for the Palestinian quest. He noted that solidarity with the Palestinian struggle for liberation was the driving factor behind the overwhelming support of Africans and, in all multilateral forums, most African nations were vocal in recognizing Palestine as an independent State.

11. He recalled that Ethiopian relations with Palestine dated back to 1973, when the country had formally recognized the Palestine Liberation Organization and provided full support for the opening of one of its offices in Addis Ababa a few years later, in 1978. His country also strongly supported Security Council resolution 1397 (2002) concerning the two-State solution, and urged the parties to resume talks based on full respect for previous agreements and United Nations resolutions. While economic and diplomatic interests inevitably guided many national foreign policy decisions, it was significant that the African continent stood largely on the side of the liberation and self-determination of Palestine, he said. On the occasion of the landmark decision taken by the General Assembly on 29 November 2012, African States had overwhelmingly endorsed upgrading the status of Palestine at the United Nations.

12. The lack of cordial relations between Israel and the State of Palestine were of great concern and, unfortunately, the absence of genuine efforts by the international community was contributing to the status quo, he pointed out. Intensified settlement activities in East Jerusalem and the West Bank were unhelpful, he said, adding that of equal importance were steps by the Palestinians to halt indiscriminate attacks against Israeli citizens. Practical actions must be taken by the two parties, with the assistance of the international community, to resume the long-stalled

peace process. He reiterated the unswerving support of Ethiopia for the Palestinian people and called upon all parties to make every effort to resolve the problem through a negotiated and durable solution.

13. The Chair of the Committee, **Abdou Salam Diallo**, echoing the concern expressed by the Secretary-General, said that Israel remained in defiance of international law, notwithstanding the global condemnation of its settlement expansion in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Gaza remained a virtual open-air prison: Israel controlled every aspect of Palestinian life and resources, while applying arbitrary military law to Palestinian residents in the West Bank.

14. The international community must put an end to Israeli colonial practices, he said, calling upon the Security Council to ensure that Israel complied with international law and upon the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention to ensure respect for the provisions of that instrument. He considered that African States, drawing on their own experience with decolonization, economic independence and sustainable development, could provide important guidance in the Palestinian quest for statehood; they had already had played an important role with their show of support in November 2012. In particular, the long, successful struggle of South Africa against apartheid had inspired those working for justice throughout the world. The tactics and initiatives employed by civil society organizations, which were based on the South African experience, had been producing tangible results. Obviously, however, more needed to be done, considering that an end to the Israeli occupation was nowhere in sight.

15. Raising the status of Palestine at the United Nations and admitting it as a State member of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization had been important steps, he said. In conclusion, he urged all States, in particular those that had already recognized the State of Palestine at the United Nations but had yet to do so bilaterally, to establish full diplomatic relations.

16. Representing the State of Palestine, the member of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization and Head of the National Committee to Resist Settlements and the Wall, **Taysir Khaled**, in a keynote address, declared that Israel had not respected a single United Nations resolution and called upon it to assume its responsibilities. It was impossible to come up with a solution when incumbent Israeli ministers openly stated that the Government's official policy was to undermine the spirit of the Palestinian people, he said.

17. With the Oslo Accords, he recalled, the Palestinians had accepted a two-State solution based on the 1967 borders, one quarter of the mandated territory, but the negotiations that had followed had never produced tangible results. Meanwhile, Israel had continued to expand settlements, making the establishment of a Palestinian State impossible. Tens of thousands of new homes had been built for settlers, while 25,000 Palestinian houses had been demolished in the West Bank. A network of settler-only roads connecting settlements in the West Bank had isolated and fragmented the Palestinian community. Palestinians were compelled to use side roads, while the main roads were kept for Israelis. Palestinians were subjected to Israeli military law, while its national law was applied to settlers.

18. In addition, Israel controlled water resources in the West Bank and allowed Palestinians to consume only a portion of the amount consumed by Israelis. Moreover, Israel continued to imprison some 5,000 Palestinians, including children, and some prisoners had died because of torture. Even though the Palestinian people faced the same situation as had South Africa under the apartheid regime, it was not condemned by the international community in the same manner, he said.

19. The representative of **Senegal** stressed the importance of the meeting, reaffirming the solidarity of the people of Senegal and the steadfast support of the African Union for the Palestinian people in their pursuit of a just and lasting solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. He said that the illegal and harmful Israeli occupation practices of continued settlement construction, house demolitions, administrative detention and the separation wall were in flagrant violation of the Geneva Conventions and that Israel, as an occupying Power, could not absolve itself of its responsibility to protect the civilian population of the territories under its control. He stressed that the blockade of the Gaza Strip was causing serious economic, social and humanitarian damage to the Palestinian people and constituted collective punishment of the civilian population. He called upon the international community to work towards the realization of the relevant United Nations resolutions and decisions on ending the occupation, pledging that his people would continue to work with other African countries to strengthen African solidarity with the people of Palestine.

20. The representative of **Indonesia** said that his country's position on the issue remained unchanged: the continued obstruction by Israel of the right of the Palestinian people to statehood and freedom amounted not only to a breach of international law, but also to a betrayal of the principles of justice and humanity. The recognition by the General Assembly of Palestine as a non-member observer State was a moral and political affirmation of the Palestinian cause and would no doubt lead the way to the eventual acceptance of the State of Palestine as a full member of the United Nations. While the work towards that goal was conducted, Indonesia wished to remind the international community that the State of Palestine must not be left financially disadvantaged by the decision of Israel to withhold Palestinian tax revenues, which had deprived the Government of much-needed financial resources to perform its functions.

21. The representative of the **League of Arab States** said that the current meeting reflected the importance of the topic and the degree of solidarity between the African continent and the Arab countries on the Palestinian question, which was at the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict. He stressed that, without the resolution of that conflict and for as long as the Palestinian people and their lands were under Israeli control and occupation, it was impossible to establish peace and security in the region. It was important that African countries continued to render their unwavering support in pursuit of the justice that the Palestinian people deserved.

22. The representative of **Morocco**, on behalf also of the Arab Council in Addis Ababa, reaffirmed the full support of his people and of the Arab Council in Addis Ababa to the Palestinian people in their endeavour to regain their inalienable and legitimate rights and establish an independent Palestinian State based on the 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital. He argued that prompt actions were needed on the part of the international community to uphold the principles of justice and freedom in Palestine, as had been done in Africa. Relevant

United Nations resolutions should serve as a basis for the final settlement of the conflict, and a just solution should be achieved regarding the Palestinian refugees, based on General Assembly resolution 194 (III).

23. The representative of the **Islamic Republic of Iran**, speaking on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, recalled that the Movement had historically raised its voice in numerous international forums in support of the Palestinian people. At the Sixteenth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held in Tehran from 26 to 31 August 2012, the participants had reviewed the serious situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and had reiterated their grave concern over the suffering of the Palestinian people. He considered that the refusal of Israel to commit itself to the internationally endorsed parameters for the two-State solution had cast a dark shadow of doubt over its professed intentions for peace and that its intransigence and policies had undermined the resumption of credible negotiations.

24. The Assistant Secretary-General of the **Organization of Islamic Cooperation**, on behalf of Secretary-General of the Organization, echoed the sentiment of many speakers by saying that the current meeting symbolized a clear message of sustainable determination and commitment to maintain the momentum of moving forward in supporting the Palestinian people and their rights. He said that the Organization was extremely concerned about the human rights violations committed against Palestinians in Israeli prisons and detention centres. He pointed out that the death in an Israeli jail in March of a Palestinian prisoner, Maysara Abu Hamdieh, had exposed the inhumane policies and systematic violations perpetrated against Palestinian prisoners by Israel. Urgent intervention by the international community was needed to defend the human rights of Palestinian prisoners, save their lives and place pressure on Israel to treat them in accordance with international humanitarian law, including the Geneva Conventions.

25. The representative of **Egypt** drew a parallel between the experiences of the African States and the Palestinian struggle for self-determination. Concurring with the statements of the representatives of the Non-Aligned Movement, the League of Arab States and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, he stated that the principles of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) must be upheld and that an independent Palestinian State must be created based on the 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital. In the diplomatic arena, he concluded, efforts must be further enhanced to expand and reinforce the international alliance against the persistent violations of international law by Israel through its illegal and destructive occupation policies and practices.

III. Plenary sessions

A. Plenary session I

The situation in Palestine, a State under occupation

26. Speakers in plenary session I addressed the following sub-themes: “Israeli strategies to consolidate the occupation: settlements, the wall, cantonization”; “The economic, social and humanitarian impact of the occupation on the Palestinian people”; and “Responsibility and accountability of the occupying Power under international law”.

27. The Head of the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality and member of the Israeli parliament, **Mohammad Barakeh**, said that, after the signature of the Oslo Accords, Israel had increased the population of settlers in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. The construction of more than one half of the 700-km separation wall had been completed. Israel wished to give the world the impression that the existence of settlements was legitimate; all settlements were actively set up by the Government, with its financial and military support. Land expropriated from Palestinians was given to settlers for free, and the economic activities in settlements accounted for between 15 and 20 per cent of the entire Israeli economy.

28. He was of the view that the strategic plan of Israel was to divide the West Bank and separate Jerusalem from the West Bank. The situation was a threat to both the Palestinian people and the entire region. Just about everything was blamed on the Palestinians, while Israel acted with virtual impunity. While people believed that negotiations were under way, in reality nothing was happening and the situation was deteriorating. There was a need for a comprehensive initiative to draw international attention to the plight of the Palestinian people. One specific initiative could be the use of terminology: given that Palestine had been admitted to the United Nations as a non-member observer State, the term “occupied territory” should be replaced by the term “occupied country”.

29. A slide presentation by the Child Rights Senior Adviser of Save the Children, **Cairo Arafat**, entitled “From dispossession, displacement, and dysfunction to salvaging, solidarity and self-determination”, provided participants with detailed socioeconomic information about the current situation of Palestinians, including the economic costs of, among others things, the Gaza blockade and the restrictions on water, trade and movement.

30. She provided specific details on the overall situations in Gaza, where, for example, 34 per cent of the territory’s workforce, including more than one half of its young people, was unemployed; in East Jerusalem, where 10,000 Palestinian children lacked access to education and 14,000 East Jerusalemites had been stripped of their residency rights since 1967; and in Area C, where, she said, there was no Palestinian sovereignty over 63 per cent of the West Bank territory. Humanitarian assistance for the Palestinian people from 2003 to 2012 had amounted to some \$2.8 billion, with a further \$3 billion allocated for development; by comparison, Israel had received more than \$30 billion in development aid. Some 50 per cent of the population in Gaza was food insecure, thousands of families remained internally displaced and millions of Palestinian refugees still awaited a just solution to their situation.

31. Looking ahead, she urged the Palestinians in their national discourse to accord priority to national solidarity and reunification programmes; to target community mobilization and volunteer programmes at reclaiming rural and border lands, in addition to the natural resources belonging to them; and to initiate agricultural and information and communications technology jobs targeted at young people. She said that the Palestinian Authority and Israel must be held responsible for protecting the rights of Palestinian citizens; there was a need to develop national strategies that looked beyond settlements; Israeli policies must be disregarded and legal action taken in local and international courts; and legal aid and other remedies must be included in all local and international programmes for Palestinians.

32. The representative of the International Advocacy Coordinator for the Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counselling, **Salwa Duaibis**, reviewed the main rules of law, as outlined by the International Committee of the Red Cross, governing the responsibilities of an occupying Power. Among them was that the occupant did not acquire sovereignty over the territory in question and that occupation was only a temporary situation. In addition, the occupying Power must respect the laws in force in an occupied territory unless they constituted a threat to its security or impeded the application of the international law of occupation. Furthermore, an occupying Power must devote particular attention to the well-being of children, and collective punishment was prohibited, as was the confiscation of private property.

33. In her work in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, she said, the settlements issue was prominent. Such settlements were both illegal and at the epicentre of a host of human rights violations which occurred on a daily basis and affected 2.5 million Palestinians. Seizure of land for settlement construction had shrunk the space available for Palestinian housing, infrastructure and services to sustain livelihoods. In total, for example, 43 per cent of the West Bank was allocated to settlements and the number of Jewish settlers living in those areas was double that of Palestinians. She urged those still under the illusion that the occupation was of a temporary nature to reconsider their position.

34. She said that Israeli settlers in the West Bank were consuming approximately six times the water used by the Palestinians. To ensure that 300,000 settlers got to work every day without interruption, the Israeli army must crush the local Palestinian population. Experts or United Nations meetings were not needed to tell the world that settlements caused severe harm to ordinary men and women, or that those who lived in their shadow struggled daily to protect themselves and their families. Facts on the ground were accelerating at a pace that would soon make gatherings such as the current meeting a waste of time, she said, warning that time was of the essence. She agreed that negotiations were the way forward, but stressed that they must be grounded in the rule of law.

35. The member of the jury of the Russell Tribunal on Palestine and former member of the United States House of Representatives, **Cynthia McKinney**, discussed the role that the pro-Israel lobby in United States politics played with regard to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. For example, the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, held in Durban in 2001, had been a watershed event that could have been supported by the United States, except that powerful lobbies wanted otherwise. At a meeting such as the current one, where the theme was African solidarity with the Palestinian people, it was important to explain how the pro-Israel lobby skewed politics in the United States, not only against the Palestinian people but also against African descendants living there.

36. While Palestinians suffered, platitudes and delays had served as effective policies of the United States and European countries, she said, outlining breaches by the occupying Power of international humanitarian law, international human rights law, international law and the law of the United States. As a juror on the Russell Tribunal on Palestine, she noted the finding that both the United States and Europe were guilty of contributing to Israeli impunity. Having also recently served as an official observer at the Kuala Lumpur War Crime Commission, she had

received testimony from Palestinians concerning their treatment inside Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

37. In conclusion, she said that she was not Palestinian or Arab or Muslim but, as a human being, she acknowledged the dignity of those who were oppressed and who epitomized the theme of the current meeting, namely, African solidarity with the Palestinian people for the achievement of their inalienable rights, including the sovereignty and independence of the State of Palestine.

B. Plenary session II
From colonial yoke to sovereignty: lessons drawn from ending colonization
and achieving sovereignty and independence

38. Speakers in plenary session II addressed the following sub-themes: “Severing from colonial powers: building relations based on self-determination, equality and mutual benefits”; “Engaging the diaspora in building the institutions of the State and its economy”; and “Maximizing the effects of donor assistance”.

39. The Deputy Head of the United Nations Office to the African Union in Addis Ababa, **Colin Stewart**, welcomed the decision of the Committee to hold the current meeting in Africa, given that African solidarity with the State of Palestine continued to be crucial to achieving Palestinian self-determination. African States, drawing on their own anti-colonial experiences and post-colonial struggles to build effective governments and sustainable economies, had much to offer. In much of post-colonial Africa, the first few years of independence had been met with jubilation and hope, but economic development and political stability had posed many challenges. Generating common national objectives and confidence in national democratic systems as a means of resolving conflicts were challenges that the State of Palestine also faced. The lessons learned in Africa were important for the State of Palestine as it dealt with its internal conflicts, in particular those which divided the polities of the West Bank and Gaza, he said. The African Union supported the bid for full United Nations membership. A total of 49 States members of the African Union, a vast majority, now recognized Palestine as a State. It was encouraging that most African States had full diplomatic relations with the State of Palestine, which could generate political support for its recognition by other international organizations and create opportunities for trade, commercial and cultural exchange.

40. Forming a government of national unity was vital for Palestinians to achieve full sovereignty and territorial integrity, he continued, encouraging the renewed efforts of the Palestinian leaders towards that end. Divisions served only to weaken and destabilize a nascent State already beset by enormous challenges, further complicating the economy. Any emerging State struggled with creating the structures and policies necessary to encourage growth. With its two physically divided and independently functioning polities in the West Bank and Gaza, the ability of the State of Palestine to develop one national economic policy or strategy was nearly impossible. In addition, donor support could not be equally or effectively invested in improving government services.

41. The challenges of an emerging State to swiftly create infrastructure, an effective banking system and policies to attract local and international investment had been more pronounced in the State of Palestine because it had yet to free itself from its colonial legacy and exercise full control of its borders, he said. The constraint on the movement of persons and goods in Palestine was one that most newly independent African States fortunately had not faced. Moreover, the cantonization within the State of Palestine itself, inhibiting movement within State-controlled areas, must be addressed if it were to achieve full sovereignty. He pointed to other numerous challenges unique to the State of Palestine, such as its reliance on a third State for the transfer of its own tax revenues. There were even limitations on how far fishing vessels could move off the coast of Gaza.

42. The former Ambassador of Israel to South Africa, **Ilan Baruch**, said that, serving as an Israeli diplomat to several African countries during the period from 2005 to 2011, he had witnessed their deep commitment to Middle East peace and sincere concern for the Palestinian people. He had, however, resigned from his post in pain and anguish at his Government's decision to dismiss as superfluous any effort to achieve a lasting settlement based on the land-for-peace principle. Recent opinion polls had shown that most Israelis and Palestinians desired a negotiated peace in line with the two-State solution, but hawks on both sides of the conflict had refused to compromise, capitalizing on the support of a fearful public. Rather than the peace process, the Government of Israel was focused on self-reliant security and was primarily preoccupied with the nuclear programme of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

43. In a historic visit to the region in March, the President of the United States had told ordinary Israelis in Hebrew that they were not alone and not in isolation, he said. On the world stage, however, Israel was consistently condemned, isolated and delegitimized. The global narrative of anti-colonialism had skipped Israel, even though Israel too had fought for its independence. Instead, the Afro-Asian bloc, subsequently known as the Non-Aligned Movement, had embarked on a marathon campaign to secure self-determination, sovereignty and statehood for the Palestinians, leaving Israelis with the impression that there was a cynical, automatic majority against them. Aiming to change that, the Arab Peace Initiative had sent a message to Israel that, once it had completed peace negotiations with the Palestinians and had resolved all pending disputes, States members of the Arab League would make peace with Israel and normalize diplomatic and trade relations. The Government of Israel had not responded to that offer, but Israeli civil society had, so much so that the Israel Peace Initiative campaign, launched by an Israeli non-governmental organization to complement the Arab Peace Initiative, had been well received internationally.

44. He suggested that Africa, drawing on its rich heritage of struggle against colonialism, should launch an African peace initiative modelled after the Arab initiative to help the parties to the conflict to remove the barriers to Palestinian self-determination, sovereignty and statehood. He said that Africa and the Non-Aligned Movement should then make a commitment to extending their hand to Israel with a message of acceptance and recognition, saying "atem lo levad" (you are not alone): you are not isolated, undermined, delegitimized. That move would undoubtedly resonate boldly in the Israeli peace camp, Israeli civil society and, it was hoped, with the Government as well, he said.

45. The representative of **Namibia** emphasized the value and power of international solidarity. During the Namibian movement towards independence, he said, supporters around the world had never lost faith in the Namibian struggle for freedom; that persistence had eventually prevailed, with their Governments imposing sanctions on the South African regime. The same faith in solidarity should be applied to the Palestinian cause. Solidarity with the State of Palestine should be further expanded in Africa to include the masses, especially university students. The oppressed must unite beyond an individual affinity to mobilize people throughout the world to put pressure on their Governments. The Palestinian people should unite behind the Palestinian Authority to force Israel to comply with the resolutions and decisions of the international community.

46. He said that in the Caracas Declaration,¹ adopted at its special meeting in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela in April 2013, the Committee had requested the General Assembly to proclaim 2014 the International Year of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. The year would provide a significant opportunity to send a message to people around the world to pressure their Governments to change their policies in support of the State of Palestine. Moreover, the Assembly should endorse a meaningful increase in the budget of the Committee to reinforce its activities during such a year.

47. With regard to donor aid, the Acting Head of Office of the Local Aid Coordination Secretariat, **Iman Shawwa**, said that, its upgraded United Nations status notwithstanding, the State of Palestine was not permitted full control of its territory, forcing it to rely heavily on external funding. In 2005, the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee had set up a local aid coordination structure so that the Palestinian Authority could better set priorities and distribute aid, in line with the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. Thanks to impressive strides in self-governance, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the United Nations had, by September 2011, deemed the Authority's governmental functions sufficient for a functioning State in six key areas: governance, human rights and the rule of law; education and culture; health; social protection; livelihoods, food security and employment; and infrastructure, water and sanitation. By 2012, most donors, except the large ones, had fully untied their aid to Palestine.

48. She said that the peace process remained at a stalemate and the \$1 billion drop in donor aid in the previous four years, coupled with continued restrictions on Palestinians' movement and access, had exacerbated the Palestinian Authority's fiscal crisis. The Palestinian economy had slowed from 11 per cent real growth in 2011 to 6 per cent in 2012. Moreover, in 2011, the Authority had suffered from a donor financing shortfall of between \$200 million and \$220 million, while its 2012 budget finance gap was estimated at \$500 million. In March 2013, the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee had called upon donors to ensure adequate, predictable funds to meet the Authority's 2013 financing requirements of an estimated \$1.2 billion.

49. She emphasized that it was important to maintain the momentum and that key players in aid coordination continue to steadfastly support the Palestinian Authority. She pointed to the many challenges confronting the Authority, among them programme fragmentation and duplication, and the lack of accurate data on funding. Donor aid must be in line with the

¹ Available from www.un.org/depts/dpa/qpal/docs/Committee/Caracas_declaration%20FINAL.pdf.

Palestinian National Development Plan, coordinated through the Aid Management and Coordination Unit of the Ministry of Finance, and monitored through such mechanisms as the Survey on Monitoring the Paris Declaration, the gender mainstreaming survey and the Security Sector Working Group survey. In addition, donors should continue to share information on their disbursements by updating the national aid information management system.

C. Plenary session III
International efforts aimed at achieving Israeli-Palestinian peace:
Africa's support for Palestinian sovereignty and independence

50. Speakers in plenary session III addressed the following sub-themes: “The important contribution of international organizations: efforts by the United Nations, the Non-Aligned Movement, the Arab League, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the African Union”; “Bilateral and multilateral support for the State of Palestine”; and “Civil society initiatives for a comprehensive, just and lasting solution to the question of Palestine”.

51. The representative of **South Africa** said that South Africans had a story to tell that they could share with their Palestinian brothers and sisters. South Africans, who only 19 years previously had been subjected to discrimination and oppression by their minority apartheid rulers, were today reaping the benefits of freedom and reconciliation, including a well-developed civil service, after enduring hard, painful negotiations with their political opponents.

52. Just as unity had played a key role in independence for South Africa, unity between Fatah and Hamas was critical for the future of the State of Palestine, he said, urging its fractured leadership to reconcile permanently and hold broad-based Palestinian elections. The recent appointment of Tzipi Livni as Minister of Justice and Chief Negotiator for the Middle East Peace Process in the new coalition Government of Israel, which the President of the State of Palestine had termed a positive development, could also be an important move, he said, urging Palestinian leaders to pressure Israel to return to the negotiating table. He said that the current meeting was timely because it was being held a few weeks before the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Organization of African Unity. On various occasions, his Government had called upon Israel to abandon all settlement activity, which had made the two-State solution increasingly difficult to achieve. The halting of settlement construction was viewed by the Government of South Africa as a commitment already agreed to by Israel during preceding peace negotiations, he said, citing the conference held in Annapolis, United States, in November 2007.

53. During the ministerial meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement Coordinating Bureau held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, in May 2012, the Government of South Africa had reiterated its unwavering commitment to, and had called for recognition of, the State of Palestine, he said. He condemned all acts of violence and expressed particular concern over the continued violence perpetrated by Israeli settlers against Palestinians and their property, including the uprooting of trees, the assaulting of and firing on Palestinians and the demolition of Palestinian homes, mosques, churches and cemeteries. South Africa had urged the Israeli authorities on many occasions to take action against the perpetrators. South Africans, who had also been subjected to discrimination and oppression, were passionate about the Palestinian cause. Their experience

with dialogue and negotiation with their political opponents had been hard and painful, but it had enabled them to reap the benefits of freedom and reconciliation.

54. The former Chair of the Committee, **Ibra Deguene Ka**, said that Africa, with its shared geography and history of legitimate struggle, was at the forefront of the fight for Palestinian self-determination and independence. The future of Arab nations was inextricably linked to that of Africa, which was home to 60 per cent of Arabs and 40 per cent of Arab land. Since its inception in 1963, the Organization of African Unity and its successor organization, the African Union, had unequivocally supported the Palestinian people's legitimate struggle in such multilateral forums as the United Nations, the Non-Aligned Movement and the Organization of the Islamic Conference. Since 1967, several African countries had strongly advocated the withdrawal of Israel from Arab lands.

55. In 1973, African nations had severed diplomatic ties with Israel after the Yom Kippur war at a time when Israel had invested heavily in several African countries, he said. One year later, under an African presidency, the General Assembly had adopted resolution 3236 (XXIX), in which it had reaffirmed the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination, independence and return. In 1975, the Committee had been created, with Senegal as its first Chair. Most recently, African nations had rallied behind upgraded status of Palestine in the United Nations.

56. For almost 40 years, the Committee had greatly helped to advance the Palestinian cause and had raised global public awareness of the illegal and inhumane practices of Israel in occupied Palestine, which had amounted to the collective punishment of the Palestinian people and offended the conscience of humankind, he said. The Committee had constantly berated in international forums unpunished violations by Israel of Security Council resolutions and its rejection of any peace effort in the region. He asked whether the dismantling of the segregationist apartheid regime had helped South African society to reconcile, and whether the end of the cold war, the collapse of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Gulf War had paved the way for the Madrid Conference and the Oslo Accords. The parties to the conflict must be pushed to save the peace process until peace reigned in the Middle East. Africa, drawing on its own victory against colonization, would continue to make every effort to bring peace and self-determination to the State of Palestine.

57. The Executive Director of the Afro-Middle East Centre, **Naeem Jeenah**, said that on 9 July 2005 about 200 Palestinian civil society and political organizations had called upon the world to boycott, divest from and sanction Israel. Four days later, the International Conference of Civil Society in Support of Middle East Peace, held in Paris, had endorsed the call in its Action Plan 2005. Known as the boycott, divestment and sanctions movement, the call demanded that Israel end its occupation and colonization of all Arab lands and dismantle its separation wall; recognize the fundamental rights of Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel to full equality; and respect, protect and promote the right of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes and properties, as stipulated by the General Assembly in its resolution 194 (III).

58. He recalled that the basis for the South African anti-apartheid campaign had been armed struggle, an internal underground, international solidarity and international isolation of the South

African State, and mass mobilization within the country. It had, however, taken decades for gains to be made. By the time the bans on the South African liberation movements had been lifted, many Western countries in particular had still been staunchly refusing to adopt sanctions. Over the previous 8 years, the boycott, divestment and sanctions campaign had achieved more success in various parts of the world than the South African anti-apartheid campaign had in 20 years, he said. When the occupier was strong militarily, economically and diplomatically, as was the case during the apartheid regime in South Africa and in Israel currently, strategies to isolate it were wise.

59. The boycott, divestment and sanctions campaign, which was focused on the Israeli State, institutions and companies linked to settlement activity and academic institutions, had scored many victories. For example, Carmel-Agrexco, an Israeli company, had filed for liquidation in 2011 and Ahava had closed its main London store after being boycotted by retailers in Canada, Japan, Norway, South Africa and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. In 2011, the University of Johannesburg had decided not to form institutional relations with Israeli institutions. An increasing number of artists and writers throughout the world had refused to perform in Israel, while churches and other civil society groups had made divestments. The Governments of South Africa and some European countries were poised to pass legislation to label settlement products. A group of South African Jews had set up an organization, Stop the JNF, to convince their fellow citizens not to support the Jewish National Fund, which supported settlement building in the State of Palestine and was active in agricultural projects in South Africa and other parts of the continent, he said. While Palestinian solidarity organizations existed in many African countries, they had to date failed to develop a continent-wide solidarity network that could render their activities more effective. He argued that the global community should broaden and deepen the boycott, divestment and sanctions campaign.

IV. Closing session

60. The Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations, **Riyad Mansour**, said that the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 67/19 had been vital for the Palestinian struggle for freedom. The status of Palestine as a State Member of the United Nations or as an observer State was not as important as the fact that the international community had recognized the existence of the State of Palestine. It was time for the pillars of that State to be strengthened. The notion that self-determination could not be accorded to Palestinians until negotiations with Israel were finalized was completely unacceptable. He recalled that, when Israel had declared independence, it had not sought permission from other countries, and when the United States of America had declared independence, it had not negotiated with the British. They simply exercised their right, he said, adding that the Palestinians were ready to negotiate with Israel on all issues, provided that Israel was ready to do the same in good faith.

61. The Palestinians were grateful to African countries, most of which, with the exception of Cameroon and Eritrea, recognized the State of Palestine, he said. While South African civil society had an extremely strong basis, civil society in Africa as a whole was not united as a strong regional force. African civil society players should build a massive popularity movement in support of the State of Palestine. For the situation to improve, the State of Palestine needed to

join United Nations agencies, become a State party to international conventions and use any available international instruments.

62. He said that it was not sufficient to characterize settlements as illegal and an obstacle to peace. Practical steps must be taken. Friendly countries, such as those that provided financial and economic support to Palestinians, should implement legal instruments that held Israel to account. He called upon countries to determine the source of products from Israel to ensure that they were not produced in Israeli settlements. Settlers who committed crimes against Palestinians should pay a price, and countries should deny them entry. Participation in the current meeting was not merely about listening to good speeches, he said, requesting the participants to return home with a responsibility, that was, not only to advocate freedom and independence but also to show to the world that occupation was ugly. He added that it was the collective responsibility of the international community to make the world a better place by eradicating occupation and apartheid.

63. In closing the meeting, the Chair said that the historic adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 67/19 in November 2012, by which it had accorded Palestine non-member observer State status in the United Nations, had created a new dimension in the search for a solution to the question of Palestine and had been an important first step. Nevertheless, for the State of Palestine, the path to achieving full membership of the United Nations remained a difficult one. Moreover, the precarious financial situation of the Palestinian Authority endangered the sustainability of its institution-building programme. The Palestinian people and leadership needed continued and increased support, he stressed, warning that mere criticism of the occupation and colonization policies of Israel would not stop their continuation.

64. He welcomed the continuing meaningful talks facilitated by third parties aimed at resuming negotiations between Israel and the State of Palestine. A major global effort, including by regional parties and the Quartet, which incorporated practical steps to force Israel to reverse its detrimental policies and accept coexistence with all of its neighbours, was needed to drive the peace process forward. He was also convinced of the support of African States for the Palestinian people, in particular their important role at the United Nations as part of the African Group and the Non-Aligned Movement.

Annex I

Summary of the Chair

1. The United Nations International Meeting on the Question of Palestine was convened at the United Nations Conference Centre, Addis Ababa, on 29 and 30 April 2013 by the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, under the theme “African solidarity with the Palestinian people for the achievement of their inalienable rights”. The participants examined, among others things, the situation in Palestine as a State under occupation, the responsibility and accountability of the occupying Power under international law and the lessons learned from the experience of African States in ending colonization and achieving sovereignty and independence.

2. In his message to the meeting at its opening session, the Secretary-General stressed that there was an urgent need for a concerted push for peace in 2013 to salvage the two-State solution, stating that the status quo was unsustainable, both politically and economically. The accomplishments of the Palestinian state-building programme and donor funding would be difficult to maintain in the absence of specific progress on the political track. He also stressed that all settlement activity in the West Bank and East Jerusalem was illegal under international law and constituted an ever-greater impediment to peace.

3. The Chair of the Committee said that the Palestinian people and their supporters had much to learn from the experience of African States in their quest for decolonization, independence and sovereignty, and from their experience on the path to economic independence and sustainable development. The Committee had continued to call upon the Security Council to ensure compliance by Israel with international law. It had also called upon the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention to ensure respect for its provisions. Non-action by the Council and the States parties to the Geneva Conventions would put into question the credibility of the international legal system.

4. The international community should put an end to the colonial policies and practices of the State of Israel with a view to encouraging a new dynamic between the two adversaries in the conflict. The representative of the State of Palestine said that Israel had not respected a single one of the many United Nations resolutions which called upon Israel to commit itself to its responsibilities as an occupying Power. It was impossible to reach a solution when incumbent Israeli ministers openly stated that the Government’s official policy was to undermine the spirit of the Palestinian people.

5. With the Oslo Accords, the Palestinians had accepted a two-State solution based on the 1967 borders, one quarter of the mandated territory, but the ensuing negotiations had never produced tangible results. Meanwhile, Israel had continued to expand the settlements, making the establishment of a Palestinian State impossible. Tens of thousands of new homes had been built for settlers, while 25,000 Palestinian houses had been demolished in the West Bank. A network of settler-only roads connecting settlements in the West Bank had isolated and

fragmented the Palestinian community. Palestinians were forced to use side roads, while the main roads were kept for Israelis.

6. Palestinians were subjected to Israeli military law, while its national law was applied to settlers. Israeli soldiers did not seek to stop the settlers' aggression against Palestinians, and complaints filed by Palestinians rarely resulted in prosecutions by the Israeli authorities. Israel controlled water resources in the West Bank and allowed Palestinians to use only a fraction of the amount consumed by Israelis. It continued to imprison some 5,000 Palestinians, including children, and some had died because of torture.

7. Even though the Palestinian people faced the same situation as South Africa under the apartheid regime, Israel was not condemned in the same manner by the international community. The representative of Ethiopia said that his country had always associated itself with the decisions of African States to support the Palestinian cause and struggle for freedom, national independence and sovereignty. Its relations with the State of Palestine dated back to 1973, when the country had formally recognized the Palestine Liberation Organization and had provided full support for the opening of an office in Addis Ababa in 1978. He reiterated the strong support of Ethiopia for the objective, affirmed by the Security Council in its resolution 1397 (2002), of two States living side by side within secure and recognized borders.

8. Also speaking at the opening session were the representatives of Senegal, Indonesia, Morocco, the Islamic Republic of Iran (on behalf also of the Non-Aligned Movement) and Egypt, and the representatives of the League of Arab States and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. Speakers reiterated their solidarity with the Palestinian people and confirmed their support for wide international recognition of the State of Palestine. Expert panellists gave detailed accounts of the ugly, dirty and nasty reality of the occupation. It was emphasized that, after the signature of the Oslo Accords, Israel had increased the population of settlers in the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

9. The construction of more than one half of the 700-km separation wall had been completed. It was pointed out that all settlements had been set up with the active financial and military support of the Government of Israel. Land expropriated from Palestinians had been given to settlers for free, and the economic activities in settlements accounted for between 15 and 20 per cent of the entire Israeli economy. Seizure of land for the construction of settlements had shrunk the space available for the housing, infrastructure and services needed to sustain the livelihoods of Palestinians. Moreover, Israeli settlers in the West Bank consumed approximately six times the water used by the Palestinians living there.

10. Israel had a strategic plan to divide the West Bank and separate Jerusalem from the West Bank, and had acted with virtual impunity. While people were under the illusion that negotiations were somehow under way, in reality nothing had been happening and the situation was only deteriorating. As one way to draw international attention to the plight of the Palestinian people, the use of new terminology was suggested: given that Palestine had been admitted to the United Nations as a non-member observer State, the term "occupied territory" should be replaced by "occupied country".

11. About 43 per cent of the West Bank had been allocated for settlements and Israeli military use. Since 2000, some 12,400 Palestinian houses and structures had been demolished, forcibly displacing thousands of Palestinians within their homeland. In East Jerusalem, only 13 per cent of the land had been allocated for Palestinian construction. Some 10,000 children lacked access to education. Since 1967, 14,000 East Jerusalemites had been stripped of their residency rights, while 150,000 Israelis had been given residency. At least 93,100 residents were at risk of displacement because they did not have permits issued by the Israeli authorities. In Area C, which represented 63 per cent of the West Bank, there was no autonomy for Palestinians.

12. More than 350,000 Palestinians used to live in Area C, but there were only 150,000 at the current time, while 325,000 settlers lived in some 135 settlements and 100 outposts. In 2012, 540 Palestinian-owned structures, including 165 residences, had been demolished, displacing 815 people, more than one half of them children. In such a situation, many people would decide to leave their homeland simply to protect their family. Palestinians were showing increasing signs of depression, anxiety, stress, frustration and post-traumatic stress disorder, while children were having difficulties learning.

13. In Gaza, 44 per cent of the population were food insecure and about 80 per cent were recipients of aid; six years previously, food insecurity had been unknown. A total of 34 per cent of the workforce, including more than one half of young people, was unemployed, and 35 per cent of farmland and 85 per cent of fishing waters were totally or partially inaccessible. A severe fuel shortage had resulted in outages of up to 12 hours a day; electricity was cut off in the middle of surgeries at hospitals, and people were forced to use flights of stairs to avoid being stranded in elevators. Some 95 per cent of the water from the Gaza aquifer contained levels of nitrate that were eight times the normal level; parents had no choice but to let their children drink it to survive, although aware of the risk of cancer.

14. It was pointed out that the occupation had cost the Palestinians some \$7 billion annually. Meanwhile, the continued restrictions on their movement and access, coupled with a \$1 billion drop in donor aid in the previous four years, had exacerbated the fiscal crisis of the Palestinian Authority. It also had caused the real growth of the Palestinian economy to slow from 11 per cent in 2011 to 6 per cent in 2012. Moreover, in 2011, the Authority had suffered from a shortfall in donor financing of between \$200 million and \$220 million, while its 2012 budget finance gap was estimated at \$500 million. Attention was drawn to the Authority's many challenges, among them programme fragmentation and duplication, and the lack of accurate data on funding. Donor aid must be in line with the Palestinian National Development Plan, coordinated through the Aid Management and Coordination Unit of the Ministry of Finance, and monitored through such mechanisms as the Survey on Monitoring the Paris Declaration, the gender mainstreaming survey and the Security Sector Working Group survey. Moreover, donors should continue sharing information on their disbursements by updating the national aid information management system.

15. Participants then reviewed the responsibility and accountability of the occupying Power under international law. A legal expert said that the duties and responsibilities of an occupying Power were primarily to be found in articles 42 to 56 of the 1907 Hague Regulations concerning

the Laws and Customs of War on Land. Those duties and responsibilities were also laid down in the Fourth Geneva Convention, certain provisions of Additional Protocol I and customary international humanitarian law. That body of law was commonly referred to as international humanitarian law.

16. It was recalled that the principles of the main rules of law placing duties and responsibilities on the occupying Power included the following: the occupier did not acquire sovereignty over the territory; occupation was only a temporary situation and the rights of the occupier were limited to the duration of that period; the occupying Power must respect the laws in force in the occupied territory unless they constituted a threat to its security or an obstacle to the application of the international law of occupation; the occupying Power must take measures to restore and ensure, as far as possible, public order and safety; the occupying Power should devote particular care to the well-being of children; collective or individual forcible transfers of population from and within the occupied territory were prohibited; transfers of the civilian population of the occupying Power into the occupied territory, regardless of whether they are forcible or voluntary, were prohibited; collective punishment was prohibited; the confiscation of private property by the occupier was prohibited; cultural property must be respected; and people accused of criminal offences should be provided with proceedings respecting internationally recognized judicial guarantees.

17. Israel, as an occupying Power, was also bound by another body of law referred to as human rights law, which included the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. A former member of the United States Congress stated that Israeli impunity had been brought about by the pro-Israel lobby operating in the political sphere of the United States. That well-funded lobby had ensured the ouster from Congress of anyone who dared to draw attention to Israeli human rights violations, its misuse of weapons supplied by the United States or any other inconvenient facts. She suggested that much of the Palestinian suffering could be alleviated if sufficient energy and resources were directed at making the public aware that the pro-Israel lobby had misdirected United States and European policies by preventing pro-peace and pro-justice politicians from initiating a public debate on important values and basic human dignity.

18. Experts pointed out that there was no real motivation for Israel to end the occupation. The devastating effects of its failure to respect international law had been compounded by a lack of political will to neutralize its incentive in prolonging the occupation. While most people around the world did not approve of Israeli policies, Governments had accepted the situation and the political will to rectify it was almost non-existent. Only a vast people's movement would make a difference, and action must be taken before the point of no return was reached.

19. Participants reiterated the important role of African States in support of the State of Palestine. African States and the African Union had always strongly supported the Palestinian people and their right to self-determination. In January 2012, the Assembly of the African Union had affirmed its full support to the Palestinian people in their legitimate struggle to end the Israeli occupation and to establish an independent State under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization. The Union had supported Palestine's bid for full United Nations

membership. A total of 49 States members of the Union, the vast majority, recognized Palestine as a State. Most African States had full diplomatic relations with the State of Palestine.

20. Experts then discussed the lessons that the Palestinian people could draw from African experience in ending colonization and achieving sovereignty and independence. An expert from Namibia emphasized the value and power of international solidarity. During the Namibian independence movement, supporters around the world had never lost faith in supporting that country's struggle for freedom; given that persistence, they had eventually prevailed on their Governments to impose sanctions on the South African regime.

21. The same faith in solidarity should be applied to the Palestinian cause. Solidarity with the State of Palestine should be further expanded in Africa to include the masses, especially university students and other young people. The Committee was planning to request the General Assembly to proclaim 2014 the International Year of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, which would provide a significant opportunity to send a message to people around the world to pressure their Governments to support the State of Palestine. The Palestinian people should unite behind the Palestinian leadership to force Israel to comply with the resolutions and decisions of the international community.

22. An expert from South Africa stated that the basis for the South African anti-apartheid campaign had been armed struggle, an internal underground, international solidarity and international isolation of the South African State, and mass mobilization within the country. It had, however, taken decades for gains to be made. Even after South African liberation movements had been internationally recognized, many Western countries in particular had still staunchly refused to adopt sanctions. When the occupier was strong militarily, economically and diplomatically, as was the case during the apartheid regime in South Africa and in Israel at the current time, strategies to isolate it would deliver results. One expert suggested the launching of an African peace initiative, the objective of which would be to assist the parties in the Middle East conflict to remove the barriers through a peace agreement in accordance with Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973).

23. Based on the Arab Peace Initiative, the African peace initiative would call upon the Governments of Israel and the State of Palestine to complete the peace negotiations and achieve a peace agreement that would put an end to the occupation and the conflict, in return for a commitment by Africa and the Non-Aligned Movement to accept and recognize Israel, passing along the message that Israel was not isolated or delegitimized. The move undoubtedly would resonate boldly in the Israeli peace camp, Israeli civil society and, it was hoped, with the Government of Israel.

24. Specific initiatives and action taken by civil society were discussed. On 9 July 2005, about 200 Palestinian civil society and political organizations had called upon the world to boycott, divest from and sanction Israel. Four days later, the International Conference of Civil Society in Support of Middle East Peace had endorsed the call in its Action Plan 2005. Known as the boycott, divestment and sanctions movement, the call demanded that Israel end its occupation and colonization of all Arab lands and dismantle its separation wall; recognize the fundamental rights of Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel to full equality; and respect, protect and

promote the right of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes and properties, as stipulated in General Assembly resolution 194 (III). The boycott, divestment and sanctions campaign, which focused its attention on institutions and companies linked to settlement activity, had produced tangible results: several Israeli companies had filed for liquidation or closed their offices. Universities and artists had joined the movement, and churches and other civil society groups had divested. The Governments of South Africa and some European countries were poised to pass legislation to label settlement products. Over the previous 8 years, the campaign had achieved more success in various parts of the world than the anti-apartheid campaign had in 20 years. It was pointed out, however, that, while Palestinian solidarity organizations existed in many African countries, they had not to date succeeded in developing a continent-wide solidarity network that could make their activities more effective.

25. At the closing session, the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations pointed out that the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 67/19 had been vital for the Palestinian struggle for freedom. The status as a full State Member of the United Nations or as an observer State was not as important as the fact that the international community had recognized the existence of the State of Palestine. The time was ripe for the pillars of that State to be strengthened. The notion that self-determination could not be accorded to Palestinians until negotiations with Israel were finalized was completely unacceptable. When Israel had declared independence, it had not sought permission from other countries, and when the United States had declared independence, it had not negotiated with the British. They had simply exercised their right. It was not sufficient to characterize settlements as illegal and an obstacle to peace; practical steps must be taken to stop the practice. For example, countries should determine the source of products from Israel to ensure that they had not been produced in the settlements. Countries should deny entry to settlers who had committed crimes against Palestinians.

26. In closing the meeting, the Chair of the Committee said that, beyond the historic adoption of General Assembly resolution 67/19, a difficult path lay ahead for the State of Palestine to gain full membership in the United Nations. He called upon African States to strengthen their support for the Palestinian people, especially as part of the Group of African States and the Non-Aligned Movement at the United Nations.

Annex II

List of participants

Speakers

Cairo Arafat	Child Rights Senior Adviser, Save the Children Ramallah
Mohammad Barakeh	Head of the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality Member of the Knesset Tel Aviv
Ilan Baruch	Peace Activist and Policy Advisor to Meretz Former Ambassador of Israel to South Africa Jerusalem
Salwa Duaibis	International Advocacy Coordinator, Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counselling Ramallah
Naeem Jeenah	Executive Director, Afro-Middle East Centre Johannesburg
Ibra Deguene Ka	Former Permanent Representative of Senegal to the United Nations, New York Former Chair of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People
Tuliameni Kalomoh	Adviser, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Namibia Former Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, United Nations Secretariat
Taysir Khaled	Member of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization Head of the National Committee to Resist Settlements and the Wall Ramallah
Cynthia McKinney	Member of the Jury of the Russell Tribunal on Palestine Former Member of the United States House of Representatives Atlanta, United States

Iman Shawwa
Acting Head of Office, Local Aid Coordination Secretariat
Ramallah

Ndumiso Ndima Ntshinga
Ambassador of South Africa to Ethiopia and
Permanent Representative to the African Union and
Economic Commission for Africa

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

Abdou Salam Diallo
Permanent Representative of Senegal to the United Nations
Chair of the Committee

Christopher Grima
Permanent Representative of Malta to the United Nations
Rapporteur of the Committee

Riyad Mansour
Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine
to the United Nations

Representative of the Secretary-General

Carlos Lopes
Executive Secretary, Economic Commission for Africa

Governments

Algeria
Said Mousi, Chargé d'affaires
Larbi Lebbaz, Diplomatic Attaché
Embassy in Addis Ababa

Belgium
Hugues Chantry, Ambassador to Ethiopia
Wouter Detavernier, First Secretary
Embassy in Addis Ababa

Brazil
Romulo Nieves, Deputy Head of Mission
Embassy in Addis Ababa

Burkina Faso
Taro Toussaint, Second Counsellor
Tiemtore T. Rodrigue Ismael, Economic Counsellor
Embassy in Addis Ababa

Burundi
Eliséé Nimpagaritse, Ambassador to Ethiopia
Fulgence Misago, First Counsellor
Embassy in Addis Ababa

Chad	Cherif Mahamat Zene, Ambassador to Ethiopia Doradji Kettong, First Counsellor Faradj Mahamat Djaddah, Attaché Embassy in Addis Ababa
Côte d'Ivoire	Georges Aboua, Ambassador to Ethiopia Nanan Kouassi, Counsellor Embassy in Addis Ababa
Cuba	Juan Manuel Rodriguez Vasquez, Ambassador to Ethiopia Omar Leyva Rafull, Chargé d'affaires Embassy in Addis Ababa
Czech Republic	Jiri Luhan, Third Secretary, Embassy in Addis Ababa
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Mr. Julien Lontange Bongima, Minister Counsellor Embassy in Addis Ababa
Egypt	Mohamed Edrees, Ambassador to Ethiopia Abdelmoneim El Shazly, Third Secretary Embassy in Addis Ababa
Ethiopia	Negash Kibret, Director General for International Organizations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
France	Laurent Chevallier, Second Counsellor Embassy in Addis Ababa
Gabon	Ndiaye Dieudonné, Minister Counsellor Koumba Dieu-Donné, Counsellor Embassy in Addis Ababa
Gambia	M. Sajo Jallow, Ambassador to Ethiopia Embassy in Addis Ababa
Ghana	Albert Francis Yankey, Ambassador to Ethiopia Embassy in Addis Ababa
Greece	Nicolas Protonotarios, Ambassador to Ethiopia Embassy in Addis Ababa
Indonesia	Ramli Saud, Ambassador to Ethiopia Dessi H.Y. Imbiri, Third Secretary Aregay Kidane, Political Officer Nico Ismael Nadeak, Political Officer Aulia Sae Rahman, Political Officer

	Aldrin Chandra, Media Officer Embassy in Addis Ababa
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	Ali Bahreini, Ambassador to Ethiopia Ali Asghar Yekdeleh, Second Secretary Embassy in Addis Ababa
Japan	Shiori Oku, First Secretary Asuka Tekawa, Second Secretary Embassy in Addis Ababa
Kenya	Monica K. Juma, Ambassador to Ethiopia Beatrice Karago, Minister Counsellor Embassy in Addis Ababa
Kuwait	Rashed Al-Hajri, Ambassador to Ethiopia Abdulwahab Al Rashed, Third Secretary Embassy in Addis Ababa
Libya	Atef A. Shamah, First Secretary Mohamed E. Najah, First Secretary Bashir A. Elbarg, Counsellor Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation
Malaysia	Ismail Bin Salam, High Commissioner to Ethiopia
Mali	Boubacar Gouro Diall, Ambassador to Ethiopia Diarra Mamadou Fatogoma, First Counsellor Embassy in Addis Ababa
Mauritania	Hamadi Meimou, Ambassador to Ethiopia Yahya Abdullah, First Counsellor Embassy in Addis Ababa
Mexico	Iván Antonino Sosa Espinosa, Attaché Embassy in Addis Ababa
Morocco	Abdul Jabbar Ibrahim, Ambassador to Ethiopia Mohammed el Alaoui, Counsellor
Namibia	Anne N. Mutelo, Ambassador to Ethiopia and Permanent Representative to the African Union Tuliameni Kalomoh, Special Advisor on Foreign Affairs Pinehas Aluteni, Minister Counsellor Embassy in Addis Ababa

Netherlands	Wouter Jan Lok, Counsellor Political Affairs Embassy in Addis Ababa
Niger	Diallo Amina Djibo, Ambassador to Ethiopia Embassy in Addis Ababa
Nigeria	Peter Isoa Iyamabo, Deputy Permanent Representative Embassy in Addis Ababa
Pakistan	Adeel Ashraf, Chargé d'affaires Embassy in Addis Ababa
Qatar	Hamad Mohammed Al Rumaihi, Chargé d'affaires Munir Adem, Information Officer Embassy in Addis Ababa
Russian Federation	Alexey Litvinov, Deputy Chief of Mission Embassy in Addis Ababa
Rwanda	Joseph Nsengimana, Ambassador to Ethiopia Phillip Karenzi, First Counsellor Embassy in Addis Ababa
Saudi Arabia	Abdulbaqi O. Ajlan, Ambassador to Ethiopia Khedir Adamnur Beshir, Translator Embassy in Addis Ababa
Senegal	Bassirou Sene, Ambassador to Ethiopia Embassy in Addis Ababa
Sierra Leone	Christopher Bockarie, Second Secretary Julia Fallah, First Secretary Embassy in Addis Ababa
South Africa	Ndumiso Ndima Ntshinga, Ambassador to Ethiopia and Permanent Representative to the African Union and the Economic Commission for Africa Johnny Pitswane, Minister Plenipotentiary and Deputy Head of Mission Clara Kiesewetter, Counsellor Yaseen Lagardien, Third Secretary Embassy in Addis Ababa
Tunisia	Rachid Saidani, Chargé d'affaires Jamel Elhoudhek, First Secretary Embassy in Addis Ababa

Turkey	Ece Yilmaz, Third Secretary, Embassy in Addis Ababa
Ukraine	Alexander Buravchenkov, Ambassador to Ethiopia Embassy in Addis Ababa
United Arab Emirates	Yousif Eisa Hassan Alsabri, Ambassador to Ethiopia and Permanent Representative to the African Union Ali Saad Alomaira, Counsellor Mona Ahmed, Political Affairs Omer Saeed, Political Affairs Embassy in Addis Ababa
United Republic of Tanzania	Nsavike Ndatta, Minister Plenipotentiary Embassy in Addis Ababa
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Luis Joubertt, Ambassador to Ethiopia Mario Aquillino Gomez Torres, First Secretary Olga Veronica Martin Barria, First Secretary Embassy in Addis Ababa
Zambia	Mwamaka Lweyamulaga, Chargé d'affaires Inyambo Liboma, First Secretary Evariste T. Mwila, First Secretary, Protocol Dorothy Nachilongo, Counsellor Embassy in Addis Ababa
Zimbabwe	Andrew Mtetwa, Ambassador to Ethiopia Virginia Chikuri, Counsellor Embassy in Addis Ababa

**Non-member States having received a standing invitation
to participate as observer in the sessions and the work
of the General Assembly and maintaining permanent
observer missions at Headquarters**

State of Palestine	Taysir Khaled, Member of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization Zuhar-Al Shun, Ambassador to Ethiopia Salah Shebab, First Secretary Jasser Ahmed M. Mohammed, First Counsellor Embassy in Addis Ababa
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Intergovernmental organizations

African Union	Baso Sangqu, Chief Advisor to the Chairperson Salah Siddik, Human Rights Expert Matthew Brubacher, Political Officer Addis Ababa
International Organization of la Francophonie	Libère Bararunyeretse, Permanent Representative Addis Ababa
League of Arab States	Fares Abdelkareem, Head of Occupied Arab Territories Department, Cairo Mohamed Abdella, Technical Staff
Organization of Islamic Cooperation	Samir Bakr Diab, Assistant Secretary-General for Palestine Affairs, Jeddah

Other entities having received a standing invitation to participate as observer in the sessions and the work of the General Assembly and maintaining permanent observer missions at Headquarters

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies	Diego Sanchez, Humanitarian Diplomacy Delegate Addis Ababa
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United Nations organs, agencies and bodies

United Nations Office to the African Union	Colin Stewart, Deputy Head
Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs	Jeanine Cooper, Head of the African Union Liaison Office
Economic Commission for Africa	Rebecca Sabah, Programme Management Officer
United Nations Environment Programme	Mikyeong Won, Programme Officer
World Food Programme	Abdoulaye Diop, Director Rachel Quint, Liaison Officer Addis Ababa Liaison Office

Food and Agriculture
Organization of the United
Nations

Mr. Mobido Tiemoko Traoré, Subregional Coordinator
for Eastern Africa and Representative in Ethiopia
Maria Pia Rizzo, Senior Policy Advisor

United Nations Educational,
Scientific and Cultural
Organization

Firmin Matoko, Director of the Liaison Office
in Addis Ababa and Representative to Ethiopia

Civil society organizations

Jam LLC, Business without
Borders

Abenezer Asfaw, Marketing and Public Director for
Eastern Africa, Addis Ababa

Palestinian Centre for
Human Rights

Hamdi Shaqqura, Head of Democracy Development Unit
and Deputy Director for Programme Affairs, Gaza

Save Youth Future Society

Sarhan B. Abu Kalloub, Communication and
External Relations Officer, Gaza

Society for the Care of
Handicapped Children in the
Gaza Strip

Raed Mahmoud Ibrahim, Project Manager
Maysaa Hany Eshkontana, Project Coordinator
Gaza

United Nations Association of
Mauritius (Palestine Solidarity /
Friendship Committee)

Nundkeswarsing Bossoondyal, Director General
Port Louis

World Council of Churches -
Commission of Churches on
International Affairs

Nigussu Legesse, Programme Executive for Africa,
Geneva

Media

Voice of America,
Washington, D.C.

Marthe van der Wolf, Correspondent

Middle East News Agency,
Cairo

Abouelela Hamdy Mohammed, Correspondent

Agence Maghreb Arabe Press,
Rabat

Nassiri Mohamed, Correspondent

New Business Ethiopia,
Addis Ababa

Anduaem Sisay Gessesse, Managing Editor

Press TV,
Addis Ababa

Coletta Wanjohi, Correspondent
Ssekyondwa Eudes, Cameraman/Video Editor

SSPP Le Soleil Senegal,
Dakar

Mamadou Lamine Diatta, Correspondent

Xinhua News Agency

Liang Shanggang
Shiferaw Tadesse
Michael Tewelde
Addis Zenebe

CCTV

Muluneh Gebre, Reporter

RFI

Gregoire Pourtier, Correspondent

Afro FM

Snetsenat Assefa, Junior Reporter

ENA

Habtamu Ashare, Senior Reporter
Ayenew Addis, Reporter

PANA

Anaclet Rwegayura, Correspondent

News Agency of Nigeria

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