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Report of the Security Council

1 August 2009-31 July 2010

Introduction

The Security Council, in discharging its function of the maintenance of international peace and security, was engaged in yet another year of intensive activities. During the period under review, the Council held 191 formal meetings, 168 of which were public. It also held 18 meetings with troop-contributing countries and 124 consultations of the whole. In this period, the Council adopted 54 resolutions and 27 presidential statements and issued 42 statements to the press.

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The Council remained engaged with the situation in the Middle East, including the question of Palestine, through monthly briefings and debates. ...

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Middle East

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

The Council considered the situation in the Middle East, including Palestine, on a monthly basis. The Council urged the parties to rapidly resume peace negotiations. Members of the Council stressed the need for Israelis and Palestinians to fulfil their obligations under the road map, and a number of Council members called for the complete freeze of settlement activity by Israel. The Council expressed concern at the humanitarian situation in Gaza and reiterated its call for the full implementation of resolution 1860 (2009).

On 14 October 2009, in an open debate, the Council was briefed by the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, who said that political efforts to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict had continued but there had been no significant progress on the ground. He confirmed the Secretary-General's support for the work of the Fact-finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict and his call for credible national investigations into the conduct of the conflict without delay, which was echoed by a number of delegations that addressed the Council after the briefing. Many speakers called for an end to all acts of violence and for strict compliance with international humanitarian and human rights law, as well as for the safety and security of all civilians, diplomatic and United Nations premises and personnel. A number of participants expressed concern about the findings contained in the Goldstone report and the need to urgently address the continuing grave humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip, including the need for the long-overdue reconstruction process to commence.

On 24 March 2010, the Council heard a briefing by the Secretary-General on the Quartet meeting held in Moscow on 19 March 2010 and his visit to the Middle East. In his briefing, the Secretary-General informed the Council of the Quartet's statement, which reflected strong agreement on the following: the need for proximity talks to move forward and to become direct negotiations as soon as possible; the need for the parties to respect the conditions that made proximity talks possible and to act in accordance with international law and the road map, including the freeze by Israel of all settlement activity and the fulfilment by the Palestinians of security obligations; the immediate easing of the closure affecting Gaza and the commitment to a durable solution to the issues of security, unity and crossings, as envisaged in resolution 1860 (2009); and strong support for the Palestinian Authority's State-building agenda. The Council welcomed the Secretary-General's meetings with the Palestinian and Israeli authorities and the diplomatic efforts made by the Quartet to relaunch the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. The Council requested the two parties to fulfil their obligations under the road map and the relevant resolutions of the Council and invited them to make every effort to resume the peace

negotiations.

Following the flotilla incident of 31 May, the Council held an emergency meeting. On 1 June, it adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2010/9) on the use of force during the Israeli military operation in international waters against the convoy sailing to Gaza. In the statement, the Council condemned those acts which had led to the loss of at least 10 civilians and the wounding of many, requested the immediate release of the ships and the civilians held by Israel, and called for a prompt, impartial, credible and transparent investigation conforming to international standards. In the same statement, the Council emphasized that the situation in Gaza was not sustainable, re-emphasized the importance of the full implementation of resolutions 1850 (2008) and 1860 (2009), reiterated its grave concern at the humanitarian situation, and stressed the need for a sustained and regular flow of goods and people to Gaza. Members of the Council underlined the fact that only a two-State solution, with an independent and viable Palestinian State living side by side in peace and security with a secure Israel and its other neighbours could bring peace to the region. The Council expressed continued support for the proximity talks and urged the parties to act with restraint.

Members of the Council agreed that a comprehensive peaceful settlement of the dispute was in the interest of all concerned. In this regard, the Council again urged all parties concerned to fulfil their mutual obligations under the road map, the Madrid terms of reference and relevant Council resolutions, thus contributing to the peaceful settlement of the Israel-Palestine and Arab-Israel conflicts, and the ultimate attainment of a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East.

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