



Security Council

SC/9565

Department of Public Information • News and Media Division • New York

Security Council
6061st Meeting (Resumed) (AM)

CALLING FOR GREATER DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS AS SECURITY COUNCIL CONCLUDES GAZA DEBATE

DELEGATES WARN THAT SURGING VIOLENCE THREATENS HOPES FOR FUTURE PEACE

No Military Solution to Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, Say Speakers, Stressing Risk of Exacerbating Dire Humanitarian Situation

Stressing that there was no military solution to the conflict between Israel and Hamas militants in the Gaza Strip, delegations called today for stepped up diplomatic efforts to end it, warning the Security Council that the upsurge in violence threatened hopes for future Israeli-Palestinian peace and exacerbated an already dire humanitarian situation in the densely populated territory.

As the Council concluded the special meeting it began yesterday on the Gaza crisis, speakers expressed deep concern that thus far into the 12-day-old conflict, neither side had heeded worldwide calls for an immediate cessation of hostilities. Decrying the mounting civilian casualties, delegates condemned Israel's ground incursion into Gaza, even as they called for an end to the launching of rockets into southern Israel by Hamas. Still, it was the plight of the nearly 1.5 million Palestinian civilians trapped by the fighting, and the deteriorating humanitarian conditions, that drew the most concern.

Deploping Israel's expanded offensive in Gaza as "disproportionate and an excessive use of force, even in the name of self-defence", Malaysia's representative said the Security Council had no option but to stop the killing of innocent civilians and the destructions of homes, schools, mosques and other infrastructure. "A durable and sustainable cessation of hostilities must be the immediate target, to be achieved through the deployment of an international monitoring/peacekeeping force," he added.

Israel's occupation of Palestinian territory was the root cause of the current violence, he continued, stressing that only negotiations leading to a two-State solution would bring about a durable and lasting peace. While the Security Council must do its part to end "Israel's military aggression", the leaders of Hamas and Fatah should initiate immediate talks to resolve their differences. Unity among the Palestinians themselves would be the most critical element in resolving the Palestinian predicament.

Pakistan's representative, describing the use of force as counter-productive, said he was concerned that the current situation would lead to an escalation of tensions in the Middle East and undermine broader peace efforts. "The crisis requires an urgent collective response by the international community," he added, voicing a concern shared by other speakers that, while the Security Council was expected to lead such a response, once again it had failed to act. The Council's inexplicable inaction was a blow to its credibility.

He expressed support for a resolution that would demand a respected and immediate ceasefire, ensure the reopening of border crossings and establish a mechanism for protecting civilians and monitoring a ceasefire, while promoting intra-Palestinian reconciliation. Pakistan, therefore, supported the draft resolution tabled earlier by Libya. The international community must redouble its efforts to resolve the Palestinian question on the basis of international law, relevant Council resolutions, the [Road Map](#) and the Arab Peace Initiative, among other things.

The representative of the Czech Republic, speaking on behalf of the European Union, expressed the bloc's deep concern over the fighting and the plight of civilians in Gaza. There must be an unconditional halt to Hamas rocket attacks against Israel and an end to Israeli military action, he stressed, urging both sides to respect their obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law. The parties, in particular Israel, should grant unhindered and secure passage for the delivery of humanitarian aid to the inhabitants of Gaza.

Welcoming Israel's overnight decision to halt military operations for three hours to allow humanitarian organizations free access, he said a cessation of fighting should facilitate the normal opening of all border crossings, as provided for by the 2005 Agreement on Movement and Access. Immediate humanitarian action was required to ensure the delivery of food, urgent medical supplies and fuel into Gaza, he continued, calling for the safe evacuation of the injured.

Australia's representative said the recent escalation of the conflict underlined the urgency of diplomatic efforts to end it. To that end, Australia supported the actions of the Secretary-General and the United Nations to help bring about an immediate ceasefire. At the same time, any diplomatic solution must form part of a longer-term compact involving Israel and Palestine, and based on a two-State solution. Australia welcomed the diplomatic effort led by Egypt and France, as

well as Israel's statement that it also viewed that effort positively.

Turning to the humanitarian implications, he said the expansion of the conflict had exacerbated an already grave situation. It was, therefore, critical that Israel meet its obligations under international law and ensure that the people of Gaza had access to basic goods, food, medical supplies and humanitarian assistance. Australia welcomed Israel's announcement that it was establishing improved conditions for aid to flow into Gaza.

Argentina's representative said, however, that Israel's proposal to implement a ceasefire for a few hours "was by all means unacceptable" since it could not contribute in any meaningful way to resolving the grave and urgent humanitarian needs of the Palestinian population. "What is needed in this hour is the permanent and unconditional end of all hostilities," he said, stressing that the alarming developments in Gaza had starkly revealed that innocent civilians were the main victims of the violence and military actions.

Other speakers today included the representatives of Cuba (on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement), Brazil, Indonesia, Iran, Nicaragua, Venezuela, Iceland, Ecuador, Bolivia and Paraguay (on behalf of the Southern Common Market, or MERCOSUR).

Also making a statement was the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.

The meeting began at 11:10 a.m. and ended at 12:55 p.m.

Background

The Security Council met this morning to resume yesterday evening's debate on events in the Gaza Strip under its agenda item: "The situation in the Middle East, including the question of Palestine". (See Press Release [SC/9563](#) for coverage of that meeting.)

Statements

HAMDON ALI ([Malaysia](#)), noting that the Israeli military aggression was entering its thirteenth day, said more than 600 lives had been lost and more than 2,700 people injured. Most of the victims were civilians. Any right-minded person or Government would deplore such disproportionate and excessive use of force, even in the name of self-defence. The action demonstrated Israel's complete disregard for international law and the United Nations Charter. It was a war crime and a crime against humanity.

The Council had no option but to stop the killing of innocent civilians and the destructions of homes, schools, mosques and other infrastructure, he said. A durable and sustainable cessation of hostilities must be the immediate target, to be achieved through the deployment of an international monitoring/peacekeeping force. Israeli forces must leave the Gaza Strip and the Council must also ensure the immediate lifting of its blockade on the enclave.

Israel's occupation of Palestinian territory was the root cause of the current violence, he said. In clear contravention of the Annapolis understanding, the Israeli occupation machinery had plodded on unrelentingly, including through the continuing construction of the separation wall and the mushrooming of illegal settlements. Only negotiations leading to a two-State solution would bring about a durable and lasting peace. The violence and killings must be stopped now. The Council must make every effort to ensure that the Israeli military aggression ceased immediately. The leaders of Hamas and Fatah should initiate immediate talks to resolve their differences. Unity among the Palestinians themselves would be the most critical element in resolving the Palestinian predicament.

ABELARDO MORENO ([Cuba](#)), speaking as Chair of the Coordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement, recalled that the Bureau had issued two statements since 29 December, expressing deep concern about Israel's military aggression. The Movement strongly condemned the escalation of that aggression and was gravely concerned that Israel had launched a ground invasion into Gaza in flagrant defiance of calls by the international community for a cessation of its military operations, and of regional and international diplomatic efforts to end the crisis. It also expressed deep concern and regret over the loss of innocent life as a result of Israel's military attacks, including the killing of more than 570 Palestinian civilians, among them several children, the injuring of some 2,000 more civilians, and the massive destruction of property and infrastructure.

"The Movement reiterates that this unacceptable Israeli military aggression against the Palestinian civilian population in the Gaza Strip constitutes a grave breach of international law," he continued, adding that Israel's aggression only fuelled the cycle of violence and threatened international peace and security, as well as the fragile peace processes under way between the two sides. The Movement called for an immediate cessation of all military activities and violence and for the implementation of an immediate general ceasefire. Israel should scrupulously abide by all its obligations under international law and relevant United Nations resolutions. In light of the indiscriminate bombing and the severe humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip, the Movement also called for immediate protection for the Palestinian civilian population in accordance with international humanitarian law.

He went on to say that, in light of the grave crisis, his delegation was deeply disappointed by the Security Council's inability to uphold its responsibilities to maintain international peace and security. Indeed, after more than a week of sustained military operations that had gravely affected the civilian population and heightened instability and tension in the region, the Council had regrettably been unable to take any concrete action to end the aggression. "Once again, the Movement requests the Security Council to act urgently to address this grave situation," he said, stressing at the same time the need for intensified and coordinated efforts by the wider international community to end the crisis and support all efforts to promote the peace process and respect for international humanitarian law.

MARIA LUIZA RIBEIRO VOTTI ([Brazil](#)) said that her country, deeply concerned about the magnitude and gravity of recent developments in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, condemned violence from all sides and deplored Israel's disproportionate military response to unlawful rocket attacks against its territory, which must cease. Brazil called for an immediate ceasefire, the opening of border crossings and a negotiated solution. Lasting peace could only be achieved through the creation of an independent Palestinian State, living peacefully side by side with Israel, within internationally recognized borders and with full respect for Council resolutions.

She said the Council's legitimacy and effectiveness would be diminished if it were perceived as hesitant in fulfilling its obligation to maintain and restore international peace and security. President [Luiz Inácio] Lula [da Silva] had recently called for a conference to facilitate the Council's work and Brazil was encouraged by the initiative of Presidents [Mohamed Hosni] Mubarak and [Nicolas] Sarkozy. A ceasefire called by the Council must be fully implemented by all parties while an international mechanism to monitor a sustained cessation of hostilities could be put in place. The Council must also ensure that all parties fully satisfied Gaza's humanitarian and economic needs. Once calm was restored, the Council must assist the peace process more decisively. The Council had been put to a difficult test and it must succeed.

MARTIN PALOÚŠ ([Czech Republic](#)), speaking on behalf of the European Union, expressed deep concern over the ongoing fighting and the plight of the civilian population in Gaza. The European Union deplored the hostilities, which had led to high numbers of civilian casualties, and expressed condolences to the families of Palestinian and Israeli victims. The European Union was determined to make every effort to help stop the violence and would therefore repeat its call for an immediate cessation of military actions on both sides. There must be an unconditional halt to Hamas rocket attacks against Israel and an end to Israeli military action. All parties must respect their obligations under international humanitarian law.

He called on the parties, in particular Israel, to grant unhindered and secure passage for the delivery of humanitarian aid to the inhabitants of Gaza, and welcomed Israel's overnight decision to halt military operations for three hours to allow humanitarian organizations free access. The European Union was also ready to step up its already substantial assistance in order to improve the humanitarian situation of the people in need. In support of all efforts to find an immediate solution to the crisis, European Union Foreign Ministers had met in Paris on 30 December and put forward relevant proposals. Subsequently, a European Union delegation had travelled to the region to seek an end to the violence and an alleviation of the humanitarian situation.

Cessation of fighting should allow the lasting and normal opening of all border crossings, as provided for by the 2005 Agreement on Movement and Access. Immediate humanitarian action was required to ensure the delivery of food, urgent medical supplies and fuel. Safe evacuation of the injured must be allowed and immediate access should be made possible for humanitarian workers through the opening of crossing points. The European Union had dispatched a field mission to provide the most appropriate response as quickly as possible, in cooperation with the United Nations, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, as well as non-governmental organizations. Finally, the European Union reiterated the need to step up the peace process, leading to the establishment of an independent, democratic and viable Palestinian State, existing side by side with Israel in peace and security. It therefore called on the parties to desist from any actions that threatened the viability of a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement.

JORGE ARGÜELLO ([Argentina](#)) said the recent alarming developments in Gaza had starkly revealed that innocent civilians, especially Palestinians, were the main victims of the violence and military actions. The Government of Argentina had condemned Israel's ground invasion as well as its disproportionate use of force. It had likewise condemned continued rocket attacks against Israel by Palestinian groups. Despite ringing calls to halt the violence, hostilities had instead intensified over the past few days. Just yesterday, some 40 civilians had been killed following Israeli attacks against schools operated by the United Nations. Argentina condemned those attacks "most energetically" and urged the launching of an independent investigation to determine responsibility and ensure that such actions were not repeated.

He went on to say that Israel's response had been "totally excessive and disproportionate", and that Israel must respect its obligations under international humanitarian law and take all steps to protect Gaza's civilian population. The immediate priority was to declare a ceasefire, end the violence and all military operations. Israeli troops must withdraw from the Gaza Strip and attacks on Israeli territory must cease. Israel's proposal to implement a ceasefire for a few hours "was by all means unacceptable" since it could not contribute in any meaningful way to resolving the grave and urgent humanitarian needs of the Palestinian population. "What is needed in this hour is the permanent and unconditional end of all hostilities."

If the parties were incapable of arriving at an agreement, the Security Council must assume its responsibilities and adopt a relevant resolution, he said, warning that the Council's credibility would be seriously eroded unless it took resolute measures. As for the alarming humanitarian situation in Gaza, the already grave conditions could escalate into a crisis affecting more than 1.5 million Palestinians if the international community did not act urgently. Argentina was preparing a huge humanitarian package and was willing to join broader international efforts to that end. Still, such efforts would be useless if the assistance did not arrive on the ground immediately to alleviate the suffering of thousands of Palestinian women, men and children, who were suffering gravely. "This is why it is urgent to declare a ceasefire so that humanitarian agencies may enter the territory and start their work."

MARTY M. NATALEGAWA ([Indonesia](#)) condemned in the strongest manner possible the Israeli military attacks against Palestinians, which contravened international humanitarian law and human rights law. Far from building on the common position reached on 28 December 2008, the Council had been unable to pursue stronger measures to end all violence and military activities. Indonesia called on it to issue, without delay, a "crystal clear and simple" message: end the fighting. Apart from the death and destruction resulting from Israeli military operations, the peace process itself was at risk.

He said a credible and permanent ceasefire, with the requisite international mechanism, must be established immediately. Similarly urgent was the need to open the border crossings and to provide humanitarian assistance in a continuous and permanent manner. Israel had not responded to the Council's call of 28 December. A situation of such a magnitude in the Middle East warranted serious and swift response from the Council. Should it remain unable to act, alternative avenues for action within the United Nations system should be sought, including the General Assembly, by invoking the "uniting for peace" resolution in accordance with Assembly resolution 377.

FARUKH AMIL ([Pakistan](#)) said the besieged population of Gaza was being tormented once again by the occupying Power's brutal military campaign, which employed callous, excessive and indiscriminate force. The disproportionate response to the firing of rockets by Hamas was displaced since the root causes were occupation, human rights violations and policies of collective punishment. Israel's use of destruction against civilians had been widely documented and was in flagrant violation of international law and the Fourth Geneva Convention and there should be accountability. Pakistan had appealed for a cessation of hostilities as the use of force was counter-productive.

Expressing concern that the situation would lead to an escalation of tensions in the region and undermine peace efforts, he said the crisis required an urgent collective response by the international community. The Council was expected to lead such a response, but had once again failed to act. Its silence and inaction were inexplicable and a blow to its credibility. The Council must stop the Israeli aggression.

He expressed support for a resolution that would demand a respected and immediate ceasefire, ensure the reopening of border crossings and establish a mechanism for protecting civilians and monitoring a ceasefire, while promoting intra-Palestinian reconciliation. Pakistan therefore supported the draft resolution tabled by Libya. The international community must redouble its efforts to resolve the Palestinian question on the basis of, among other things, international law, Council resolutions, the Road Map and the Arab Peace Initiative.

PAUL BADJI ([Senegal](#)), speaking in his capacity as Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, noted that Israel's brutal and deliberate attacks had been under way for more than two weeks now. The Committee strongly condemned those attacks, which had killed more than 600 people and wounded scores of other innocent, defenceless civilians. The Committee demanded that Israel cease its brutal and destructive military operations, which were being carried out in flagrant violation of humanitarian law. The Committee also demanded that Israel open all borders and crossing points to allow humanitarian assistance into the Gaza Strip, which had been under a blockade for more than a year in grave humanitarian conditions.

He reiterated the Committee's condemnation of rocket attacks into Israel, stressing that they must cease. At the same time, the Committee nevertheless expressed its strong belief that the entire population of Gaza must not be subjected to brutal collective punishment for the actions of armed groups operating there. The international community must take immediate action to end Israel's violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention, and the High Contracting Parties to that instrument were urged to ensure that its tenets were upheld.

Underscoring the international community's duty to "end this carnage", he said the Council must take immediate and specific measures to protect the civilian population. It must live up to its Charter-mandated responsibilities to ensure international peace and security. The Council must cooperate with the diplomatic Quartet and other parties working to ensure calm on the ground and protection for Gaza civilians. The Council must work with regional and other actors to ensure progress in the overall peace process towards the implementation of a just, comprehensive and durable solution, leading to the creation of a viable and independent Palestinian State.

ESHAGH AL HABIB ([Iran](#)) said that, despite enormous anger and worldwide anguish, the "abhorrent carnage and the crimes against humanity by the Zionist regime against the innocent Palestinian people" was continuing unabated. It seemed as though the life of the criminal Israeli regime depended on bloodshed, as if the regime fed on nothing but war crimes, aggression, occupation and State terrorism. The Israeli regime was in fact targeting every value that the civilized world stood for, and every international law that was dear to the world community. That savagery should be stopped immediately.

A whole population was being massacred only because it resisted occupation and State terrorism, and because it had exercised its right to vote, the most basic principle of democracy, he said. With the credibility of the international community and the United Nations at stake, the Council must take urgent and effective measures to stop the carnage and help ease the suffering. It should adopt a binding resolution to call for an immediate end to the Israeli attacks; immediate Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and the lifting of the blockade; and the reopening of border crossings and urgent provision of humanitarian assistance.

The international community must hold the regime accountable for its crimes and for the damages it had wrought on the defenceless Palestinians. It should also mobilize its efforts and resources to reconstruct Gaza's infrastructure. Stalling actions by some permanent members of the Council was neither acceptable nor justifiable, he said, adding that it was tantamount to complicity in the Israeli crimes against the Palestinian people. In addition, the absurd and baseless allegations raised by Israel against Iran were despicable tactics aimed at distracting attention from Israeli crimes at a time when the whole world was united to counter those crimes.

JAIME HERMDA CASTILLO (Nicaragua) said the people of his country were watching "with great sadness" the current situation in the Gaza Strip, where the heroic Palestinian people were once again falling victim to Israel's air, land and sea attacks. History was repeating itself as the oppression of the Palestinian people continued. Apparently, the people who had suffered so greatly at the hands of the Nazi regime, having been driven out of their lands, persecuted and forced to live in ghettos, had themselves become oppressors. The situation in Gaza had become untenable, more so because the densely populated enclave had been under an embargo for more than a year. The humanitarian tragedy was thus deepening.

He expressed deep disappointment, in line with the Non-Aligned Movement, that the Security Council had been unable to adopt measures to bring an immediate end to the aggression against the Palestinian people. The Council must live up to its international and moral obligations "to bring an end to this extermination". It must force Israel to end its aggression, to open all border crossings and to allow humanitarian access to the brutalized Palestinian people. Any decision taken must ensure protection for civilians, respect international law, shore up the overall peace process, and ensure that the Palestinian people exercised their inalienable right to self-determination.

JULIO ESCALONA (Venezuela) condemned the genocide that Israel was carrying out in Gaza and expressed its unconditional solidarity with the Palestinian people. One of the darkest wars in the modern world was taking place through, among other things, the punishment of a whole population that resisted occupation.

As Israel continued to wreak havoc, Venezuela reminded it that it was not invincible, as had been shown in the 2006 war with Lebanon, and that people had also resisted Nazism and fascism. The use of cluster bombs, phosphorus or depleted uranium tipped munitions would seed hatred into millions of people and breed suicidal individuals. A Nuremberg Tribunal would be waiting for Israel.

He then read out a communiqué issued yesterday in which the Government of Venezuela categorically condemned the Israeli violations of international law and the use of State terrorism. The communiqué announced, among other things, that Israel's Ambassador to Venezuela and part of its embassy staff were being expelled.

HARALD ASPELUND (Iceland) said the situation in Gaza was unacceptable, noting that, since the end of the six-month ceasefire between Israel and Hamas, hundreds of civilians had died in military actions and thousands wounded. Iceland had condemned the killings and aligned itself with the Secretary-General in calling on Israel to immediately stop its military actions in the densely populated enclave. It had likewise condemned the firing of rockets from Gaza into Israel to terrorize Israeli civilians. While Hamas bore a heavy responsibility for drawing civilians into the conflict zone, Israel's actions over the past two weeks had been both disproportionate and clearly contrary to international humanitarian law.

It was imperative to ensure the immediate suspension of all violence by all parties, he said, adding that it would then be essential that Israel lift its blockade of Gaza so that humanitarian aid could be delivered immediately into the territory. The peace process must recommence with active international involvement. In that regard, Iceland renewed its call for enhancing the inclusion and participation of women in the peace process, in accordance with relevant Security Council resolutions. Further, Iceland called the Council's attention to the International Women's Commission for Just and Sustainable Israeli-Palestinian Peace, a tripartite body that included international women leaders. The solidarity among those women, including Israeli and Palestinian women, across the lines of conflict could offer inspiration and hope for their societies as a whole.

ROBERT HILL (Australia) said his country was deeply disturbed by the continuing violence in Gaza and southern Israel. The escalation of the conflict underlined the urgency of diplomatic efforts to find a resolution. To that end, Australia supported the actions of the Secretary-General and the United Nations towards bringing about an immediate ceasefire. At the same time, any diplomatic solution must form part of a longer-term compact involving Israel and Palestine, based on a two-State solution. Australia welcomed the diplomatic effort led by Egypt and France, as well as Israel's statement that it also viewed that effort positively.

Turning to the humanitarian implications, he said the expansion of the conflict had exacerbated what was already a grave situation in Gaza. It was therefore critical that Israel meet its obligations under international law and ensure that the people of Gaza had access to basic goods, food, medical supplies and humanitarian assistance. Australia welcomed Israel's announcement that it was establishing improved conditions for aid to flow into Gaza.

He said his country had been a long-time provider of assistance to the Palestinian people and had doubled its aid in 2008 to some \$45 million. On 1 January, Australia had announced an immediate commitment of \$5 million in additional assistance that would help provide emergency food and medical supplies, as well as cash assistance to conflict-affected families.

MARÍA FERNANDA ESPINOSA (Ecuador) said the occupying Power had resorted once again to violence. The disproportionate offensive was unacceptable and there must be an immediate ceasefire. It was crucial that the international community, through the Council, adopt measures considered in the United Nations Charter to guarantee full respect for human rights and international humanitarian law. To that end, there was an urgent need to open all border crossings to humanitarian assistance.

She said any comprehensive peace in the Middle East must be accomplished through full compliance with Council resolutions and commitment to international law and dialogue. Ecuador called for an immediate end to the hostilities, a solution to the humanitarian crisis and the beginning of a lasting peace, which must include the right of the Palestinian people to exercise their inalienable right to self-determination and the establishment of an independent State. The international community was awaiting a strong response from the United Nations. The Council's responsibility did not exclude the involvement of other bodies, such as the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council.

HUGO SILES ALVARADO (Bolivia) said the catastrophic humanitarian situation in Gaza had galvanized the entire international community, largely due to Israel's disproportionate military aggression. Indeed, the most sacred human right – the right to life – was being flagrantly violated and snatched from the innocent civilians living in Gaza. At the same time, the international community was watching the Security Council, whose decisions were critical to ensuring an end to the aggression by the occupying Power.

No effort should be spared in seeking creative and durable solutions, within the framework of Council resolutions, to build a lasting solution, he said. One thing was clear: military action was not the answer to the current crisis. The Government and people of Bolivia were appealing to the Security Council, and the wider international community, to ensure an end to the current hostilities, the opening of all borders and access points in order to alleviate the dire humanitarian

situation in Gaza, and to promote the overall peace process.

JUAN A. BUFFA ([Paraguay](#)), speaking on behalf of the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR), expressed the bloc's deep concern about the tragic situation in Gaza and condemned Israel's land invasion as well as its disproportionate use of force. MERCOSUR condemned the firing of rockets into Israel. It also condemned categorically Israel's attacks against schools operated by the United Nations and called for an immediate cessation of all hostilities. Both parties should return to dialogue in order to fully restore peace in the region.

He said that the Council, as the United Nations body responsible for maintaining international peace and security, must adopt urgent measures to remedy the situation. MERCOSUR called upon the international community and the parties to the conflict to guarantee the reopening of the border crossings in order to ensure the provision of food and medicines and to provide access for humanitarian assistance in coordination with the United Nations. The bloc appealed for the resumption, as soon as possible, of peace negotiations that would establish an independent Palestinian State living side by side with Israel and bring the necessary stability to the region.

* * * * *

For information media • not an official record