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President: Mr. Han Seung-soo (Republic of Korea)

The meeting was called to order at 9.05 a.m.

Address by Mr. Glafcos Clerides, President of the Republic of Cyprus

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Cyprus.

Mr. Glafcos Clerides, President of the Republic of Cyprus, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Glafcos Clerides, President of the Republic of Cyprus, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Clerides :

[...]

The tragic events of 11 September have highlighted the need to continue and accelerate efforts to prevent and resolve regional conflicts. The inability of the international community to put an end to the unacceptable situation in the Middle East undermines the credibility of the system of collective security. Cyprus, as a neighbouring country with close relations to the peoples of the region, is particularly pained by the continuing cycle of violence, the tragic loss of innocent human lives and the plight of the Palestinian population.

We look forward to a region living in peace, stability and security for all States, including the State of Israel. We reiterate our support for the fulfilment of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including the creation of their own State. We urge both parties to work immediately towards finding ways to put an end to this cycle of violence and to respect the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention. We consider the implementation of the recommendations of the Mitchell report as an absolutely necessary first step in this direction. Cyprus reiterates its long-held position for the implementation of Security Council resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#) and [338 \(1973\)](#).

[...]

The President : On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Luis Ángel González Macchi, President of the Republic of Paraguay, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President González Macchi (*spoke in Spanish*):

[...]

Another outstanding issue that needs to be resolved by our Organization, and one that gives us utmost concern in view of the recent increase in violence and loss of life, is the situation in the Middle East. We believe that both the General Assembly and the Security Council should redouble their efforts to arrive at a solution that will respond to the rightful aspirations of the parties concerned. It should include recognition of Israel's existence within secure and well-defined borders and the Palestinian people's full enjoyment of the right to have its own homeland. We need to tackle this issue firmly and resolutely, ensuring that we work together with the necessary political will to contribute to international peace and security.

[...]

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

Terrorist actions are misguided and criminal and must be opposed by all as a matter of principle. Africa was beginning to benefit from AGOA, the measure taken by the Americans to open their markets to our goods. Business has, however, now somewhat slumped in America. Therefore, the terrorists, who claim to be fighting for the Palestinian cause, are objectively hurting the interests of Africans, who have always been the allies of the Palestinians. This is counter-productive. The terrorists have also tried to polarize the world, pitting Moslems against Christians. This is erroneous and unacceptable. Exploitation knows no boundaries and cuts across all races and religions. Exploiters are found in all religions and races. The Arabs had to oppose Turkish imperialism. Yet both the Arabs and the Turks were Muslims. Why, then, did they have to oppose each other? One of the monsters of the last century, Idi Amin, of my country, was a Muslim. We had to get rid of him to liberate everybody, including the Muslims, in Uganda. War has been going on in the Sudan for decades. Elements that claim to be acting in the name of Islam have been the ones taking the wrong position in this conflict, seeking hegemony over God's people.

I, therefore, support the position of the United States on this occasion, as we did in the Gulf War, in fighting and defeating these reactionaries, who profane the name of freedom fighters. If necessary, all countries of the world opposed to terrorism should contribute troops and finish the job quickly. The coalition against terrorism should be regarded in the same way as the coalition against fascism in the 1930s and 1940s.

Nevertheless, the just aspirations of the Palestinian people and of other oppressed peoples, like the people of southern Sudan, must be supported so that we can get peaceful resolutions to these conflicts. I welcome freedom and equality for all peoples of the world. Those who strive to dominate or exploit others have illegitimate ambitions. We now have a chance to build a new, just world. The free will of all peoples should be ensured. In addition, the most important instrument of emancipation, free trade, should give African goods quota- and tariff-free access to the markets of the countries of the Organization for Cooperation and Development (OECD) and vice versa.

[...]

The President: I have the great pleasure to welcome to the United Nations The Right Honourable Anerood Jugnauth, Prime Minister of Mauritius, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

Mr. Jugnauth (Mauritius):

[...]

We welcome the statement by the United States that it supports the creation of a Palestinian State. We consider this to be a major step in the right direction for the resolution of the Middle East crisis. We urge the United States to be even-handed in its relations with both Israel and the Palestinian Authority. We also believe that the unilateral imposition of conditions prior to the resumption of peace talks is unhelpful. With the support of the international community, we are confident that Israel and Palestine can, within the framework of the [Mitchell report](#) and the Tenet plan, work out a just and durable peace in which the States of Israel and Palestine can live side by side, secure within their respective boundaries.

[...]

Mr. Tang Jiaxuan (China) (*spoke in Chinese*):

[...]

Tackling regional hot spots is vital to regional and global security. We are following with deep concern the current developments in the Middle East. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict that broke out in September last year is continuing unabated. It poses a grave threat to the Middle East peace process and to regional stability. China supports the relevant United Nations resolutions and the principle of land for peace. It also supports the Palestinian people in their just struggle to regain their legitimate national rights and interests. We hope that the Israeli and Palestinian sides will take constructive measures and closely coordinate with the international community in its mediating efforts so as to create conditions for easing the tension and reactivating the peace process. China supports a greater role for the Security Council in this respect.

[...]

The President: I now give the floor to His Excellency The Right Honourable Jack Straw, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Mr. Straw (United Kingdom):

[...]

Nowhere are those tensions greater than in the Middle East. The path to a settlement there is plain. It has to be based on a political process that implements United Nations resolutions. It must deliver security for Israel within recognized borders while at the same time creating a viable Palestinian State. We should give the parties every help to reach a settlement. But our efforts will be wasted unless the parties themselves show the political will to bring violence to a halt, and the political courage to make a deal.

[...]

The President : I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Erkki Tuomioja, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

Mr. Tuomioja (Finland):

[...]

One of our common responsibilities is the maintenance of international peace and security. This is one of the issues that unites us and is in everybody's interest. The United Nations is the only international organization with global competence in the area of security policies. Ongoing crises are, however, so complex that they require united efforts and combined resources. This is particularly true of the Middle East, where a return to the peace process is an urgent necessity. To this end, we will have to pressure both parties, as well as those who can influence them.

[...]

The Acting President : I give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Reinaldo Ruggiero, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Italy.

Mr. Ruggiero (Italy):

[...]

At the top of the list of regional crises is the Middle East, an area physically close to Italy, and one to which we pay close attention. Here, we are working both in a national capacity and within the European Union to create, as soon as possible, the conditions for an end to the violence and a true return to negotiations for a comprehensive, lasting peace in the region based on the establishment of a viable and democratic State for the Palestinians and an end to the occupation of their territories and on Israel's right to live in peace and security within internationally recognized borders.

This framework should also include an ambitious plan, like the one adopted to rebuild a devastated Europe in the wake of World War II, for public and private investments and inter-regional assistance towards fostering solidarity among the region's States and peoples — in other words, a new Marshall Plan. Special attention should be paid to the economic and social growth and development of the Palestinian population, to which Italy is fully committed and for which it remains prepared to do more in the future.

[...]

The Acting President (*spoke in French*) : I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Djibouti, Mr. Ali Abdi Farah.

Mr. Farah (Djibouti) (*spoke in French*) :

[...]

At a time when the attention of the international community is squarely focused on the issue of terrorism, the brutality and destructive force used against the Palestinians have increased dramatically. Israel has created the conditions for chaos and anarchy to justify its reoccupation and even annexation of Palestinian territory. The recent incursions represent the broadest military operations in years in Palestinian-controlled territory. Each day we drift closer to an unacceptable conflagration between two parties that are unequal in power, means, resources and international influence.

Insisting on a ceasefire without offering anything in return, Israel is determined to pursue its defiance of international opinion. Living conditions in the occupied territories continue to be seriously affected by the Israeli blockade. Rising unemployment, failing businesses, falling incomes, restrictions on the movement of goods and people and the banning of construction while Jewish settlement activities continue all combine to inflame an already incendiary situation. One wonders, therefore, what more the Israelis want to hear than the imploring words of President Arafat: "Let us go back to implementing the accords. Let us go back to saving the peace process with no conditions and no military pressures."

We call on Israel to relinquish Orient House and other Palestinian offices in and around Jerusalem. We also urge it to return to the negotiating table and, among other things, to implement the proposals contained in the Mitchell Committee report. Israel must release the millions of dollars in tax money owed to the Palestinian Authority in order to alleviate the economic and financial hardships inflicted upon the Palestinian people.

In the final analysis, Israel's security largely depends on the implementation of the principle of a viable Palestinian State. We hope that the international community will also commit itself to restoring dignity and respect to the Palestinian people. Like all peoples everywhere, they have a right to live in peace and to enjoy a decent existence.

[...]

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization and President of the Palestinian Authority.

Mr. Arafat (Palestine) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to begin by extending my congratulations to you, Mr. President, on your election as President of the General Assembly at this session. I would also like to extend my congratulations to Mr. Kofi Annan on his re-election to a second term as Secretary-General of the United Nations. I also wish to congratulate him and the United Nations on being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

It is important for me to be here today at this meeting, which is being held in very critical and important circumstances in the aftermath of the horrific, criminal and ugly terrorist acts against the cities of New York and Washington, D.C., on 11 September 2001. We strongly condemn those acts. In this context, I would once more like to extend our deepest and warmest sympathy to President George W. Bush and to the Government and the friendly people of the United States. In particular, I wish to express my condolences to the families of the victims.

The Palestinian people have expressed their readiness to confront all forms and manifestations of international terrorism, including State-organized terror, in order to build a new world that guarantees justice, peace, security and freedom for all peoples — a new world based on human rights and international legality. We call on all nations to coordinate their efforts within the framework of the United Nations and international legality and the need to pursue and encourage a dialogue between all nations, religions and civilizations.

I would like to express my deepest appreciation to President George W. Bush for the declaration contained in the statement he made yesterday with regard to the need to achieve a just peace based on the implementation of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and [425 \(1978\)](#) and on the basis of a two-State solution — Israel and Palestine — and with regard to expeditiously resuming the peace process. For our part, we will exert every possible effort to achieve those objectives. We have worked to provide the best possible conditions for that endeavour, and we will continue to do so.

I would also like to salute, and extend my appreciation to, all my brothers who have preceded me and clearly and eloquently made references to the question of the Palestinian people and their right to realize their legitimate rights under international legality.

Last year I had the honour of addressing the United Nations Millennium Summit. Today I am once again addressing the Assembly, bringing the pain of the Palestinian people and their just cause, which still awaits a just solution. As Members will recall, in 1947 the General Assembly adopted [resolution 181 \(II\)](#), which provided for the partition of Palestine into two States — one Jewish and the other Palestinian. But the Palestinian State has still not been recognized by the United Nations. The Palestinian people faced tremendous historic injustice, and the majority of them were uprooted from their homes and made refugees.

The Palestinian people continue to seek their rights to self-determination and return — rights that today form the backbone of all relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, international law and international humanitarian law and that should be exercised on the Palestinian national soil. Members are aware that we have accepted the solution provided for by international legality. Yes, we have accepted less than 25 per cent of historic Palestine, while the General Assembly granted us almost 50 per cent of historic Palestine, as provided for in resolution 181 (II). On this new approach, we went to the Madrid Peace Conference, which was based on the principle of “land for peace” and which had the objective of implementing all relevant international resolutions related to Palestine, particularly Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 425 (1978) and [General Assembly resolution 194 \(III\)](#) concerning the Palestinian refugees. Then we signed the Oslo Agreement at the White House in Washington, D.C., in the presence of and witnessed by representatives of the United States of America, the Russian Federation, the European Union, China, Japan, Egypt, Jordan and other countries, including Arab, African, Asian and Latin America States.

Later we signed a number of agreements and memorandums of understanding. After the assassination of my late partner, Mr. Yitzhak Rabin — my partner in the peace process — consecutive Israeli Governments clearly took the path of non-compliance and did not implement Israel's obligations stemming from the signed agreements. This impeded our sincere efforts to reach a comprehensive, just and lasting peace — the peace of the brave. The number of settlements and settlers has doubled since the start of the peace process. This reflects the lack of seriousness of the Israeli Government and its lack of commitment to the agreements signed between us.

Then came Sharon's visit to the holy sanctuary in Holy Jerusalem. I had personally and officially warned the Israeli Government of the grave consequences that would have on the peace process and the region. This action sparked the Palestinian intifada, reflecting the rejection by the Palestinian people of the Israeli Government's non-compliance with the agreements signed, the settlement policies, which deepen the occupation rather than end it by withdrawing from the occupied Palestinian territory, and its policies of undermining our Christian and Muslim Holy Places.

The current Israeli Government continues the aggression against the Palestinian people begun by the previous Government. State terror is being practised against the Palestinian people and land, using the might of the Israeli army, including F-15s, F-16s, Apache helicopters, tanks, missiles, armoured vehicles, navy vessels and lethal weapons, including those that are internationally banned. Practices of the Israeli army also include the assassination of Palestinian political leaders, the demolition of homes, the destruction of private and government institutions, ruining farms and fields and uprooting hundreds of thousands of olive and fruit trees, as well as the killing of women, children and the elderly. There have been approximately 1,800 Palestinians killed and 37,000 wounded. Many of them have been handicapped for life. Thousands have been arrested in only 13 months.

It should also be noted that the Palestinian economy has been devastated. The losses amount to \$7 billion as a result of all forms of economic, financial, medical and food closures and sieges imposed on all the Palestinian cities, villages and refugee camps. These practices continue to restrict the movement of goods and people, including students and teachers who are prevented from reaching their schools and universities. All these acts of closure and siege have recently been tightened. Our international borders, checkpoints and airports have been closed. All these measures violate outright basic human rights. Workers have also been prevented from reaching their work places, their means to sustain their families and children.

Facing this aggression, escalation and the bloody war of State terror being waged by the Israeli Government against our people, land, Holy Places, — Jerusalem in particular — and Bethlehem, Beit Jala, Hebron and other Palestinian towns, the incursion into our cities, villages and refugee camps with tanks and the brutal massacres committed in various locations in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, we call on the international community, as represented by all present, and on the peace-, freedom- and justice-loving people who defend human rights and dignity throughout the world to work sincerely and resolutely and to exert all possible efforts to stop this war of aggression and to send international observers to protect our people from the occupation, terror and ethnic cleansing practised by Israel and to supervise the implementation and the consolidation of the ceasefire, by which we

are abiding and which has been consistently violated by the Israeli Government.

International sponsorship of the Middle East peace process is the only true guarantee for efforts by the international community to make peace an established reality in our region. The absence of international involvement in this conflict — in the serious search for a solution to the Palestinian question, in accordance with justice and the principles of international law — will push the region back into a spiral of violence, confrontation and bloodshed and could make the situation more explosive and fragile.

Therefore, I call upon the international community to redouble its sincere efforts to end the current situation and the escalating crisis that, in the absence of the peace process, threatens to explode, with grave consequences for our region. The active involvement of the international community and the influential Great Powers is essential to save the peace process and to put it back on the right track, to move it forward sincerely, resolutely and effectively. Lasting peace will not be achieved or sustained without international legality to provide an effective and binding international mechanism to implement the relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions. The accurate and honest implementation of these resolutions will establish and sustain peace and will prevent bloodshed in our region.

Proceeding from our belief in peace as an irreversible strategic choice of our people, we have cooperated fully and positively with all international efforts and initiatives, including the Egyptian-Jordanian initiative, the Tenet Understandings and the Mitchell Report, which we accepted as a comprehensive, integrated package. We have also unilaterally declared an immediate comprehensive ceasefire, and we have exerted maximum efforts to sustain that ceasefire. On the eve of the Jewish New Year, we initiated the Palestinian call for peace, offered our sincere congratulations to the Israeli people and called upon them to make the New Year an occasion for a new era of peace, security and peaceful coexistence between the Palestinian and Israeli peoples and the peoples of the whole Middle East region. We made very clear and unequivocal our strategic commitment to peace, negotiations and the political solution to all outstanding issues between us and the Government of Israel.

Most regrettably, the Israeli Government instructed its war generals and army to escalate the military campaign against our people, cities, villages and refugee camps. This included the buffer zones and the siege that closed off wide areas of cities, villages and cultivated lands and led to the destruction of our farms and the uprooting of thousands of trees in various places in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

Allow me to extend my deepest appreciation and to salute sincerely all the brotherly, friendly nations and to the Great Powers that have realized today, more than ever before, that the establishment of an independent Palestinian State, with Holy Jerusalem as its capital, is the only guarantee for peace, security and stability in the region and the world. This constitutes a basic cornerstone in establishing and sustaining that peace.

We call upon these nations, particularly the United States, the United Kingdom, the Russian Federation, France, China, Japan, the members of the European Union and the non-aligned countries, the international community, individually and collectively, to exert every possible effort to translate this vision into action and political reality in order to enable the Palestinian people to live in peace, dignity, freedom, independence and sovereignty within their independent State on their national soil, with Holy Jerusalem as its capital. This can be achieved by bringing Israel, the occupying Power, to withdraw fully from all of the occupied Palestinian and Arab territories, including Holy Jerusalem, to the boundaries of 4 June 1967, in accordance with the principles of the Madrid Peace Conference, to end settlement activities and evacuate settlers from our land, and to guarantee the right of return to the Palestinian refugees, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 194 (III), which provided for this right and called for compensation to those not wishing to return.

We welcome the positive positions taken by President George W. Bush and other leaders who have called for the establishment of a Palestinian State. We believe this constitutes a significant step towards ending the conflict and establishing peace in the Middle East. I will say candidly to you that reviving and completing the peace process will need a new qualitative push, and after all that has happened it will not be possible to confine ourselves to interim solutions. It is impossible, of course, to achieve another interim agreement, as called for by some. To control the situation on the ground and to get the situation back to the way it existed before 28 September 2000 requires clear political imagination and new hope.

What the peace process now requires to achieve a just and lasting peace is a genuine effort on the part of the co-sponsors of the peace process — the United States and the Russian Federation — as well as influential international actors, including the European Union, and of course the Arab and Muslim countries and other friendly nations in the Non-Aligned Movement as well as in the United Nations. All of them should immediately introduce a comprehensive framework for a permanent final solution based on international legality and the agreements signed so that both parties can negotiate expeditiously the details of that permanent solution. This, of course, should be preceded by the full and immediate implementation of the Mitchell Report and the Tenet Understandings.

It is clear that we are in need of greater international efforts, including an international presence on the ground, to help the parties move forward. In any case, the United Nations and the Secretary-General must carry out their natural and important roles in this regard so that we can achieve our desired peace objectives. I call upon the Israeli Government and the Israeli people to respond positively to this approach so that we can together build peace in the land of peace, the Holy Land of peace — the Holy Land; I repeat, the Holy Land.

Needless to say, we need an expeditious effort that brooks no further delay, especially at the current international situation. We are ready to carry out our share of responsibility. We trust you are also ready to shoulder your share of responsibility. I realize that the international community, after the assassination of my partner, Yitzhak Rabin, is looking forward to the peace process. From here I convey to the Israeli people my full commitment to the peace process, which I began with my late partner Yitzhak Rabin, and my partner Shimon Peres, a peace that guarantees freedom, stability and security for the Israelis and the Palestinians and all the peoples in the Middle East region — the peace of the brave; the just and comprehensive and lasting peace that will end the Israeli occupation of all the Palestinian and Arab territories and will lead to the establishment of the independent Palestinian State with Holy Jerusalem as its capital.

This is what we should be working for, for the sake of our children and their children. From here I call upon the Israeli Government to resume the final status negotiations in order to implement the resolutions of international legality and the agreements signed.

I salute all of you and hope that this session will produce the required solutions and recommendations which will enable our peoples and our nations and the whole of humanity to live in peace, stability, progress and prosperity.

May peace and God's blessing be with you.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.