



DIVISION FOR PALESTINIAN RIGHTS

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Bulletin on action by the United Nations system and intergovernmental organizations relevant to the question of Palestine

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*The Bulletin can be found in the United Nations Information System
on the Question of Palestine (UNISPAL) on the Internet at:
<http://unispal.un.org>*

I. UN HUMANITARIAN COORDINATOR EXPRESSES CONCERN AT THE GAZA POWER CRISIS

On 1 November 2013 in Jerusalem, the United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator, James W. Rawley, expressed his concern at the shutdown of the Gaza Power Plant due to a critical fuel shortage, affecting 1.7 million Palestinians in Gaza. The text of the statement is reproduced below:

“In recent years, Gaza has been running on less than half of the electricity that it needs. The shut-down of the power plant today and related fuel shortages will impact all essential services, including hospitals, clinics, sewage and water pumping stations. It will also mean that Gaza’s 1.7 people will experience power outages of up to 16 hours per day,” warned Mr. Rawley.

Electricity is supplied through Israeli and Egyptian feeder lines but the Gaza Power Plant provides approximately 30 per cent of Gaza’s total energy supply. “For the benefit of Gaza’s civilian population it is essential that a way be found to allow the power plant to resume its operations and that the broader chronic energy crisis be addressed,” Rawley concluded.

II. BUREAU OF THE COMMITTEE ON EXERCISE OF INALIENABLE RIGHTS OF PALESTINIAN PEOPLE CONDEMNS SETTLEMENT ACTIVITY IN OPT

On 7 November 2013 in New York, the Bureau of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (CEIRPP) issued the following statement (GA/PAL/1228):

The Bureau of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People condemns the continuing expansion of illegal Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, the latest example of which was the issuance of tenders to build 1,061 housing units in the West Bank and 1,225 in East Jerusalem on 3 and 4 November 2013.

Since the resumption of Israeli-Palestinian talks on 29 July 2013, the following have also been announced, approved or issued by Israel, the occupying Power: the construction of 230 units in the “Ma’on” settlement, tenders for the construction of 394 units in the West Bank, tenders for the construction of 793 units in East Jerusalem, a construction plan for 942 housing units in the “Gilo” settlement, and the construction of more than 1,500

settlement units in “Ramat Shlomo” in East Jerusalem. These illegal activities are seriously eroding the already-bleak prospect for realizing a two-State solution based on the 1967 borders.

All settlement activities constitute a gross violation of article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, which prohibits the occupying Power from transferring parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies. This has been reaffirmed in numerous Security Council and General Assembly resolutions and the 2004 Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice on the wall.

The international community does not recognize Israel’s annexation of East Jerusalem. The City is an integral part of the

Occupied Palestinian Territory and subject to the Fourth Geneva Convention.

While Israel continues to transfer its own population into the Occupied Palestinian Territory, it relentlessly continues its illegal expulsion of the Palestinian population from East Jerusalem through home demolitions and residency rights revocations. The Bureau expresses its serious alarm at the recent issuance of demolition orders for 200 residential blocks in Ras Khamis and Ras Shahada in East Jerusalem, putting over 15,000 Palestinians at the risk of displacement. In August, the entire Bir Nabala Bedouin community in East Jerusalem was demolished, forcibly displacing 39 people, including 18 children. In 2013, at least 91 homes and structures have been demolished in East Jerusalem, displacing 265 people, in serious violation of international law. Furthermore, in Area C of in the West Bank, 451 homes and structures have been demolished in 2013, displacing 615 people.

The Bureau urges the Security Council to act decisively against the continuing disrespect by Israel for its resolutions and the systematic obstruction of the goals of the peace process. The Bureau calls for the reconvening of the Conference of the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention in order to address Israel's continued violation of its provisions. The Bureau also expresses its support for European initiatives to put pressure on entities promoting the expansion of illegal settlements, and encourages all Governments to follow suit. The Committee stands ready to support the State of Palestine in employing all diplomatic, legal and political means to protect the territorial integrity and viability of the Palestinian land and safeguard the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, and to support all other initiatives in various international bodies to end Israel's impunity and to bring it into compliance with international law and to salvage the prospects for peace.

III. UN SPECIAL COORDINATOR FOR THE MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROCESS EXPRESSES CONCERN OVER ISRAELI SETTLEMENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Robert Serry, on 13 November in Jerusalem issued a statement on Israeli settlement announcements. The text of the statement is reproduced below:

The Special Coordinator has been following with growing concern the series of settlement announcements made by Israel over the past weeks, which cannot be reconciled with the goal of a negotiated two-state solution.

The United Nations position, recently reiterated by the Secretary-General, is unequivocal: settlements are against international law and an obstacle to peace.

Against this backdrop, the Special Coordinator met today separately with the

Israeli and Palestinian negotiators. He understands from his discussion with chief negotiator Livni and other Israeli officials that yesterday's decision to plan a large number of settlement units has been stopped.

The Special Coordinator is also deeply concerned by recent violent incidents, which he condemns. At this sensitive moment, it is imperative to avoid negative actions and support ongoing talks to preserve the remaining chances of achieving a two-state solution in the interest of Israelis and Palestinians alike.

IV. USG FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS BRIEFS SECURITY COUNCIL ON THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST, INCLUDING THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION

On 19 November 2013, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Jeffrey Feltman briefed the Security Council on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question. The following are excerpts from the briefing (S/PV.7063):

When intensive Israeli-Palestinian negotiations resumed earlier this year, tensions were to be expected along the way. Nobody predicted that would have been an easy process. Indeed, four months since their resumption, the talks have reached a delicate moment. On the positive side, it appears that the negotiators have been engaging on substance and have gone some way towards narrowing their differences, notwithstanding the great difficulties that peace will entail. But strains have been growing dangerously between the parties, and they can, and must, be overcome.

International engagement, which is critical, remains strong. United States Secretary of State Kerry visited the region again for in-depth discussions with leaders on both sides, following his regular consultations with Arab foreign ministers that took place in Paris last month. Quartet envoys met on 29 October in Jerusalem, in addition to their separate ongoing engagement with the parties. All of them maintained respect for the confidential nature of the talks.

Nevertheless, the process suffered a significant setback with a series of announcements on settlement plans in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, following the agreed release on 29 October of 26 pre-Oslo prisoners in the second of four tranches. We have been following these critical developments with growing concern, especially the announcement, on 13 November, of plans for the advancement of some 24,000 units, including in E-1, which

cannot be reconciled with the goal of a negotiated two-State solution.

On the same day, Prime Minister Netanyahu instructed the Minister of Housing to reconsider the plans announced on 13 November. Special Coordinator Serry discussed the reconsideration with Israeli chief negotiator Tzipi Livni. We hope that those plans are suspended. The Secretary-General has reiterated the United Nations unequivocal position that settlements are contrary to international law and an obstacle to peace. He expects the Government of Israel to put a full stop to those plans. In protest over those developments, Palestinian negotiators submitted their resignations, now under consideration by President Abbas, who has nevertheless made it clear that that does not constitute a Palestinian departure from talks. Parties should now intensify efforts and refrain from actions that undermine trust and the spirit of the talks.

The situation on the ground remains tense. Israeli security forces carried out some 356 search-and-arrest operations. In one such operation, on 22 October near Ramallah, an Islamic Jihad militant, reportedly involved in the bombing of a bus in Tel Aviv on 21 November 2012, was shot dead. Searches uncovered a weapons cache in Hebron on 8 November, and on 9 November of a Palestinian was arrested carrying pipe bombs near Nablus. A total of 355 Palestinians were arrested, including two Hamas members of the Palestinian Legislative Council. A total of 154 Palestinians were injured, including during

continued demonstrations against the barrier as well as the commemoration of President Arafat's death on 11 November. Three Palestinian civilians were shot dead, including two in separate incidents on 7 November near Salfit and Bethlehem while allegedly threatening Israeli soldiers at checkpoints, and another during an incursion near Jenin on 31 October, although Israeli forces denied being the source of the fire. We urge that a thorough investigation be conducted into all such cases, and that accountability for any violations of international law be ensured.

Violence between settlers and Palestinians continued on a daily basis throughout the West Bank. Settler attacks resulted in nine Palestinians being injured, including six children, as well as material losses, including over 600 trees and saplings being damaged during the olive-picking season. Palestinian attacks, including stone and firebomb-throwing, resulted in eight Israeli settlers being injured.

We continue to be deeply concerned by any act of violence and incitement, which we condemn. On 13 November, an Israeli soldier was stabbed to death in the Israeli city of Afula by a 16-year-old Palestinian from the Jenin area. We are also deeply concerned about the fate of a Palestinian man who, a day earlier, was critically injured when he was reportedly attacked in the Old City by two young Israelis who dropped a stone on his head. We reiterate our call on all parties to refrain from violence. The need for calm is all the more important at this critical juncture.

We also remain worried about the continued demolition of unlicensed Palestinian infrastructures. During the reporting period, a total of 27 were demolished, leading to the displacement of 65 Palestinians, including 31 children. The

issuing, on 1 November, of demolition orders for 10 apartment buildings in the East Jerusalem neighbourhood of Ras Khamis, if implemented, would result in the displacement of some 1,500 people. We reiterate the importance of Palestinian access to a fair planning and zoning regime.

On 5 November, a 22-year-old Palestinian who was under administrative detention died from cancer after having been transferred to an Israeli hospital, where his condition deteriorated in mid-October. As in all cases of prisoners in critical medical condition, we note that access to timely and acceptable health care is a human right. I also recall the Secretary-General's position that persons in administrative detention should either be charged or released.

Turning to Gaza, one year since the understanding for a ceasefire agreement was signed in Cairo, the situation is once again deteriorating, amid renewed violence and worsening economic and humanitarian conditions. On 31 October, Israeli forces conducted an incursion some 200 metres into the Gaza Strip to demolish a recently discovered tunnel into Israel. The operation came under attack by Hamas militants and an explosive device was detonated in the tunnel, injuring five Israeli soldiers. Subsequent shelling by Israel killed four Hamas militants. Additional violence in and around Gaza during that period included the firing of four rockets and four mortar shells from Gaza into Israel. One rocket was intercepted while the other projectiles landed in Israel without causing injuries or damage. Israel retaliated with five airstrikes into Gaza, which injured two Palestinians, and conducted a total of seven incursions.

The deteriorating socioeconomic situation in the Strip can be seen as a combined energy and construction crisis. Rolling blackouts increased to up to 16

hours per day following the shutdown on 1 November of the Gaza power plant, which was producing 25 per cent of the total power available in Gaza. That has affected the lives of the Gazan population and the functioning of basic services, including health and water facilities. While a stop-gap measure to replenish the on-site reserves for those critical facilities is now being implemented with the assistance of the United Nations, thanks to a donation by the Turkish Government, a longer-term solution to provide Gaza with the required 450 megawatts is now more urgent than ever and requires concerted efforts by all.

On 13 October, Israel suspended the import of all construction materials, including for international projects, following the discovery of a reinforced tunnel dug from Gaza into southern Israel. Virtually all construction projects in Gaza, including for the United Nations, have been suspended, putting thousands of people out of work. During the past several years, the United Nations has implemented a growing package of housing, schools and infrastructure projects with stringent control procedures, agreed to with the Government of Israel, to preserve the integrity of each project and avoid misuse of materials. While we recognize Israel's legitimate security concerns, we are confident that those procedures remain adequate. We therefore call on Israel to urgently reconsider its decision to temporarily halt the import of construction materials into Gaza.

The financial situation of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) has become more serious despite efforts to streamline services and mobilize additional resources. Unless the \$36-million deficit is bridged before the end of the year, UNRWA will be unable to adequately fund its core services, especially in education,

health and poverty mitigation, and to pay December salaries of its 30,000 teachers, medical personnel and social workers. We strongly appeal to all donors to step up their contributions to support Palestinian refugees and help prevent an already dire situation from worsening.

...

In Syria, civilians continue to bear the brunt of the conflict, with warring parties failing in their responsibilities to offer protection. Already, half of the country's population is in need of assistance and displaced from their homes. Palestinian refugees also remain trapped in the conflict. UNRWA is particularly concerned about the situation of civilians in Yarmouk and other Palestinian refugee camps. The Agency managed some days ago to deliver some food to several dozen refugees in Yarmouk when an upsurge in conflict required the operation to withdraw. UNRWA is standing by until an arrangement can be made with the parties to the conflict to access the camps.

...

In conclusion, let me return to the status of the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian negotiations. The risks they face are apparent to all of us, yet a two-State solution remains the only way to fully realize the legitimate aspirations of both peoples to self-determination, peace and security. The consequences of failure would be dire for Israelis and Palestinians alike. We thus continue to urge the parties to remain steadfast in their commitment to seeing this process through, but we fear that unless steps are taken to prevent the recurrence of negative developments, such as those of recent weeks, the remaining chances to achieve a negotiated two-State solution may be irreparably damaged.

V. SECRETARY-GENERAL APPOINTS THE COMMISSIONER-GENERAL OF UNRWA

On 20 November 2013, Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon appointed Pierre Krähenbühl of Switzerland as Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). The text of the press release issued on the occasion follows (SG/A/1444, BIO/4551, PAL/2167):

United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, following consultations with the Advisory Commission of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), announced today the appointment of Pierre Krähenbühl of Switzerland as the Agency's new Commissioner-General. He will replace Filippo Grandi.

The Secretary-General expressed his gratitude for the outgoing Commissioner-General's leadership in the implementation of UNRWA's mandate and outstanding dedication and commitment to the Palestinian people.

Mr. Krähenbühl brings to the position a wealth of experience and dedicated passion in humanitarian, development and human-rights action, coupled with strategic leadership experience in politically sensitive and high-risk environments.

Since 2002, he has held the position of Director of Operations at the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), overseeing 12,000 staff in 80 countries. Prior to this, Mr. Krähenbühl served as personal adviser to the President of the ICRC (2000-2002) and carried out various field assignments in El Salvador, Peru, Afghanistan and Bosnia and Herzegovina (1991-1998). He served as Head of Operations for Central and South-Eastern Europe in Geneva (1998-2000). Prior to joining the ICRC in 1991, he worked as a Communication and Reporting Officer for the Lutheran World Federation in Venezuela, Haiti and Ethiopia.

Mr. Krähenbühl holds a Bachelor of Arts in political sciences and international relations from the University of Geneva (1991).

Born in 1966 in Geneva, he is married and has three children.

VI. INTERNATIONAL DAY OF SOLIDARITY WITH THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE IS MARKED AT UN HEADQUARTERS IN NEW YORK

On 25 November 2013 in New York, the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (CEIRPP) held a special meeting and other events to mark the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People on Monday, 25 November, in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 32/40 B of 2 December 1977 and 67/21 of 30 November 2012. The speakers at the special meeting included the Chairman of the Committee, the President of the General Assembly, the Deputy Secretary-General, the President of the Security Council, the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations, as well as other representatives of intergovernmental and civil society organizations. Meetings in observance of the Solidarity Day at the United Nations Offices at Geneva and Vienna were held on 29 November.

The following is Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's message, delivered by Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson, in observance of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, in New York on 25 November (SG/SM/15495, GA/PAL/1282, OBV/1283):

This annual Solidarity Day is an opportunity to reflect on the critical situation faced by the Palestinian people and to consider our collective contributions and responsibilities as Governments, international or civil society organizations, towards Israeli-Palestinian peace. I appreciate the efforts of the Committee [on the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People] to keep the international community's attention and focus on the question of Palestine.

This year's observance takes place as Israeli and Palestinian negotiators work together towards the agreed objective of a peaceful, comprehensive settlement on all permanent status issues. I call on all in the international community to support the parties in this ambitious endeavour to fulfil the two-State objective, bringing about an end to the conflict. All parties must act in a responsible way and refrain from actions that undermine the prospects for successful negotiations.

I am alarmed by the increasingly dangerous situation on the ground. There

has been an escalation of violence and incitement. Although I welcome Israel's release of prisoners as part of the agreement to renew talks, its settlement activity in the Occupied Palestinian Territory continues and remains a cause for very grave concern. Announcements of thousands of new housing units cannot be reconciled with the goal of a two-State solution and risk the collapse of negotiations. Settlements are in violation of international law and constitute obstacles to peace. All settlement activity in the West Bank and East Jerusalem must cease. Measures that prejudge final status issues are not to be recognized.

Meanwhile, Palestinians continue to be displaced through house demolitions in Area C of the West Bank and East Jerusalem. Of particular concern are developments in East Jerusalem, where, this year alone, some 100 structures have been demolished, displacing 300 people. Hundreds more Palestinians are at risk because their homes were built without Israeli-issued building permits. This underscores the importance of Palestinian access to a fair planning and zoning regime.

I remind Israel of its obligation to protect the population under occupation.

The situation in Gaza remains a source of serious concern. I reiterate my condemnation of all rocket fire into Israel, as well as of the construction of tunnels into Israel by militants. Following the recent tunnel discovery, Israel suspended the transfer of construction material into Gaza, including for humanitarian projects. While I recognize Israel's legitimate security concerns, I urge Israel to ensure that the needs of the civilian population in Gaza are met.

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), a lifeline for millions of Palestinians in Gaza, the West Bank and the region, continues to face serious financial difficulties. I call on all donors, including new ones, to make or increase contributions to sustain UNRWA's vital and indispensable operations.

Palestinian unity based on the commitments of the Palestine Liberation Organization and the positions of the Arab Peace Initiative is essential for the two-State solution. I urge the Palestinians to overcome their divisions without delay in the interest of unity.

VII. SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON THE SITUATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES CALLS TO ADDRESS GAZA FUEL CRISIS

On 26 November 2013 in Geneva, the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the occupied Palestinian territories, Richard Falk, called for urgent action to address the power shortage that affected 1.7 million residents of the Gaza Strip. The text of the press release follows:

“The situation in Gaza is at a point of near catastrophe,” warned the independent expert charged by the United Nations Human Rights Council to monitor and report on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967.

The goal remains clear — an end to the occupation that started in 1967 and the creation of a sovereign, independent and viable State of Palestine based on the 1967 borders, living side by side in peace with a secure State of Israel. Jerusalem is to emerge from negotiations as the capital of two States, with arrangements for the holy sites acceptable to all. An agreed solution must be found for millions of Palestinian refugees around the region.

This past September marked the twentieth anniversary of the Oslo Accords. After two decades of talks and far too many adverse developments on the ground, I urge Palestinian and Israeli leaders to take the decisions that will usher in a political solution to this serious and long-standing conflict. The United Nations, through its engagement with all relevant partners, including within the Quartet, stands ready to contribute to this process and to the two-State solution.

We cannot afford to lose the current moment of opportunity. I ask all in the international community to work together to translate the solidarity expressed on this occasion into positive action for peace and justice.

“The fuel shortage and power cuts have undermined an already precarious infrastructure, severely disrupting the provision of basic services, including health, water and sanitation,” he said. “The onset of

winter is certain to make things even worse.”

Less than half of Gaza’s total power needs are being met and disruptions to specialized health services, such as kidney dialysis, operating theatres, blood banks, intensive care units and incubators are putting the lives of vulnerable patients in Gaza at risk.

Mr. Falk highlighted the plight of patients in Gaza unable to seek affordable specialized medical treatment in Egypt as a result of Egypt’s closure of the Rafah crossing in recent weeks. “The Israeli authorities have been more forthcoming in issuing permits to Gazans in need of urgent specialized treatment, but the high cost of medical treatment in Israel places it beyond the reach of most Gazans,” he noted.

For the past two weeks, approximately 3,000 residents, including children, living in or near the Gazan neighbourhood of Az Zeitoun have been wading through raw sewage on the streets after the largest sewage treatment facility in area overflowed due to a power failure.

The Special Rapporteur stressed that other sewage treatment stations may soon also run out of petrol to fuel generators and result in more sewage overflowing onto the streets of Gaza. Medical experts have warned of the serious risk of disease, and even an epidemic.

“Up to 40 per cent of Gaza’s population receives water only once every three days,” he noted. “In this situation of dire necessity those who can afford to do so are shockingly buying unsafe water from unregulated water vendors and distributors.”

The human rights expert believes that the main trigger for the latest crisis is Egypt’s ongoing crackdown on the vast

network of tunnels and fuel tanks near the southern border of Gaza, which allowed Gaza to avoid some of the hardships associated with the Israeli blockade maintained since 2007.

“We mustn’t forget that the underlying cause of a lack of adequate medical facilities and specialized care in Gaza is a consequence of Israel’s illegal blockade,” Mr. Falk said.

The Special Rapporteur explained that, under present conditions, Israel has a special responsibility under international humanitarian law to take whatever measures are necessary to protect the civilian population of Gaza against this mounting threat to their wellbeing. “The failure to do so would be an aggravated instance of collective punishment, which is unconditionally prohibited by the 4th Geneva Convention,” Mr. Falk cautioned.

He also urged the governing authorities in Gaza to cooperate with the Palestinian Authority in a joint effort to ensure that desperately needed fuel becomes available to the residents of Gaza at the earliest hour.

“Israel must end its illegal blockade and exercise its core responsibility as the occupying Power to protect the civilian population,” the expert said.

Last Tuesday, an aid convoy carrying medicine, medical equipment and canned food was reportedly permitted to enter Gaza via the Rafah crossing for first time since June this year.

“Under these conditions of humanitarian emergency, the international community also has a responsibility to take special measures to safeguard the acutely vulnerable people of Gaza from impending tragedy,” the Special Rapporteur underscored.

VIII. GENERAL ASSEMBLY ADOPTS FOUR RESOLUTIONS ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE

On 26 November 2013, the General Assembly, at its 68th session and under agenda item 36 on the Question of Palestine, adopted four resolutions on the Question of Palestine, including A/Res/68/12, by which the Assembly proclaimed 2014 the International Year of Solidarity with the Palestinian People (A/Res/68/12 to 15). The text of the resolutions is reproduced below, with an indication of the vote:

68/12. Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 181 (II) of 29 November 1947, 194 (III) of 11 December 1948, 3236 (XXIX) of 22 November 1974, 3375 (XXX) and 3376 (XXX) of 10 November 1975, 31/20 of 24 November 1976 and all its subsequent relevant resolutions, including those adopted at its emergency special sessions and its resolution 67/20 of 30 November 2012,

Recalling also its resolution 58/292 of 6 May 2004,

Having considered the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People,¹

Recalling the mutual recognition between the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people, as well as the existing agreements between the two sides and the need for full compliance with those agreements,

Affirming its support for the Middle East peace process on the basis of the relevant United Nations resolutions, the terms of reference of the Madrid

Conference, including the principle of land for peace, the Arab Peace Initiative adopted by the Council of the League of Arab States at its fourteenth session² and the Quartet road map to a permanent two-State solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, endorsed by the Security Council in resolution 1515 (2003) of 19 November 2003,³

Welcoming the resumption, on 29 July 2013, of Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations aimed at resolving all core final status issues and concluding a final peace agreement within the agreed time frame of nine months, and expressing appreciation for the efforts and support of the United States of America, the European Union, the Russian Federation and the United Nations, as the members of the Quartet, and of the League of Arab States and all other concerned States,

Recalling the advisory opinion rendered on 9 July 2004 by the International Court of Justice on the legal consequences of the construction of a wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory,⁴ and recalling also its resolutions ES-10/15 of 20 July 2004 and ES-10/17 of 15 December 2006,

Taking note of the application of Palestine for admission to membership in

¹ Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 35 (A/68/35).

² A/56/1026-S/2002/932, annex II, resolution 14/221.

³ S/2003/529, annex.

⁴ See A/ES-10/273 and Corr.1.

the United Nations, submitted on 23 September 2011,⁵

Recalling its resolution 67/19 of 29 November 2012, by which, inter alia, Palestine was accorded non-member observer State status in the United Nations, and taking note of the follow-up report of the Secretary-General,⁶

Reaffirming that the United Nations has a permanent responsibility towards the question of Palestine until the question is resolved in all its aspects in a satisfactory manner in accordance with international legitimacy,

1. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People for its efforts in performing the tasks assigned to it by the General Assembly, and takes note of its annual report,¹ including the conclusions and valuable recommendations contained in chapter VII thereof;

2. *Requests* the Committee to continue to exert all efforts to promote the realization of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to self-determination, to support the Middle East peace process for the achievement of the two-State solution on the basis of the pre-1967 borders and the just resolution of all final status issues and to mobilize international support for and assistance to the Palestinian people, and in this regard authorizes the Committee to make such adjustments in its approved programme of work as it may consider appropriate and necessary in the light of developments and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session and thereafter;

⁵ A/66/371-S/2011/592, annex I.

⁶ A/67/738.

3. *Also requests* the Committee to continue to keep under review the situation relating to the question of Palestine and to report and make suggestions to the General Assembly, the Security Council or the Secretary-General, as appropriate;

4. *Further requests* the Committee to continue to extend its cooperation and support to Palestinian and other civil society organizations and to continue to involve additional civil society organizations and parliamentarians in its work in order to mobilize international solidarity and support for the Palestinian people, particularly during this critical period of political instability, humanitarian hardship and financial crisis, with the overall aim of promoting the achievement by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights and a just, lasting and peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine, the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict, on the basis of the relevant United Nations resolutions, the terms of reference of the Madrid Conference, including the principle of land for peace, the Arab Peace Initiative² and the Quartet road map;³

5. *Welcomes*, in this regard, the reactivation of the Working Group of the Committee, the mandate of which is to coordinate the efforts of international and regional civil society organizations regarding the question of Palestine;

6. *Requests* the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine, established under General Assembly resolution 194 (III), and other United Nations bodies associated with the question of Palestine to continue to cooperate fully with the Committee and to make available to it, at its request, the

relevant information and documentation that they have at their disposal;

7. *Invites* all Governments and organizations to extend their cooperation to the Committee in the performance of its tasks, recalling its repeated call for all States and the specialized agencies and organizations of the United Nations system to continue to support and assist the Palestinian people in the early realization of their right to self-determination, including the right to their independent State of Palestine;

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to circulate the report of the Committee to all the competent bodies of the United Nations, and urges them to take the necessary action, as appropriate;

9. *Decides* to proclaim 2014 the International Year of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, and requests the Committee to organize activities to be held during the year, in cooperation with Governments, relevant organizations of the United Nations system, intergovernmental organizations and civil society organizations;

10. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to provide the Committee with all the facilities necessary for the performance of its tasks.

(The resolution was adopted by 110 in favour to 7 against, with 56 abstentions)

68/13.Division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat

The General Assembly,

Having considered the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the

Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People,⁷

Taking note, in particular, of the action taken by the Committee and the Division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat in accordance with their mandates,

Recalling its resolution 32/40 B of 2 December 1977 and all its subsequent relevant resolutions, including its resolution 67/21 of 30 November 2012,

1. *Notes with appreciation* the action taken by the Secretary-General in compliance with its resolution 67/21;

2. *Considers* that, by providing substantive support to the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People in the implementation of its mandate, the Division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat continues to make a most useful and constructive contribution to raising international awareness of the question of Palestine and of the urgency of a peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine in all its aspects on the basis of international law and United Nations resolutions and the efforts being exerted in this regard and to generating international support for the rights of the Palestinian people;

3. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to provide the Division with the necessary resources and to ensure that it continues to carry out its programme of work as detailed in relevant earlier resolutions, in consultation with the Committee and under its guidance;

⁷Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 35 (A/68/35).

4. *Requests* the Division, in particular, to continue to monitor developments relevant to the question of Palestine, to organize international meetings and conferences in various regions with the participation of all sectors of the international community and to ensure, within existing resources, the continued participation of eminent persons and international renowned experts in these meetings and conferences, to be invited on a par with the members of the Committee, to liaise and cooperate with civil society and parliamentarians, including through the revitalized Working Group of the Committee, to develop and expand the “Question of Palestine” website and the documents collection of the United Nations Information System on the Question of Palestine, to prepare and widely disseminate publications and information materials on various aspects of the question of Palestine and to develop and enhance the annual training programme for staff of the Government of the State of Palestine in contribution to Palestinian capacity-building efforts;

5. *Also requests* the Division, as part of the observance of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People on 29 November, to continue to organize, under the guidance of the Committee, an annual exhibit on Palestinian rights or a cultural event in cooperation with the Permanent Observer Mission of the State of Palestine to the United Nations, and encourages Member States to continue to give the widest support and publicity to the observance of the Day of Solidarity;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to ensure the continued cooperation with the Division of the United Nations system entities with programme

components addressing various aspects of the question of Palestine and the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem;

7. *Invites* all Governments and organizations to extend their cooperation to the Division in the performance of its tasks.

(The resolution was adopted by 108 in favour to 7 against, with 59 abstentions)

68/14. Special information programme on the question of Palestine of the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat

The General Assembly,

Having considered the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People,⁸

Taking note, in particular, of the information contained in chapter VI of that report,

Recalling its resolution 67/22 of 30 November 2012,

Convinced that the worldwide dissemination of accurate and comprehensive information and the role of civil society organizations and institutions remain of vital importance in heightening awareness of and support for the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to self-determination and independence, and for the efforts to achieve a just, lasting and peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine,

⁸Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 35 (A/68/35).

Recalling the mutual recognition between the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people, as well as the existing agreements between the two sides,

Affirming its support for the Middle East peace process on the basis of the relevant United Nations resolutions, the terms of reference of the Madrid Conference, including the principle of land for peace, the Arab Peace Initiative adopted by the Council of the League of Arab States at its fourteenth session,⁹ and the Quartet road map to a permanent two-State solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, endorsed by the Security Council in resolution 1515 (2003) of 19 November 2003,¹⁰ and welcoming the resumption of Israeli-Palestinian negotiations on 29 July 2013,

Recalling the advisory opinion rendered on 9 July 2004 by the International Court of Justice on the legal consequences of the construction of a wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory,¹¹

Taking note of its resolution 67/19 of 29 November 2012,

Reaffirming that the United Nations has a permanent responsibility towards the question of Palestine until the question is resolved in all its aspects in a satisfactory manner in accordance with international legitimacy,

1. *Notes with appreciation* the action taken by the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat in compliance with resolution 67/22;

2. *Considers* that the special information programme on the question of Palestine of the Department is very useful in raising the awareness of the international community concerning the question of Palestine and the situation in the Middle East and that the programme is contributing effectively to an atmosphere conducive to dialogue and supportive of the peace process and should receive the necessary support for the fulfilment of its tasks;

3. *Requests* the Department, in full cooperation and coordination with the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, to continue, with the necessary flexibility as may be required by developments affecting the question of Palestine, its special information programme for 2014-2015, in particular:

(a) To disseminate information on all the activities of the United Nations system relating to the question of Palestine and the peace process, including reports on the work carried out by the relevant United Nations organizations, as well as on the efforts of the Secretary-General and his Special Envoy vis-à-vis the peace process;

(b) To continue to issue, update and modernize publications and audiovisual materials on the various aspects of the question of Palestine in all fields, including materials concerning relevant recent developments, in particular the efforts to achieve a peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine;

(c) To expand its collection of audiovisual material on the question of Palestine, to continue the production and

⁹ A/56/1026-S/2002/932, annex II, resolution 14/221.

¹⁰ S/2003/529, annex.

¹¹ See A/ES-10/273 and Corr.1.

preservation of such material and to update, on a periodic basis, the public exhibit on the question of Palestine displayed in the General Assembly Building as well as at United Nations headquarters in Geneva and Vienna;

(d) To organize and promote fact-finding news missions for journalists to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel;

(e) To organize international, regional and national seminars or encounters for journalists aimed in particular at sensitizing public opinion to the question of Palestine and the peace process and at enhancing dialogue and understanding between Palestinians and Israelis for the promotion of a peaceful settlement to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, including by fostering and encouraging the contribution of the media in support of peace between the two sides;

(f) To continue to provide assistance to the Palestinian people in the field of media development, in particular to strengthen the annual training programme for Palestinian broadcasters and journalists;

4. *Encourages* the Department to formulate ways for the media and representatives of civil society to engage in open and positive discussions to explore means for encouraging people-to-people dialogue and promoting peace and mutual understanding in the region.

(The resolution was adopted by 163 in favour to 7 against, with 7 abstentions)

68/15. Peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine

The General Assembly,

Recalling its relevant resolutions, including those adopted at its tenth emergency special session,

Recalling also its resolution 58/292 of 6 May 2004,

Recalling further relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967, 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973, 1397 (2002) of 12 March 2002, 1515 (2003) of 19 November 2003, 1544 (2004) of 19 May 2004 and 1850 (2008) of 16 December 2008,

Recalling the affirmation by the Security Council of the vision of a region where two States, Israel and Palestine, live side by side within secure and recognized borders,

Noting with concern that it has been 66 years since the adoption of its resolution 181 (II) of 29 November 1947 and 46 years since the occupation of Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, in 1967,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General submitted pursuant to the request made in its resolution 67/23 of 30 November 2012,¹²

Reaffirming the permanent responsibility of the United Nations with regard to the question of Palestine until the question is resolved in all its aspects in accordance with international law and relevant resolutions,

¹² A/68/363-S/2013/524.

Recalling the advisory opinion rendered on 9 July 2004 by the International Court of Justice on the legal consequences of the construction of a wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory,¹³ and recalling also its resolutions ES-10/15 of 20 July 2004 and ES-10/17 of 15 December 2006,

Convinced that achieving a just, lasting and comprehensive settlement of the question of Palestine, the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict, is imperative for the attainment of comprehensive and lasting peace and stability in the Middle East,

Stressing that the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples is among the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations,

Reaffirming the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war,

Recalling its resolution 2625 (XXV) of 24 October 1970,

Reaffirming the illegality of the Israeli settlements in the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, including East Jerusalem,

Expressing grave concern about the extremely detrimental impact of Israeli settlement policies, decisions and activities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, including on the contiguity, integrity and viability of the Territory and the efforts to advance the peace process and to achieve peace in the Middle East,

Expressing grave concern also about all acts of violence, intimidation and

provocation by Israeli settlers against Palestinian civilians and properties, including homes, mosques, churches and agricultural lands, and calling for accountability for the illegal actions perpetrated in this regard,

Reaffirming the illegality of Israeli actions aimed at changing the status of Jerusalem, including settlement construction and expansion, home demolitions, evictions of Palestinian residents, excavations in and around religious and historic sites, and all other unilateral measures aimed at altering the character, status and demographic composition of the city and of the Territory as a whole,

Reaffirming also that the construction by Israel, the occupying Power, of a wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, and its associated regime are contrary to international law,

Encouraging all States and international organizations to continue to actively pursue policies to ensure respect for their obligations under international law with regard to all illegal Israeli practices and measures in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, particularly Israeli settlements,

Expressing deep concern about the continuing Israeli policies of closures and severe restrictions on the movement of persons and goods, including medical and humanitarian, via the imposition of prolonged closures and severe economic and movement restrictions that in effect amount to a blockade, as well as of checkpoints and a permit regime throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

¹³ See A/ES-10/273 and Corr.1.

Expressing deep concern also about the consequent negative impact of such policies on the contiguity of the Territory and the serious socioeconomic and humanitarian situation of the Palestinian people, which is critical in the Gaza Strip, and on the efforts aimed at rehabilitating and developing the damaged Palestinian economy, despite some measures taken by Israel in 2012 and 2013,

Recalling the mutual recognition 20 years ago between the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,¹⁴ and the need for full compliance with the agreements concluded between the two sides,

Recalling also the endorsement by the Security Council, in resolution 1515 (2003), of the Quartet road map to a permanent two-State solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict¹⁵ and the call in Council resolution 1850 (2008) for the parties to fulfil their obligations under the road map and to refrain from any steps that could undermine confidence or prejudice the outcome of negotiations, and recalling further in this regard the relevant Quartet statements, including those of 23 September 2011 and 27 September 2013,

Stressing the road map obligation upon Israel to freeze settlement activity, including so-called “natural growth”, and to dismantle all settlement outposts erected since March 2001,

Recalling the Arab Peace Initiative adopted by the Council of the League of

Arab States at its fourteenth session, held in Beirut on 27 and 28 March 2002,¹⁶

Expressing support for the agreed principles for bilateral negotiations, as affirmed by the parties in the Israeli-Palestinian Joint Understanding reached at the international conference held in Annapolis, United States of America, on 27 November 2007, aimed at concluding a peace treaty resolving all outstanding issues, including all core issues, without exception, for the achievement of a just, lasting and peaceful settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and ultimately of the Arab-Israeli conflict as a whole for the realization of a comprehensive peace in the Middle East,

Reiterating support for the convening of an international conference in Moscow, as envisioned by the Security Council in resolution 1850 (2008) and the Quartet statement of 23 September 2011, for the advancement and acceleration of a resumed peace process towards the fulfilment of its stated objectives,

Noting the important contribution to the peace process of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority, including within the framework of the activities of the Quartet,

Noting also the continuing efforts of the Quartet’s Special Representative, in particular the efforts to strengthen Palestinian institutions, promote Palestinian economic development and mobilize donor support,

¹⁴ See A/48/486-S/26560, annex.

¹⁵ S/2003/529, annex.

¹⁶ A/56/1026-S/2002/932, annex II, resolution 14/221.

Welcoming the ongoing efforts of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians, under the chairmanship of Norway, and noting its recent meeting at United Nations Headquarters on 25 September 2013, at which donor countries reaffirmed the necessity of continued and increased donor support in this critical period,

Recognizing the efforts being undertaken by the Government of the State of Palestine, with international support, to reform, develop and strengthen its institutions, emphasizing the need to preserve and further develop Palestinian institutions and infrastructure, and commending in this regard the implementation of the August 2009 plan of the Palestinian Authority for constructing the institutions of an independent Palestinian State and the ongoing implementation of the National Development Plan on governance, economy, social development and infrastructure and the significant achievements made, as confirmed by the positive assessments made by international institutions regarding readiness for statehood, including by the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the United Nations and the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee, while also expressing concern about the negative impact of the current financial crisis being faced by the Government of the State of Palestine,

Welcoming the launch, on 15 August 2013, of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, which is aimed, inter alia, at enhancing developmental support and assistance to the Palestinian people and strengthening institutional capacity in line with Palestinian national priorities,

Welcoming also the continued efforts and tangible progress made in the Palestinian security sector, calling upon the parties to continue cooperation that benefits both Palestinians and Israelis, in particular by promoting security and building confidence, and expressing the hope that such progress will be extended to all major population centres,

Reiterating its concern over the negative developments that have continued to occur in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, including the large number of deaths and injuries, mostly among Palestinian civilians, the construction and expansion of settlements and the wall, the arbitrary arrest and detention of more Palestinian civilians, the acts of violence, vandalism and brutality committed against Palestinian civilians by Israeli settlers in the West Bank, the widespread destruction of public and private Palestinian property, including religious sites, and infrastructure, the internal forced displacement of civilians and the consequent deterioration of the socioeconomic and humanitarian conditions of the Palestinian people,

Expressing grave concern, in particular, over the continuing crisis in the Gaza Strip as a result of the prolonged Israeli closures and severe economic and movement restrictions that in effect amount to a blockade and the continuing negative repercussions of the military operations in the Gaza Strip in November 2012 and between December 2008 and January 2009, which caused extensive loss of life and injury, particularly among Palestinian civilians, including children and women, widespread damage and destruction to Palestinian homes, properties, vital infrastructure, public institutions,

including hospitals and schools, and United Nations facilities, and internal displacement of civilians,

Stressing the need for the full implementation by all parties of Security Council resolution 1860 (2009) of 8 January 2009 and General Assembly resolution ES-10/18 of 16 January 2009,

Expressing concern over the continued imposition of hundreds of checkpoints and obstacles to movement in and around Palestinian population centres by the Israeli occupying forces, and emphasizing in this regard the need for the implementation by both sides of the Sharm el-Sheikh understandings,

Expressing grave concern about the imprisonment and detention by Israel of thousands of Palestinians, including children, under harsh conditions,

Emphasizing the importance of the safety, protection and well-being of all civilians in the whole Middle East region, and condemning all acts of violence and terror against civilians on both sides, including the firing of rockets,

Expressing the hope for tangible progress towards Palestinian reconciliation for the restoration of Palestinian unity, under the leadership of the President, Mahmoud Abbas, and consistent with Palestine Liberation Organization commitments, and of the situation in the Gaza Strip to that which existed prior to June 2007, and calling for the continuation of the serious efforts being exerted by Egypt, the League of Arab States and other concerned parties towards the achievement of this aim,

Stressing the urgent need for sustained and active international involvement, including by the Quartet,

including through the proposed monthly meetings of its envoys and initiatives to support the parties in building a climate for peace, to assist the parties in advancing and accelerating the peace process negotiations for the achievement of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace settlement that ends the occupation which began in 1967 and results in the independence of a democratic, contiguous and viable State of Palestine living side by side in peace and security with Israel and its other neighbours, on the basis of relevant United Nations resolutions, the road map and the Arab Peace Initiative,

Taking note of the application of Palestine for admission to membership in the United Nations, submitted on 23 September 2011,¹⁷

Taking note also of its resolution 67/19 of 29 November 2012, by which, inter alia, Palestine was accorded non-member observer State status in the United Nations, and taking note of the follow-up report of the Secretary-General,¹⁸

Acknowledging the efforts being undertaken by civil society to promote a peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine,

Recalling the findings by the International Court of Justice, in its advisory opinion, including on the urgent necessity for the United Nations as a whole to redouble its efforts to bring the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which continues to pose a threat to international peace and security, to a speedy

¹⁷ A/66/371-S/2011/592, annex I.

¹⁸ A/67/738.

conclusion, thereby establishing a just and lasting peace in the region,¹⁹

Affirming once again the right of all States in the region to live in peace within secure and internationally recognized borders,

1. *Reaffirms* the necessity of achieving a peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine, the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict, in all its aspects, and of intensifying all efforts towards that end, and stresses in this regard the urgency of salvaging the prospects for realizing the two-State solution of Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security within recognized borders, based on the pre-1967 borders;

2. *Reaffirms its full support* for the Middle East peace process and the establishment of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace, based on the relevant United Nations resolutions, the terms of reference of the Madrid Conference, including the principle of land for peace, the Arab Peace Initiative adopted by the Council of the League of Arab States at its fourteenth session,⁵ and the Quartet road map to a permanent two-State solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict,⁴ and for the existing agreements between the Israeli and Palestinian sides;

3. *Welcomes* the resumption, on 29 July 2013, of Israeli-Palestinian negotiations aimed at resolving all core final status issues and concluding a final peace agreement within the agreed nine-month time frame, and expresses appreciation in this regard for the efforts and support of the United States of America, the European Union, the Russian Federation and the United

Nations, as the members of the Quartet, and of the League of Arab States and all other concerned States;

4. *Encourages*, in this regard, continued serious regional and international efforts to follow up and promote the Arab Peace Initiative, including by the Ministerial Committee formed at the Riyadh summit in March 2007;

5. *Urges* the parties to undertake, with the support of the Quartet and the international community, immediate and concrete steps in follow-up to the Israeli-Palestinian Joint Understanding reached at the international conference held in Annapolis;

6. *Calls for*, in this regard, the timely convening of an international conference in Moscow, as envisioned by the Security Council in resolution 1850 (2008), for the advancement and acceleration of the resumed peace process;

7. *Calls upon* both parties to act on the basis of international law and their previous agreements and obligations, in particular adherence to the road map, irrespective of reciprocity, in order to create the conditions necessary for the advancement of negotiations within the nine-month time frame agreed to at the resumption of negotiations;

8. *Calls upon* the parties themselves, with the support of the Quartet and other interested parties, to exert all efforts necessary to halt the deterioration of the situation, to reverse all unilateral and unlawful measures taken on the ground since 28 September 2000, to take every possible step to

¹⁹ A/ES-10/273 and Corr.1, advisory opinion, para. 161.

promote conditions conducive to the success of the negotiating process and to refrain from actions that undermine trust or prejudice final status issues;

9. *Calls upon* the parties to observe calm and restraint and to refrain from provocative actions, incitement and inflammatory rhetoric, especially in areas of religious and cultural sensitivity, including in East Jerusalem;

10. *Underscores* the need for the parties to take confidence-building measures aimed at improving the situation on the ground, promoting stability and fostering the peace process, including the need for the further release of prisoners, and notes in this regard the exchange of prisoners in October and December 2011 and the release of prisoners by Israel in August and October 2013;

11. *Stresses* the need for the removal of checkpoints and other obstructions to the movement of persons and goods throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the need for respect and preservation of the territorial unity, contiguity and integrity of all of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem;

12. *Also stresses* the need for an immediate and complete cessation of all acts of violence, including military attacks, destruction and acts of terror;

13. *Reiterates its demand* for the full implementation of Security Council resolution 1860 (2009);

14. *Reiterates* the need for the full implementation by both parties of the Agreement on Movement and Access and of the Agreed Principles for the Rafah

Crossing, of 15 November 2005, and the need, specifically, to allow for the sustained opening of all crossings into and out of the Gaza Strip for humanitarian supplies, movement and access, as well as for commercial flows and all necessary construction materials, and stresses the urgent need to promote reconstruction, including through the implementation of United Nations-led projects and civilian reconstruction activities, all of which are essential for alleviating the humanitarian crisis, improving the living conditions of the Palestinian people and promoting the recovery of the Palestinian economy;

15. *Calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to comply strictly with its obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law, and to cease all of its measures that are contrary to international law and all unilateral actions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, that are aimed at altering the character, status and demographic composition of the Territory, including via the confiscation and de facto annexation of land, and thus at prejudging the final outcome of peace negotiations;

16. *Reiterates its demand* for the complete cessation of all Israeli settlement activities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, and calls for the full implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions;

17. *Stresses*, in this regard, the need for Israel forthwith to abide by its road map obligation to freeze all settlement activity, including so-called “natural growth”, and to dismantle

settlement outposts erected since March 2001;

18. *Calls for* the cessation of all provocations, including by Israeli settlers, in East Jerusalem, including in and around religious sites;

19. *Demands*, accordingly, that Israel, the occupying Power, comply with its legal obligations under international law, as mentioned in the advisory opinion rendered on 9 July 2004 by the International Court of Justice² and as demanded in General Assembly resolutions ES-10/13 of 21 October 2003 and ES-10/15, and, inter alia, that it immediately cease its construction of the wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and calls upon all States Members of the United Nations to comply with their legal obligations, as mentioned in the advisory opinion;

20. *Reaffirms its commitment*, in accordance with international law, to the two-State solution of Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security within recognized borders, based on the pre-1967 borders;

21. *Stresses* the need for:

(a) The withdrawal of Israel from the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, including East Jerusalem;

(b) The realization of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, primarily the right to self-determination and the right to their independent State;

22. *Also stresses* the need for a just resolution of the problem of Palestine

refugees in conformity with its resolution 194 (III) of 11 December 1948;

23. *Calls upon* the parties to continue urgently direct peace negotiations towards the conclusion of a final peaceful settlement on the basis of relevant United Nations resolutions, especially of the Security Council, the terms of reference of the Madrid Conference, the road map and the Arab Peace Initiative;

24. *Urges* Member States to expedite the provision of economic, humanitarian and technical assistance to the Palestinian people and the Government of the State of Palestine during this critical period in order to help to alleviate the serious humanitarian situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which is critical in the Gaza Strip, to rehabilitate the Palestinian economy and infrastructure and to support the development and strengthening of Palestinian institutions and Palestinian State-building efforts in preparation for independence;

25. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue his efforts with the parties concerned, and in consultation with the Security Council, towards the attainment of a peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine and the promotion of peace in the region and to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session a report on these efforts and on developments on this matter.

(The resolution was adopted by 165 in favour to 6 against, with 6 abstentions)

IX. GENERAL ASSEMBLY ADOPTS TWO RESOLUTIONS ON THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

On 26 November 2013, the General Assembly, at its 68th session and under agenda item 35 on the situation in the Middle East, adopted two resolutions, 68/16 on Jerusalem and 68/17 on the Syrian Golan. The text of the resolution on Jerusalem is reproduced below, with an indication of the vote:

68/16. Jerusalem

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 181 (II) of 29 November 1947, in particular its provisions regarding the City of Jerusalem,

Recalling also its resolution 36/120 E of 10 December 1981 and all its subsequent relevant resolutions, including resolution 56/31 of 3 December 2001, in which it, inter alia, determined that all legislative and administrative measures and actions taken by Israel, the occupying Power, which have altered or purported to alter the character and status of the Holy City of Jerusalem, in particular the so-called “Basic Law” on Jerusalem and the proclamation of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, were null and void and must be rescinded forthwith,

Recalling further the Security Council resolutions relevant to Jerusalem, including resolution 478 (1980) of 20 August 1980, in which the Council, inter alia, decided not to recognize the “Basic Law” on Jerusalem,

Recalling the advisory opinion rendered on 9 July 2004 by the International Court of Justice on the legal consequences of the construction of a wall in the Occupied Palestinian

Territory,²⁰ and recalling its resolution ES-10/15 of 20 July 2004,

Expressing its grave concern about any action taken by any body, governmental or non-governmental, in violation of the above-mentioned resolutions,

Expressing its grave concern also, in particular, about the continuation by Israel, the occupying Power, of illegal settlement activities, including provocations regarding the so-called E-1 plan, its construction of the wall in and around East Jerusalem, its restrictions on Palestinian access to and residence in East Jerusalem and the further isolation of the city from the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, which are having a detrimental effect on the lives of Palestinians and could prejudice a final status agreement on Jerusalem,

Expressing its grave concern further about the continuing Israeli demolition of Palestinian homes, the revocation of residency rights and the eviction and displacement of numerous Palestinian families from East Jerusalem neighbourhoods, as well as other acts of provocation and incitement, including by Israeli settlers, in the city, including desecration of mosques and churches,

Expressing its concern about the Israeli excavations undertaken in the Old

²⁰ See A/ES-10/273 and Corr.1.

City of Jerusalem, including in and around religious sites,

Reaffirming that the international community, through the United Nations, has a legitimate interest in the question of the City of Jerusalem and in the protection of the unique spiritual, religious and cultural dimensions of the city, as foreseen in relevant United Nations resolutions on this matter,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Middle East,²¹

1. *Reiterates its determination* that any actions taken by Israel, the occupying Power, to impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration on the Holy City of Jerusalem are illegal and therefore null and void and have no validity whatsoever, and calls upon Israel to immediately cease all such illegal and unilateral measures;

2. *Stresses* that a comprehensive, just and lasting solution to the question of

²¹ A/68/371

the City of Jerusalem should take into account the legitimate concerns of both the Palestinian and Israeli sides and should include internationally guaranteed provisions to ensure the freedom of religion and of conscience of its inhabitants, as well as permanent, free and unhindered access to the holy places by people of all religions and nationalities;

3. *Also stresses* the need for the parties to observe calm and restraint and to refrain from provocative actions, incitement and inflammatory rhetoric, especially in areas of religious and cultural sensitivity, and expresses its grave concern in particular about the recent series of negative incidents in East Jerusalem;

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session on the implementation of the present resolution.

(The resolution was adopted by 162 in favour to 6 against, with 8 abstentions)