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## UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN SUPPORT OF ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN PEACE

**Brussels  
30 and 31 August 2007**

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### I. Introduction

1. The United Nations International Conference of Civil Society in Support of Israeli-Palestinian Peace was held at the European Parliament in Brussels on 30 and 31 August 2007, under the auspices of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and in accordance with the provisions of General Assembly resolutions 61/22 and 61/23 of 1 December 2006.

2. The Committee was represented at the conference by a delegation comprising Ambassador Paul Badji (Senegal), Chairman of the Committee; Ambassador Rodrigo Malmierca Díaz (Cuba), Vice-Chairman of the Committee; Ambassador Hamidon Ali (Malaysia); and Ambassador Riyad Mansour (Palestine).

3. The theme of the conference was "Civil Society and parliamentarians working together for peace in the Middle East". Eighteen representatives of civil society organizations were invited to serve as members of the Steering Committee of the Conference. The members chaired the different

sessions of the Conference, conferred with other participants and drafted the 2007 Plan of Action (annex I) in consultation with the Bureau of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. A list of participants at the Conference is contained in annex II.

4. The Conference consisted of an opening session, two plenary sessions, five workshops, and a closing session. Thirty-five experts made presentations in the plenary meetings and served as resource persons in the workshops (for a summary of the workshops, see annex III). Representative of 153 civil society organizations participated in the Conference. Representatives of 54 Governments, the Holy See, Palestine, 4 intergovernmental organizations and 12 United Nations system entities attended as observers.

## II. Opening statements

5. **Ban Ki Moon**, Secretary-General of the United Nations, in a message read out on his behalf by Ms. Angela Kane, Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, stated that the settlement of a just and lasting resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was one of the foremost priorities of the United Nations. The continued occupation of the Palestinian territory prolonged hardship and injustice for millions of Palestinians, yet it had also failed to ensure the security of Israeli civilians. The Arab Peace Initiative, the appointment of Tony Blair as Quartet Representative, and the decision of President Bush to convene a Middle East peace meeting, all had the potential to result in a significant breakthrough. Movement on the political front could not obscure the dire humanitarian situation on the ground. The unsustainable division of the West Bank and Gaza Strip had grave humanitarian and political implications. Conditions in the Gaza Strip had become particularly acute; they demanded the urgent reopening of border crossings for commercial and humanitarian deliveries. To alleviate this crisis, United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East and other United Nations agencies were doing everything they could to support the affected populations. Their efforts, however, could not compensate for the effect of the closed crossings.

6. The message concluded by stressing that both parties should demonstrate a true commitment to peace through a negotiated two-State solution. Israel should cease settlement activity and the construction of the barrier, ease Palestinian movement and implement the Agreement on Movement and Access. Palestinians, for their part, needed to make every effort to end violence by militant groups and make progress on building robust institutions. Working together, the common goal could be achieved: a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement, based on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 1397 (2002), 1515 (2003) and the principle of land for peace.

7. **Edward McMillan-Scott**, Vice-President of the European Parliament, said that he chaired in 2005 and 2006 the largest-ever parliamentary observer missions, comprised of 30 Members of the European Parliament, to the Palestinian presidential and parliamentary elections and he did not feel that the democratic process had been well served since then by the international community response to technically perfect elections. He also said that the European Parliament was entirely committed to contributing to the agreed establishment of a just and lasting peace agreement which would be based on the legitimate existence of the State of Israel in safe borders as well as on the existence of a Palestinian State in safe borders, those of 1967. He mentioned that the European Union was celebrating the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Treaties of Rome and more than 50 years of peace, stability, prosperity and progress for the Europeans. The European Parliament saw it as its responsibility to advocate its values outside the Union borders: the promotion of democracy, human rights, the rule of law and fundamental freedom was a treaty obligation. As the founder of the European Union Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights, an increasing proportion of which was devoted to the Arab world, he was looking forward to the development of democracy outwards from Israel and Palestine to other countries in the region. Europeans should encourage all moves designed to build trust and the objective of a two-State solution. There had been too much suffering in the Middle East; too many opportunities had been missed. A Palestinian State with sustainable borders would bring Israeli citizens greater security and stability. The barrier that almost encircled Bethlehem and Jerusalem was not propitious for peace.

8. The Euro-Parliamentary Assembly which brought together Members of the European Parliament, the parliaments of the EU member States and the parliaments of the Mediterranean States, which did not belong to the European Union, the countries of North Africa and the Middle East - was an extraordinary forum for encouraging the intercultural dialogue which could help bring about mutual understanding. Today, violence and terror, walls and exclusion often stood in the way of the ideal of bringing societies together. He supported for 2008, the Year of Intercultural Dialogue, the proposal by the EU President Hans-Gert Poettering made in the Knesset to bring young people from Israel and Palestine, the Arab States and the countries of the European Union together at the European Parliament. He also recalled Mr. Poettering's suggestion made on 3 July in Brussels for a new European Parliament approach to the Middle East, the creation of a special European Parliament structure, a working group headed by the Vice-President to work on the topic.

9. **Paul Badji**, Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, said the expansion of settlements in the occupied West Bank continued in violation of international law. Israel had failed to fulfill its obligation to dismantle settlement outposts as required in the very first phase of the Road Map. It had further expanded the existing settlements, while constantly demanding that the Palestinian side fulfill its obligations called for by the international community as a precondition to even start negotiations. The advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice concerning the separation wall in the occupied West Bank and around East Jerusalem had never been heeded since it was issued nearly four years ago. Moreover, for the past four decades, the occupying Power had essentially disregarded its obligations under the Fourth Geneva Convention. The human rights of the civilian population were routinely violated. The Committee strongly condemned any activities indiscriminately targeting civilians, either by the Israeli Army or by Palestinian groups firing mortars and rockets at Israeli towns. A large majority of the Palestinians, in particular in Gaza, lived in poverty with no prospect of economic recovery or development. The problem was exacerbated by the continued closure of crossing points and other forms of movement restriction, resulting in Gaza's isolation. The sealing-off of the Gaza Strip, as well as the continuing Israeli incursions into Palestinian centres and the humiliating system of checkpoints throughout the West Bank had also contributed to the polarization within the Palestinian society.

10. The Committee had called upon the parties to resume without delay the political process aimed at the establishment of a viable and contiguous Palestinian State in the territory occupied since 1967, comprising the West Bank, including East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip. Ending the occupation, establishing a Palestinian State on the basis of the pre-1967 borders, and enabling Palestine refugees to exercise their right of return were the very basic principles for negotiations aimed at a lasting final status settlement. The Committee aligned itself with the conclusion adopted by the Council of the European Union at its meeting on 22 July 2007, which said, "Settlements activities in and around East Jerusalem, as well as in the rest of the West Bank and the ongoing construction of the barrier on Palestinian land, which are against international law, are of particular concern. The EU would not recognize any changes to the pre-1967 borders than those agreed by the parties."

11. He concluded by saying that the Committee's position was that the continuing occupation of the Palestinian Territory remained the root cause of the conflict. It emphasized the urgent need for a negotiated solution that would end the occupation, ensure the exercise by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights and guarantee security for the State of Israel. This settlement should be based on international law, General Assembly resolution 194 (III), Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 1397 (2002) and 1515 (2003) and other relevant United Nations resolutions, supported by the Arab Peace Initiative and the Road Map.

12. **Leila Shahid**, General Delegate of the Palestinian Authority to Belgium and to the European Union, read a message sent by President Mahmoud Abbas, which said that the international community had become ever more convinced, that the root of the Middle East difficulties was the Palestinian problem. The only way for this region to enjoy the blessing of security, prosperity and stability was to find a just solution to this problem on the basis of the internationally recognized resolutions relating to Palestine. Continuing to negate this question would only exacerbate the situation and keep the region mired in violence and conflict. These included repeated daily incursions into Palestinian towns and villages, accompanied by the destruction of infrastructure, lands, property and houses, the confiscation of land, the continued construction of the wall on the West Bank land, the building of more settlements and expansion of existing ones, the isolation of occupied East Jerusalem and the imposition of unjust laws designed to Judaize it. This was in addition to paralyzing economic life in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, cutting off communications, and depriving Palestinians of the most basic human rights to freedom of movement and travel by setting up more than 550 permanent and mobile checkpoints that had turned the West Bank into a group of isolated cantons, while over 11,000 Palestinians, including elected representatives and municipal council members, languished in prison, and targeted assassinations continued.

13. **Pierre Galand**, Chairman of the European Coordination of Committees and Associations for Palestine, and Representative of the International Coordinating Network on Palestine said Palestinian current leaders carried the responsibility of having failed to save the unity of the people and having diverted the fight for self-determination and recognition of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people into a fratricide struggle. The consequences were catastrophic for the people of Palestine and their future prospects. The Israeli leaders confined in a sort of autism, torpedoed and emptied of their contents all the propositions and peace initiatives, those of the United Nations, as well as the Oslo agreements or the Quartet proposals. In fact, what was happening in the Occupied Palestinian Territory was a result of a policy of territorial conquest and confinement of Palestinians, based on what was denounced recently again by Avraham Burg, former speaker of the Knesset and former President of the Jewish Agency, as a Zionist, paranoiac and xenophobe conception. The great project of two democratic

States, Israel and Palestine, living side by side, with Jerusalem as a bridge, was seriously compromised and the consequences were tragic, firstly for the Palestinians, then for the Israelis, but also for peace, security and cooperation in the whole region. Regarding the international community, the inactivity of the United Nations, the lack of vision of the United States, the absence of political courage from the Europeans, the weakness of the Arab voice, these were the many ingredients that led to a political and human impasse.

14. He highlighted the importance of the report "After Gaza" published early August by the International Crisis Group, which insisted on the necessity of a Hamas-Fatah agreement and on the support of Europeans; the end-of-mission report of former Personal Representative of the Secretary-General Alvaro de Soto regarding the initiatives to be taken out of the current impasse; and the reports of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs describing in detail how Israel locked in the Palestinians, with walls and a whole system of check-points and road-blocks, as well as with so-called "strategic roads" reserved for the settlers. This system, deemed for security, had dehumanized the life of Palestinians. A serious matter was that these reports were not even passed to the Security Council. Another serious concern was the same auto-censorship practiced by the European Union, which refused the distribution of an alarming report sent to the EU and to the Council, in October 2005, by the Heads of Mission of the EU member countries in Jerusalem and Ramallah, on the occupation and the wall around East Jerusalem.

15. He concluded his presentation quoting a report of Amnesty International where it said "The level of despair, poverty and food insecurity in the Occupied Territory has reached a level never reached before". The restrictions imposed were disproportionate and discriminatory, and imposed on the Palestinians to the exclusive benefit of the settlers. He also quoted the report entrusted by French President Chirac to author Régis Debray in 2007, the summary of which had been published by "Le Monde" under the title "Palestine: A Policy of Deliberate Blindness – How the world backed itself into a corner", where it is said "What is taking shape is not the Palestinian State announced and desired by all: it is an as yet unperceived Israeli territory enclosing three self-governing Palestinian enclaves. ... Is this situation tenable to the end of the century? It seems doubtful, given Israel's obsession with security, which makes it less secure, and its disregard for the demographic and religious trends in the region. Could not at least one European Government convey to our Israeli friends that we are not all taken in by the deception, and that those who deceive may not be its first victims – but will certainly be its last?"

### III. Plenary sessions

#### A. Plenary I

##### The situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and civil society response

16. **Wassim Khazmo**, Communications Advisor, Negotiation Affairs Department, Palestine Liberation Organization, said that Israel was entrenching its control over the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The settler population, between 1993 and 1999, nearly doubled from 200,000 settlers in 1993 to 400,000 in 1999. For the Palestinians, the Oslo process resembled Israel's strategy of taking the land and the resources that were needed for the establishment of a viable Palestinian State. The same strategy went for the wall. Israel, under international law, had no claim on Palestinian land. After World War II, acquisition of land by force was totally inadmissible. About 80 per cent of the wall ran inside Palestinian land. Upon completion the length of the wall would be as twice the length of the 1967 boundary, and the wall was not taking small parts of land, but went deep inside Palestinian land. For example, in the north, the wall went 22 kilometers inside the West Bank, the wall around Jerusalem went as deep as 14 to 15 kilometers, and the wall around the Bethlehem area went 8 kilometers inside the West Bank. It was not a question of the quantity of land but the quality of land. The wall in the north part of the West Bank went inside to incorporate the settlement of Ariel which sat on the most valuable aquifer of the West Bank. The wall around East Jerusalem totally severed the city from the rest of the West Bank. In addition, the wall around Bethlehem took away its water resources and agricultural land, and it totally isolated 260,000 Palestinians in Jerusalem from other areas in the West Bank, cutting 300,000 Palestinians from the urban land and also denied access for people to go to their jobs, schools and normal social services. The wall itself would take around 9 per cent of the West Bank and this percentage alone meant that any future Palestinian State would be unviable because of the lack of resources and the severance of Jerusalem. But the wall was only one layer of this entire process, the second layer were those settlements on the other side of the wall, the Palestinian side of the wall which controlled an additional 8 per cent of the West Bank and these settlements were continuing to expand.

17. The third layer was the Jordan Valley which constituted 28.5 per cent of the West Bank, most of the Israeli leaders, including Prime Minister Ehud Olmert repeatedly said that it would remain under Israel's control no matter the agreements with the Palestinians would be. All along, Palestinians would be left with 54.5 per cent of the West Bank to establish a Palestinian State that was discontinuous and totally unviable.

18. He concluded his presentation speaking of the importance of Jerusalem for the Palestinians. Ramallah, Bethlehem and East Jerusalem constituted metropolitan East Jerusalem, interdependent on each other. Most importantly, this metropolitan unit had contributed 35 per cent of the Palestinian Gross Domestic Product in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. For the realization of any future viable economic Palestinian State, this metropolitan unit had to be accessible, but that was not what was really happening on the ground. Israel was enacting a policy of totally severing East Jerusalem from other areas by building three human rings around the city. The first ring was the settlements in the Old City and around it; the second was what the Israelis defined as "Jerusalem municipal borders"; and the third ring, the settlements in the outskirts of Jerusalem. Additionally, Israel was building more settlements to insure that Jerusalem and the metropolitan Jerusalem would be totally discontinuous. For example, the E1 Plan near the settlement of "Maale Adumin" was meant to connect around 400,000 settlers with West Jerusalem on the expense of 200,000 Palestinians living in East Jerusalem. There were new plans to build new settlements in East Jerusalem for another 100,000 settlers. Israel always claimed that the wall was a temporary measure for security reasons but the terminals built all around Jerusalem showed how permanent those physical structures were. In addition, road networks built all around the West Bank further cut the Palestinian Territory into smaller areas and these roads had their own walls cutting the Palestinian areas into more cantons.

19. **Danny Rubinstein**, Member of the Editorial Board, Haaretz, said that even if the wall had been erected within the 1967 borders, although there was no justification for the wall, a cooperation was needed like between neighbours. There was a need to have a sort of separation because the principle of two States for two peoples sets the base for the relationship. There was no other alternative. The only other alternative was one State for two peoples, a bi-national State, but it was not a real bi-national State it was an apartheid state because the two peoples did not share the same equal rights. On the ground, there were four different Palestinian communities with four different status, one in Gaza, the second in the West Bank, the third in East Jerusalem, and the fourth was inside Israel, Palestinian citizens of Israel, with whom Israelis pretended they shared the same rights. The heavily populated Palestinian areas would be Palestine, and the rest would be the State of Israel.

20. He stressed that Israel had red lines. Israel could survive without some of the settlements, without East Jerusalem, but Israel could not give the Palestinians the right of return. If the Palestinians would exercise practically the right of return, it would be the end of the State of Israel. The red line for the Palestinians was that there would be no Palestinian State without East Jerusalem. The Palestinians would not agree to establish their capital anywhere else but in Jerusalem. It was not because the Palestinians had some pretension or could not live without Jerusalem. Jerusalem was a big symbol for the whole Arab, the whole Muslim world. Mr. Rubinstein mentioned that he had been to Camp David in 2000 and he remembered the proposal given by President Clinton about the Temple Mount which was the core issue then. Ehud Barak demanded a synagogue underneath the Temple Mount. Late President Yasser Arafat told President Clinton that if one of the Arab leaders would agree to that demand he would sign immediately. President Clinton called the Arab leaders, proposed that Israel demand and saw their reaction. Palestinians could not make concessions on Jerusalem. Jerusalem belonged to 300 million Arab Muslims. The only agreement that could be reached would be between those two red lines: Israel should go back to the 1967 borders with some concessions and Palestinians would give up the right of return. Mr. Rubinstein concluded his presentation saying that Hamas did wrong when they took over Gaza but they had won an election and one that should not be ignored.

21. **Clare Short**, Member of the British Parliament for Birmingham Ladywood, said that she had visited the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in June 2007 and on a number of other occasions in the 80s and 90s, and followed the developments in the Middle East over the years. She was shocked by Israel's blatant, brutal, systematic annexation of land, demolition of Palestinian homes, and deliberate creation of an apartheid system by which Palestinians had been enclosed in four Bantustans, surrounded by a wall, with massive checkpoints that controlled all Palestinian movements in and out of the ghettos. Israelis were clearly and systematically attempting to take the maximum amount of land with a minimum number of Palestinians. As things stood, Israel had taken about 85 per cent of historical Palestine, leaving the remaining 15 per cent for Palestinian ghettos.

22. During her recent visit to the Occupied Palestinian Territory in June 2007, with a delegation organized by "War on Want" she took a tour of East Jerusalem with the Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions. The Committee showed her and the delegation how the combination of formal and informal settlements, and systematic home demolitions, was encircling East Jerusalem. At the occasion, the delegation had witnessed a house demolition of a Palestinian home that was built on their own land which belonged to the Palestinians under international law. Houses were being demolished because Palestinians did not have permits

to build on their own land. When Palestinian families expanded, they had to live somewhere else. Israel would not issue a permit because of its determination to drive Palestinians out of East Jerusalem.

23. The delegation also visited the Jordan Valley, where all fertile land near the river had been confiscated by Israel. There were acres of green houses that were worked by settlers and which were strategically located over water sources, where they grew agricultural produce for the European market. Impoverished Palestinians had to buy water from the settlers. She also visited farming families whose relatives had lived on the land in the Jordan Valley for generations. They were being threatened by new settlements.

24. She concluded by saying that the project of a two-State solution was being destroyed and instead a new apartheid regime was being created with the Palestinians being confined into ghettos. The Hamas takeover in Gaza was not the cause of the problem, but the consequence of it. The arming of Fatah by US and Israel forces to enable it to fight Hamas in Gaza made the takeover inevitable. It was in the interests of the people in Israel, the Palestinians and the wider Middle East that there should be a two-State solution to bring an end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. But Israel was determined to expand its borders in total breach of international law. The United Kingdom and the United States were colluding in that, and the consequences were causing terrible suffering, and endangering the future.

25. **Nadia Hilou**, Member of the Knesset (Labour Meimad) said the appointment of former British Prime Minister Tony Blair, as the Peace Envoy on behalf of the Quartet, symbolized the commitment and involvement of the European Union, the United States and the United Nations, as well as Egypt, Jordan and Saudi Arabia.

26. The Israeli population in general was less optimistic than in the past about peace because of the results of the unilateral Israeli withdrawals from southern Lebanon and from the Gaza Strip. These withdrawals were viewed as an indication of Israeli good will and its willingness to give up territory for peace. However, both withdrawals resulted in a worsening of the security situation along Israel's northern and southern borders.

27. Civil society in Israel had not given up, and continued to struggle, though in less visible forms than in the past. She pointed to the constant demonstrations along the wall and the work of organizations like MACHSOM Watch, composed of Israeli women who stood at checkpoints to observe the conduct of Israeli soldiers. There also were those who struggled against the inequalities and injustices suffered by Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem, who were residents of Israel, bearing blue identity cards, and even Israeli citizenship, but suffered inequalities in terms of infrastructure, service and basic human and civil rights. She had been approached and had intervened with the authorities on such issues as the injustices and inconveniences caused by the wall, and the unbearable conditions in the public education system in East Jerusalem. She was also actively involved in assisting Palestinians from the Gaza Strip, who were caught in the Erez checkpoint after the takeover of Hamas in Gaza.

28. **Kyriacos Triantaphyllides**, Member of the European Parliament, Chairman of the Delegation for Relations between the European Parliament and the Palestinian Legislative Council, said that a delegation of the Parliament paid a visit to the Council in early May 2007. He recalled that Hamas had won the legislative elections in January 2006. Its government had been boycotted leading to an intra-Palestinian dialogue. A Government of National Unity was formed in March of 2007. This Government had to face very specific problems, a financial crisis which was brought about by the international community and by the Israelis who were within holding Palestinian revenues. There were also problems created by the imprisonment of BBC correspondent Alan Johnston, the Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit, the 11,000 Palestinian prisoners amongst them forty elected representatives, including the speaker of the House of Representatives. The EU delegation met Government officials and representatives of Non Government Organizations and heard complaints about simple and serious things like the injustice that Palestinians had to buy water from their occupied land; the problems of the unpaid salaries to the security forces that led to the degradation of the security situation and the creation of mafias and family clans like the one who had kidnapped Alan Johnston; the new refugees, some 43,000 young Palestinians who left the Occupied Palestinian Territory; the problem the wall posed to agriculture, 25 per cent of the West Bank had been cut off by the wall isolating 63 localities; and Gaza became an open air prison for 1.5 million inhabitants. These violations of international law should be dealt with by the International Court of Justice.

29. When the members of the delegation came back from the visit to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the delegation informed EU officials about their findings, including European Parliament President Pöettering; Marc Otte, Special Representative to the Middle East; and Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner. However, the Foreign Minister of Germany, who was then presiding the EU declined to receive the delegation. Mr. Triantaphyllides accused the international community, the United Nations, and the European Union for having missed the only window of opportunity to promote peace in the region. Had they done this at the time perhaps what followed could have been avoided.

30. **Raymond Dolphin**, Consultant on access issues for the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OCHA) said that OCHA's reports focused particularly on the impact of closures on the humanitarian situation counting the number of physical obstacles that were presently in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. It was not just checkpoints but a whole combination of different obstacles, roadblocks, earth mounds, road barriers, road gates, trenches and the wall itself. The reason for the closures was the settlements and their infrastructure in the West Bank. Settlements were a subject that the international community had been very reluctant to talk about or reproach, it had been like the elephant in the room everybody ignored. OCHA had just posted on its web site a major report on the impact of settlements and other infrastructures on Palestinians in the West Bank.

31. Mr. Dolphin made a Power Point presentation showing the link between the closures and settlements. Going back to 1995, during the Oslo Accords, the West Bank was divided in areas A, B, and C - areas A and B were under Palestinian civil control, and area C remained under Israeli military control. About 40 per cent of the West Bank was under the authority of the Palestinian Authority. This was meant to be an interim agreement and the idea was that area C would become B, and almost all land would be handed over to the Palestinian Authority. He showed a map with the location of settlements and outposts distributed everywhere in the West Bank, particularly in the Jordan Valley; the settlers' roads that crisscrossed the West Bank horizontally and vertically; the location of 96 outposts, which were supposed to be removed under the first phase of the Road Map, but very few of them had been removed, and in fact quite a number of them had been retroactively legalized by the Israeli Government, even though they had started off as illegal. However, the settlements and outposts were not the full extent of the Israeli infrastructure in the West Bank. In addition, the Israeli military closed areas and military bases and land reserves, where Palestinians were not authorized to practice any kind of economic activity in the area. OCHA estimated that about 10.2 per cent of Palestinian land of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, would be on the Israeli side of the wall. This estimate was according to latest official Israeli maps. OCHA estimated that with the new route of the wall, about 16 per cent of the West Bank would be behind the wall.

## **Plenary II**

### **Civil Society support for a just and peaceful resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict**

32. **Mustafa Barghouti**, President, Palestinian National Initiative and Member, Palestinian Legislative Council, said that the first step towards ending the occupation was to understand the facts on the ground, including a recognition of the occupation complete transformation into fully fledged apartheid, whether people liked that reality or not. He gave the example of the water production. A total of 936 million cubic meters of water were produced in the West Bank - Israel took away 800 million of them. On average, a Palestinian citizen was allowed no more than 50 cubic meters of water per capita per year while Israeli settlers were allowed to use 2,400 - 48 times more than Palestinians. More than that, on average, when Palestinians bought water from Israel - their own water from Israel - they had to pay five shekels per unit while Israelis paid 2.4. Palestinians paid 13 shekels per unit for electricity while Israelis paid 6.4. The main reason why the wall went like a snake inside the Occupied Palestinian Territory was not just the settlement annexation, whether in Ariel, Salfit area or Jordan Valley or north in the Qalqilya region.

33. The Israeli GDP per capita was US\$ 24,500; the Palestinian GDP was per capita was between US\$ 800 and US\$1,000. That meant that Israel made 25 times more than Palestinians, but the Palestinians were obliged by the Paris Agreement and by Israeli orders to have unified market and unified tax laws. Also, Palestinians were obliged to buy products at Israeli market price when they had a GDP that was 25 times more than the Palestinian GDP. The segregation of roads and the wall was destroying Palestinian contiguity of the land. The wall was built for about 90 per cent inside the Occupied Palestinian Territory, separating Palestinians from Palestinians not Palestinians from Israelis. In addition to the wall, the Israelis had invented a more sophisticated system of segregation of roads. The major main roads inside the West Bank were now practically confiscated, surrounded by a wall on both sides, only accessible to Israelis and settlers. That situation had to be called it apartheid no other term could be used.

34. Mr. Barghouti emphasized that there was no real peace process. Israel was trying to gain time to continue building its wall and annexing more Palestinian land. In addition, the Defense Minister Ehud Barak was carrying out "settlement laundry" to give legal standing to Israeli illegal settlements. There were also attempts to abuse Palestinian internal division by trying to demonstrate that the main conflict was not between Israelis and Palestinians but between Palestinian moderates and extremists. Mr. Barghouti emphasized that there was no real peace process. Israel was trying to gain time to continue building its wall and annexing more Palestinian land. In addition, the Defense Minister Ehud Barak was carrying out "settlement laundry" to give legal standing to Israeli illegal settlements. There were also attempts to abuse Palestinian internal division by trying to demonstrate that the main conflict was not between Israelis and Palestinians but between Palestinian

moderates and extremists, a strategy reflected not only in the United States policy, but also in that of the international community at large. The Palestinian problem was portrayed as a need to rebuild the same institutions that had been repeatedly rebuilt and destroyed, including with American money. Palestinians had managed to build a democratic model that was the best in the Arab world. Nothing could justify the fact that the world community, especially the United States and Europe, mobilized by Israel, to strangled the Palestinian Authority – the first democratic experience when Palestinians had a national unity government which represented 96 per cent of the Palestinian people and which provide a very good opportunity for sustaining democracy.

35. He concluded by saying that insisting on interim borders was an attempt to buy time for the creation of new facts on the ground. The aims of the recently proposed peace conference was to reproduce another piece of paper like Oslo, but the question was why another framework was needed when Israel had failed to implement the first. The whole idea of peace had been substituted with the peace process, which in turn had been frozen.

36. **Jennifer Lowenstein**, Member of the Board, Israeli Committee Against House Demolition and Associate Director, Middle East Studies Program, University of Wisconsin-Madison, recalled that on 26 January 1976 the United Nations Security Council debated a draft resolution, introduced by Jordan, the Syria Arab Republic and Egypt, that included all the crucial wording of Security Council resolution 242 (1967). It accepted the right of all states in the region to exist within secure and recognized borders while re-emphasizing the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force. This resolution added for the first time, however, what was missing in resolution 242 (1967): recognition of Palestinian national rights. Israel was invited to attend the session by refused to participate, and the United States vetoed the resolution. As a result, such a draft had vanished from historical record despite its significance in marking for the first time a Security Council document that explicitly recognized the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. In the debate leading up to the vote on this resolution, one of the participants remarked that “We are sorry that Israel stayed away from the debate and has instead been wreaking havoc all over and hurling defiance against the alleged bias ... of the United Nations. In truth it was Israel which is maintaining, by use of force, and wished to be left alone to continue, its occupation of the territories of its Arab neighbors”. Persistence in this policy of tone and dictat could only breed more violence, engender further bitterness, and make ever more remote the prospect of peace and cooperation which the Israeli Government professes to be seeking and which all peoples of the Middle East desire and need”. She also recalled that on 7 December 1987, the General Assembly passed resolution 42/159 which, among other things, authorized peoples living under occupation regimes the right to resist.

37. Ms. Lowenstein concluded by noting three pre-conditions that would be necessary to begin a process leading a just settlement. The first would be to demand an end to Israeli crimes, which included the siege of Gaza, an end to Israeli actions in the West Bank and East Jerusalem and continued territorial expansion. The second, would be the recognition of the right of Palestinians to have free elections – meaning, in this case, the recognition of Hamas and the establishment of dialogue with it and all other political factions, the release of Palestinian Parliamentarians and the release of thousands of prisoners and illegal detainees. The third pre-condition would be that the Quartet would publicly acknowledge the international consensus as it existed since 26 January 1976 and was broadened by 2002 Arab League Summit in Beirut to include full normalization of relations, in return for Israel’s compliance with international law, which had been systematically rejected by Israel and the US.

38. **Michel Warschawski**, Founder and Director, Alternative Information Center, said that Palestinians, after their expulsion from Palestine, had to struggle to reaffirm their existence as people and to struggle to be recognized by the Israeli public opinion. Late President Yasser Arafat and the Fatah had the great merit to impose themselves to the whole world and, at Oslo, to the Israeli Government. The Palestinian legitimacy also imposed itself, thanks to the process of decolonization, as an international phenomenon when after the war in 1967 the Palestinians imposed the legitimacy of their struggle for self-determination and the recognition of the Organization for the Liberation of Palestine. American and Israeli neo-conservative had worked during the second half of the 80s putting into place a global strategy of reconquest of the world, what was called “the shock of civilizations”, identifying an enemy, terrorism, which became the Islamist terrorism and Islam, as well as the strategy of a global, preventive and endless war, against an undefined threat. When Yasser Arafat and Yitzhak Rabin negotiated the decolonization of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the world entered in the era of recolonization. At Camp David, the neo-conservatives announced that international law was over, all United Nations resolutions were irrelevant and the Geneva Convention obsolete. Fifty years after the victory over Hitler, the neo-conservatives wanted to close the chapter of international law and human rights, in other words, impose the law of the jungle.

#### IV. Closing statements

39. **Na’eem Jeenah**, Co-Chair, International Coordinating Network on Palestine, Spokesperson of the Palestine Solidarity Committee of South Africa and President of the Muslim Youth Movement, read out a draft call to action by which civil society would strengthen its global campaign of boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) as non-violent effort against Israeli occupation and oppression, and commit itself to a campaign opposing Israeli policies as violations of the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid. Under a related provision of the draft, civil society would call on the European Union to organize a fact-finding mission to investigate Israeli violations of the International Convention and other international laws in its treatment of the Palestinian living inside Israel, as well as its violations of the Fourth Geneva Convention in Israel’s isolation campaign against the 1.5 million people in the Gaza Strip. According to the proposed document, civil society would also, with the European Coordination of Committees and Associations for Palestine and others in global civil society, the United Nations, parliaments and parliamentarians and others, join efforts to demand that Governments work to meet obligations under the Fourth Geneva Convention and under other relevant aspects of international law. In the document civil society would call on the international community to respect the results of Palestinian democracy and reject the claim that at a time of internal Palestinian division and crisis, the international community and global civil society must simply stand aside.

40. Civil society would also build a campaign of education and mobilization to mark 2008 as a year to commemorate Palestinian dispossession and expulsion, and a year committed to reversing those 60-year-old losses. In particular, the United Nations, the European Union and the Non-Aligned Movement would be called upon to mark 29 November 2007 as an international day to commemorate the 1947 partition resolution and its consequences. Finally, global civil society would be called upon to join Palestinian communities inside Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory in mobilizing for a year of educational work beginning on 29 November 2007. That year would include 15 May 2008, as a day of global action to commemorate the Nakba, and the continuing dispossession and denial of Palestinian rights.

41. **Luisa Morgantini**, Vice-President of the European Union, said it was a sign of weakness that a conference on international legality had undergone such pressure against convening the event. That meant that the international community and the European Union were not implementing international legality. The core of the problem remained the violations of international legality, the violations of human rights, the fact that the international community and the EU were not doing what they should be doing and claimed they were for, to implement international legality. The EU should not only speak about human rights, but also implement them. For example, to make Israel accountable for the violations of human rights, and to make the EU accountable for the agreement it signed. The EU should have the courage to suspend the Association Agreement with Israel. Ms. Morgantini called for the creation of a network of members of Parliament, to build a unity among Parliaments, and to inform about Parliamentarians’ actions. In South Africa, 200 members of the South African Parliament demonstrated to ask for the end of the Israeli occupation. She ended by saying that the suffering and the destruction in Gaza, Jenin and Nablus could not be ignored, and that work should be done to release Palestinian political prisoners.

42. **Riyad Mansour**, Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations, said that brave Palestinian people who had survived almost 60 years after the Nakba and 40 years of occupation were still resisting in Gaza, the West Bank and East Jerusalem. That resistance brought all the participants to express their solidarity. He said that the convening of the conference had a special meaning, adding that it had two objectives: to stress the importance of Europe, because of its genuine friendship with the Palestinian People and because Palestinians wanted parliamentarians to work in support of their cause. The notion that international actors had failed was wrong. The struggle was an ongoing process in which all had a role to play, especially Governments representatives at the United Nations. The Palestinian people were a mature population and deserved to have their wishes respected. It was them who had made a decision to resist the occupation and their decision should be respected.

43. **Paul Badji**, Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, aligned the Committee with an important resolution, adopted by the European Parliament on 12 July 2007, calling on Israel and the Palestinians to implement specific steps towards confidence-building and the resumption of a meaningful dialogue. The Committee also joined the European Union in calling on the Israeli Government to immediately stop the military operations against the Palestinian people; to remove the roadblocks installed since September 2000; to stop the extension of settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem and the building of the wall beyond the 1967 borders; to immediately release all imprisoned former Palestinian Ministers, legislators and mayors, and many others, including minors; and to release the withheld Palestinian tax money and customs revenues. The Committee also joined the Parliament in condemning the killing of innocent people by either side and in denouncing rocket attacks against Israel, and called for a cessation of those activities by Palestinian militants.

44. The Conference had highlighted the fact that the occupying Power continued to disrespect its obligations under the Fourth Geneva Convention. That had serious implications for the whole international community, far beyond the context of the conflict, by eroding the credibility of the international legal system. Europe, the main contributor to the framing of the Geneva Conventions, should take the lead in ensuring respect for the Conventions and thus preserving a central instrument of the international order. The Committee attached great importance to the role of civil society organizations in demanding that the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention live up to their obligations to act against violations of it.

45. The Committee called on parliamentarians to mobilize their constituencies and fellow parliamentarians with a view to impress on them the need for concerted actions by their respective bodies to uphold international law. Their role in monitoring Government's compliance with their obligations under the Convention was of paramount importance.

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## **Annex I**

### **CALL TO ACTION**

#### **Realizing the inalienable rights of Palestinian people**

We, in civil society, meet at a moment of acute and rising crisis in the Middle East, with grave humanitarian, political, economic and social consequences. In response, we make the following commitments:

1. We demand a complete end to the 40-year occupation of the West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem.
2. We call for an immediate end to the isolation of Gaza.
3. We call for the immediate release of Palestinian parliamentarians and Cabinet ministers illegally kidnapped by Israeli occupation forces.
4. We call on Palestinians to renew their political unity within the Occupied Palestinian Territory and for immediate international recognition of such a reunified Palestinian polity.
5. We support our Palestinian civil society counterparts, and we remain very concerned about the threat to democracy posed by the recent banning of 103 Non Government Organizations.
6. We are strengthening our global campaign of boycott, divestment and sanctions as a non-violent effort to compel Israel to abide by all international laws and conventions, as stipulated in the 2005 call by the Palestinian civil society. We especially call for an end to arms trade with Israel.
7. We demand that governments meet their obligations under the Fourth Geneva Convention and under other relevant aspects of international law regarding Israeli policies. All signatories to the Fourth Geneva Convention have special obligations to implement the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice. We call on the European Union to organize a fact-finding mission to investigate Israeli violations of international law and conventions, both inside Israel and in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.
8. We mark 2008 as a year to commemorate Palestinian dispossession and expulsion, and a year committed to reversing those 60-year-old losses, with particular attention to the unrealized rights of Palestinian refugees. We call on the United Nations, the European Union and the Non-Aligned Movement to mark November 29, 2007 as an international day to commemorate the 1947 partition resolution and its consequences.

9. Finally, we call on global civil society, to join us with Palestinian communities in exile, inside Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory in mobilizing for a year of education and campaigning beginning on November 29, 2007. That year will include May 15, 2008, as a day of global mobilization to commemorate the Nakba, and the continuing dispossession and denial of Palestinian rights.

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## **Annex III**

### **List of participants**

#### **Speakers**

Abdullah Abdullah  
Member, Palestinian Legislative Council  
Ramallah

Abdelaziz Aboughosh  
Ambassador of Palestine to Malaysia  
Kuala Lumpur

Andreas van Agt  
Professor and former Prime Minister of The Netherlands  
Amsterdam

Bassam Al-Salhi  
General Secretary, Palestinian People's Party  
Member of the Palestinian Legislative Council  
Jerusalem

Mustafa Barghouti  
President, Palestinian National Initiative  
Member, Palestinian Legislative Council  
Ramallah

Sari Bashi  
Director, Gisha – Center for the Legal Protection of Freedom of Movement  
Tel Aviv

Phyllis Bennis  
Co-Chair, International Coordinating Network on Palestine  
Director, New Internationalism Project, Institute for Policy Studies  
Washington, D.C.

Carlos Camero Gonzalez  
Member of the European Parliament  
Brussels

Arlene Clemesha  
Professor of Arab Culture, University of São Paulo  
Director of International Relations, Institute for Arab Culture

São Paulo, Brazil

Ray Dolphin

Consultant on access issues for the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Occupied Palestinian Territory  
Jerusalem

Christopher Doyle

Director, Council for the Advancement of Arab-British Understanding  
London

Pierre Galand

Chairman, European Coordination of Committees and Association for Palestine  
Brussels

Angela Godfrey-Goldstein

Coordinator, Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions  
Jerusalem

Nadia Hilou

Member of Knesset (Labour-Meimad)  
Tel Aviv

Betty Hunter

Director, Palestine Solidarity Campaign  
London

Muhammad Jaradat

Coordinator, Badil Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights  
Bethlehem

Na'eem Jeenah

Spokesperson, Palestine Solidarity Committee of South Africa  
President, Muslim Youth Movement  
Johannesburg

Jamal Juma

Coordinator, Anti-Apartheid Wall Campaign

Mohammed Khatib

Principal organizer of the village of Bil'in  
West Bank

Wassim Khazmo

Communications Advisor, Negotiations Affairs Department  
Palestine Liberation Organization  
Ramallah

Richard Kuper

Spokesperson, European Jews for a Just Peace  
London

Jennifer Loewenstein

Member of the Board, Israeli Committee Against Home Demolitions  
Associate Director, Middle East Studies Program, University of Wisconsin-Madison and  
Senior Lecturer in modern Middle East studies  
Madison, Wisconsin

Victor Makari

Coordinator, Office for the Middle East and Asia Minor  
Presbyterian Church (USA)  
Louisville, Kentucky

Ivonne Mansbach

Member, Machsom Watch  
Jerusalem

Luisa Morgantini

Vice-President of the European Parliament  
Brussels

Eoin Murray

Coordinator, Trócaire (CARITAS)  
Dublin

Doris Musalem

Professor, University Autónoma Metropolitana of Mexico  
Mexico City

Jordi Pedret

Member of the Spanish Parliament  
Barcelona

Danny Rubinstein  
Member of the Editorial Board, *Ha'aretz*  
Tel Aviv

Sayyeda Salam  
Coordinator, One Voice Movement  
London

Tobias Schnebli  
Member, *Collectif Urgence Palestine*  
Geneva

Clare Short  
Member of the British Parliament for Birmingham Ladywood  
London

Kyriacos Triantaphyllides  
Member of the European Parliament  
Chairman of the Delegation for Relations with the Palestinian Legislative Council  
Brussels

Michel Warschawski  
Founder and Director, Alternative Information Center  
Jerusalem

Ghada Zughayar  
Assistant to the General Director for External Relations  
Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committees  
Ramallah

#### **Members of the Steering Committee**

Phyllis Bennis  
Co-Chair, International Coordinating Network on Palestine  
Director, New Internationalism Project, Institute for Policy Studies  
Washington, D.C.

Arlene Clemesha  
Professor of Arab Culture, University of São Paulo  
Director of International Relations, Institute for Arab Culture  
São Paulo, Brazil

Christopher Doyle  
Director, Council for the Advancement of Arab-British Understanding  
London

Alfonso Fraga-Pérez  
Secretary-General, Organization of Solidarity Among the Peoples of Africa, Asia and Latin America  
Havana

Pierre Galand  
Chairman, European Coordination of Committees and Association for Palestine  
Brussels

Angela Godfrey-Goldstein  
Action Advocacy Officer, Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions  
Jerusalem

Betty Hunter  
Director, Palestine Solidarity Campaign  
London

Muhammad Jaradat  
Coordinator, Badil Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights  
Bethlehem

Na'eem Jeenah  
Spokesperson, Palestine Solidarity Committee of South Africa  
President, Muslim Youth Movement  
Johannesburg

Jamal Juma  
Coordinator, Anti-Apartheid Wall Campaign

Richard Kuper



Spokesperson, Europeans for a Just Peace  
London

Jennifer Lowenstein  
Member of the Board, Israeli Committee Against Home Demolitions  
Associate Director, Middle East Studies Program, University of Wisconsin-Madison and  
Senior Lecturer in modern Middle East studies  
Madison, Wisconsin

Victor Makari  
Coordinator, Office for the Middle East and Asia Minor  
Presbyterian Church (USA)  
Louisville, Kentucky

Alessandra Mecozzi  
International Secretary, Federazione Impiegati Operai Metallurgici – Confederazione Generale  
Italiana del Lavoro (FIOM-CGIL)  
Rome

Eoin Murray  
Coordinator, Trócaire (CARITAS)  
Dublin

Doris Musalem  
Professor, University Autónoma Metropolitana of Mexico  
Mexico City

Catherine Pappas  
In-charge of Middle East/North Africa Program, Alternatives  
Quebec

Michel Warschawski  
Founder and Director, Alternative Information Center  
Jerusalem

Ghada Zughayar  
Assistant to the General Director for External Relations  
Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committees  
Ramallah

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

Paul Badji  
Permanent Representative of Senegal to the United Nations  
Chairman of the Committee

Rodrigo Malmierca Díaz  
Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations  
Vice-Chairman of the Committee

Hamidon Ali  
Permanent Representative of Malaysia to the United Nations

Riyad Mansour  
Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations  
Member

#### **Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations**

Angela Kane  
Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs

#### **Governments**

Argentina  
Luis Azpiazu, Counsellor  
Embassy to the European Union

Bahrain  
Hashim Hassan Albash, Ambassador to Belgium (non-resident)  
Embassy of Bahrain in Belgium

Bangladesh  
Ashud Ahmed, Counsellor  
Embassy of Bangladesh in Brussels

Belgium  
Hendrik van De Velve, First Secretary, Middle East and Africa Division  
Michel Versailles, First Secretary  
Katelijn de Nijs, Attaché  
United Nations Division  
Permanent Representation of Belgium to the EU

Benin  
Satumin Tonoukouin, Second Counsellor  
Embassy of Benin in Brussels

Bolivia  
Jessica Elio Mansilla, First Secretary,  
Chargé d'affaires  
Claudia Liebers Gil, Second Secretary  
Embassy of Bolivia in Belgium

Brazil  
André Aranha Corrêa do Lago, Minister-Counsellor  
Bernard de Garcia Klingl, Counsellor  
Mission of Brazil to the European Communities

Brunei Darussalam  
Dino Ayup, Second Secretary  
Mission of Brunei Darussalam in Brussels

Bulgaria  
Maria Donska, Counsellor  
Embassy of Bulgaria in Brussels

China  
Gao Deyi, Counsellor  
Li Yi, Third Secretary  
Chinese Mission to the European Union

Colombia  
Carlos Holmes Trujillo  
Ambassador of Colombia in Belgium

Djibouti  
Ali Bourhan, First Counsellor  
Embassy of Belgium in Belgium

Fiji  
Namita Khatri, Second Secretary  
Embassy of Fiji in Belgium

Ghana  
Nana Bema Kumi, Ambassador  
Carolyn Oppong-Ntiri, First Secretary  
Embassy of Ghana in Brussels

Greece  
Christina Valassopoulou  
Third Secretary, Permanent Representation of Greece to the EU

Honduras  
Ramon Custodio, Ambassador to Belgium  
Sonia Carpio Mendoza, Chargé d'affaires  
Ninfa Chacón Bendeck, Third Secretary  
Embassy of Honduras in Belgium

India  
Puneet R. Kundal, First Secretary  
Embassy of India, Brussels

Indonesia  
Nadjib Riphath Kesoema, Ambassador to Belgium  
Julang Pujianto, Minister Counsellor  
Conakry Marsono, Second Secretary  
Embassy of Indonesia in Belgium

Iraq  
Camellia Alwan, Third Secretary  
Embassy of the Republic of Iraq in Belgium

Japan  
Yuji Yamamoto, First Secretary  
Miya Shimotomai, Advisor  
Permanent Mission of Japan to the EU

Jordan  
Anjad Al-Mbdeen, Third Secretary  
Mission of Jordan to the European Communities

Kuwait  
Nabeela Al-Mulla, Ambassador to Belgium  
Mubarak Al-Hajri, Third Secretary  
Embassy of Kuwait in Belgium

Lao People's Democratic Republic  
Thongphachanh Sonnasinh, Ambassador  
Embassy of the Lao People's Democratic Republic in Belgium

Lebanon  
Adnan Mansour, Chargé d'affaires  
Rayan Saïd, Secretary  
Mission of Lebanon to the European Communities

Libyan Arab Jamahiriya  
Mohamed Ghellai, Counsellor  
Embassy of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya in Belgium

Madagascar  
Jeannot Rakotomalala, Ambassador to Belgium  
Norbert Richard Ibrahim, First Secretary  
Embassy of Madagascar to Belgium

Malaysia  
Hamidon Ali, Permanent Representative of Malaysia  
to the United Nations, New York and Head of Delegation  
Mohammad Klamal Yan Yahaya  
Ambassador to Belgium and Head of Mission  
to the European Communities  
Nur Ashikin Mohd Taib  
Deputy Chief of Mission/Minister Counsellor  
Embassy of Malaysia and Mission to the European Communities

Malta  
Stephen Borg, Counsellor (Political)  
Ian Causon, First Secretary  
Permanent Representation of Malta to the EU

Mauritius  
Parasram Gopaul, Counsellor  
Embassy of Mauritius in Brussels

Morocco  
Alem Menduar  
Ambassador to the European Union

Myanmar  
Ye Htut, First Secretary  
Embassy of the Union of Myanmar in Brussels

Namibia  
Egidius Hakwenye, Chargé d'affaires  
Elina Ndadi, First Secretary  
Embassy of the Republic of Namibia in Belgium

Oman  
Ghazi said Al Rawas, Ambassador to Belgium  
Dhikrayat Al Zakwani, First Secretary  
Nisreen Barakat, Translator  
Embassy of Oman in Belgium

Panama  
Pablo Garrido Araúz, Ambassador to Belgium  
Mirla Paniza, Ambassador in-charge of Special Affairs  
Bassel Sukkar  
Embassy of Panama in Belgium

Pakistan  
Saadia Altaf Qazi, Second Secretary  
Embassy of Pakistan in Brussels

Philippines  
Cristina G. Ortega, Ambassador to Belgium  
Ma. Angelina Sta. Catalina, Minister  
Deena Joy Amatong, Second Secretary  
Ma. Chona S. Idul, Information Officer  
Embassy of the Philippines in Belgium

Qatar  
Abdulla Falah Abdulla Al Dosari  
Ambassador to Belgium  
Embassy of the State of Qatar in Brussels

Republic of Korea  
Keum Chang-rok, First Secretary  
Embassy of the Republic of Korea in Belgium

Russian Federation  
Sergey Koslov  
Head, Middle East Peace Process Division  
Middle East and North Africa Department  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Grigory Orlov, Second Secretary  
Embassy of the Russian Federation to Belgium

Senegal  
Talla Fall, Chargé d'affaires  
Embassy of Senegal in Brussels

Singapore  
Joseph Teo, Deputy Chief of Mission  
Mission of Singapore in Brussels

Slovenia  
Majar Borović, First Secretary  
Embassy of Slovenia in Brussels

Sudan  
Najeib El Kheir Abdelwanab  
Ambassador to Brussels  
Hamdi H. Osman, Counsellor  
Embassy of the Republic of the Sudan in Brussels

Switzerland  
Pascale Baeriswyl  
Sarah Bernasconi  
Swiss Mission to the European Union

Syrian Arab Republic  
Mhd Ayman Soussan, Ambassador to the European Community  
Manal Ain Melk, Attaché  
Embassy of the Syrian Arab Republic in Brussels

Thailand  
Piyapak Sricharoen, Counsellor  
Royal Thai Embassy in Brussels

Tunisia  
Nada Meslamani, Counsellor  
Embassy of Tunisia in Brussels

Turkey  
Hakan Karacay, Second Secretary  
Permanent Delegation of Turkey to the EU

Ukraine  
Vsevolod Sobko  
Embassy of Ukraine in Brussels

Uruguay  
Cristina Gonzalez, Second Secretary  
Embassy of Uruguay in Brussels

Venezuela  
Miguel Sayago, Second Secretary  
Embassy of the Republic Bolivarian of Venezuela in Belgium

Viet Nam  
Nguyen Manh Cuong  
Embassy of Viet Nam in Brussels

Yemen  
Sultan Azazy, Minister Plenipotentiary  
Embassy of Yemen in Brussels

Zimbabwe  
Martin Tavenyika, First Secretary  
Embassy of the Republic of Zimbabwe in Brussels

## **Parliamentarians**

Belgian Parliament  
Fouad Lahssaini

Belgian Senate  
Anne-Marie Lizin, Senator

European Parliament  
Zairbre de Brún  
Gabriel Zimmer  
Triago Dal-Toe  
Mari Nishimura

Knesset  
Walid Sadik Haj Yahia, former Knesset member

NATO Parliamentary Assembly  
André Kahlmeyer  
Fellow for the Middle East, North Africa and the Gulf Region

## **International organizations**

Eastern Caribbean States  
Arnold Thomas, Minister Counsellor

European Commission  
Gwanda Jeffreys-Jones, Desk Officer for the Middle East Peace Process  
Jaromir Levicek, Desk Officer for the occupied Palestinian territory

Movement of Non-Aligned Countries   Rodrigo Malmierca Díaz  
Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations

Organization of the Islamic Conference   Shaher Awawdeh

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

Holy See  
P. Johann H. Vocking  
Louie J. Dujardin

## **Entities having received a standing invitation to participate as observers in the sessions and the work of the General Assembly and maintaining permanent observer missions at Headquarters**

Palestine  
Leila Shahid, General Delegate of Palestine to the European Union, Belgium and Luxembourg  
Fathi Al-Mohor, Deputy General Delegate   Soumaya Barghouti, General Delegate of Palestine to the Netherlands, The Hague  
Chawki Armali, former General Delegate to   Belgium and the European Union  
Mohammed Rabee, General Delegation of   Palestine, Italy

## **United Nations organs, agencies and bodies**

Food and Agriculture Organization of the   United Nations  
J. M. Pederson, Director  
Anna Thaysen  
André Matton  
FAO Liaison Office with the EU and Belgium

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights  
Darka Topali, Human Rights Officer  
Middle East and North Africa Unit  
Capacity Building and Field Operations Branch

United Nations Environment Programme  
Sylvie Motard, Senior Liaison Officer

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees  
Radhouane Nouicer, Director  
Middle East and North Africa Bureau  
UNHCR Headquarters, Geneva

United Nations Human Settlements Programme

Paul Taylor, Director

United Nations Office Brussels  
Antonio Vigilante, Director

United Nations Population Fund  
D. Hermans

United Nations Regional Information Centre for Western Europe  
Afsané Bassir-Pour, Director  
Jean-Luc Onckelinx, Information Officer  
EU and Benelux Desk  
Åsa Dahlvik, Public Information Assistant  
Linda Norsby

United Nations Relief and Works Agency Matthias Burchard, Head for Palestine Refugees in the Near East  
Representative Office, Geneva  
Nelly Comon, External Relations and Liaison Officer  
Representative Office, Brussels

World Bank  
Florian Kitt, Consultant

World Food Programme'  
Gemmo Lodesani, Director

World Health Organization  
Frank George, External Relations Officer  
EU Affairs

#### **Civil society organizations**

A Different Jewish Voice  
Max Wieselmann  
Alfred Feberwee

Action for Peace – Italy  
Roberto Giudici  
Bruna Orlandi

Acsur Las Segovias  
Magaly Thill

Actieplatform Palestina  
Wim Leysens

Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Organization  
Paulette Pierson Mathy

Aktivamente  
Teresa Maisano  
Alessandro Bernardini  
Americo Cavallo

All India Peace and Solidarity Organization  
Prabir Pkkayastha

Alternative Information Center  
Michael Warschawski

Alternatives  
Catherine Pappas

Amnesty International  
François Schwan – AI Belgique francophone  
Thyr Buelins – AI Vlaanderen  
Pieter Stockmans – AI Flanders  
Petra Schöning – AI German Section

Arabs Against Discrimination  
Emad Gad Badras

Artistes contre le Mur  
Margaretha Van Den Bempt

Asociación Europea de Cooperación con Palestina  
Raquel Donaira Mula

Association belgo-palestinienne  
Daniel Dekkers  
Monjia Tanazefi  
Joseph Graindorge  
Edward Wuilquot  
Ruth Van Roosmaelen  
Monique Munting  
Pol Charles  
Marc Clausse  
Nada Dajjani  
Yasminah Hamlaoui  
Camille Herremans  
Eric Detilleux  
Lucien Belvaux  
Stephanie Cachapa  
Dominique Vercheval  
Nadia Farkh  
Ludwig Zielinski  
François Jadoul  
Marianne Blue  
Caroline Ledant  
Vincent Eggerickx-Busschaert

Association France Palestine Solidari  
Sylviane de Wangen  
Robert Kissous

Association Médecins du Monde France  
Marie-Ange Silicani

Association of World Council of Churches related Development  
Organisations in Europe  
Kirsten Hjørholm Sorensen

Association pour Jérusalem  
Danielle Bidard  
Lucien Champenois

Association pour un Liban Laïque  
Ralph Coeckelberghs

Association Repères  
Karim Amezian Fondateur

Associazione Giuristi Democratici  
Marcell Fahil

Associazione per la Pace  
Laura Cappelli

ASBL Citoyenneté Active  
Mounia Moursni

Avocats Sans Frontières  
Anne-Sophie Oger

BADIL Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights  
Muhammad Jaradat  
Rania Al-Madi

Bar Association of Liege  
Therer MeEric

Belgian interuniversity cooperation with universities in Palestine (BICUP)  
Paul Jacobs

Bethlehem Society for Rehabilitation and Specialist Surgery  
Sonia Robbins

Broederlijk Delen  
Brigitte Herremans

Centre culturel arabe en Pays de Liège  
Nagi Sabbagh

Centre de droit international  
François Dubuisson

Centre des cultures de Bruxelles  
Tatiana De Barelli

Centrum voor Ontwikkeling Documentatie en Informatie Palestijnen  
Myriam Vandecan

CIMADE Service oecuménique d'entraide  
Alain Bosc

Cités Unies France  
Simona Giovetti

Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers  
Martin Nagler

Collectif Urgence Palestine  
Tobias Schnebli

Comité de solidarité avec le peuple palestinien  
Odette Snoy  
Philippe de Henau  
Bruno Sauvage

Comité de soutien au peuple palestinien  
Dominique Waroquiez

Comité pour une paix juste au Proche-Orient  
Francesco Perroni  
Lucien Legrand

Communaute urbaine de Dunkerque  
Rose-Anne Bisiaux

Composantes de la communauté Arabe de Belgique  
Fadi Benaddi

Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro  
Gian Franco Benzi

Confédération générale du Travail  
Jean-François Courbe

Conseil de la jeunesse d'expression française/Comité pour les relations internationales  
Aicha Tarfi

Cooperation for the Development of Emerging Countries  
Monica Bianchi

Coordinationale nationale d'action pour la paix et la Démocratie  
Ghys Arnaud

Council for the Advancement of Arab-British Understanding  
Christopher Doyle

Culture Trois  
Charik Mustapha

Cyprus Solidarity Committee  
Vera Polycarpou

Danish Palestinian Friendship Association  
Fathi El-Abed

Démocratie ou barbarie  
Claire Pahaut

Ecolo  
Ahmed Mouhssin

ECI  
Sussana Kokkonen

Elijah Trust  
Linda Jack

European Jews for a Just Peace  
Richard Kuper

European Left  
Tatiana Calari

Euro-Med Movement



Joe Mifsud

Europeans throughout the World  
Simon-Pierre Nothomb

Fédération générale du Travail de Belgique  
Daniel Van Daele  
Thierry Aerts  
Lieven Vanhoutte

Federazione Impiegati Operai  
Metallurgici –Confederazione  
Generale Italiana del Lavoro  
Alessandra Mecozzi  
Roberto Giudici

Franciscan Center for Development and Mission  
Christof Hoyler  
Louis Bohte

Fraternité Association  
Imad Bayane  
Houssin Benammi

French NGO Platform for Palestine  
Florence Giard  
Maylis Labusquiere

Friends of Al-Aqsa  
Ismail Patel

Forum Nord-Sud  
Christine Massemin

Génération Palestine  
Anaïs Antreasyan  
Caroline Ledant

German Palestine Society  
Christa Clamer  
Ellen Rohlfis

GLSHA - Center for the Legal Protection of Freedom of Movement  
Sari Bashi

Giuristi Democratici  
Micol Savia

Groupe des retraités éducateurs sans frontières  
Yvonne Perrault  
Legarde Huguette

Groupe citoyen de Nivelles pour une Paix Juste au Proche-Orient  
Anne Mottart

Groupe Palestinien Santé  
Olivette Mikolajczak

Groupe pour une paix Juste au Proche-Orient de Ittre  
Geneviève Freres

Groupe pour une Suisse sans armée  
Tobias Schnebli

Humanistic Peace Council  
An Polak

Human Rights March  
Brita Bastogi

Human Rights Watch  
Claire Ivers

Institute for Arab Culture  
Arlene Elizabeth Clemesha

INTAL  
Mathy Léa

Integratives Forum E.V. – I.F. Hannover  
Rolf Gössling

Hildegard Gösling  
Eberhard Wolckenhaar  
Monika Wolckenhaar

International Forum for Justice and Peace  
Andreas A.M. van Agt  
Berend Smoes

In Cité Mondi ASBL  
Alain De Clerck

Islamic Relief Worldwide  
Sarah Douik

Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions – UK  
Angela Godfrey-Goldstein  
Jennifer Loewenstein  
Linda Ramsden

Jews for Justice for Palestinians  
Irene Bruegel  
Arthur Goodman

Kinder USA  
Dalel Diane Mohamed

La Pensée libre de la Néthen  
Christiane Schomblond

LAP Leuven  
Salwa Othman

Le Centre démocrate humaniste  
Dominique Weerts

Ligue française pour la défense des droits de l'homme et du citoyen  
Maryse Artiguelong

London One State Group at SOAS Palestine  
Omar Suliman-Jabary Salamanca

MCPalestine  
Betul Kurtoglu

Medical Aid for Palestinians  
Maria Mouskou  
Darrin Walker

Ministry for Peace  
Ahlam Akram

Missionszentrale der Franziskaner  
Margarethe Mehren

Mouvement Citoyen pour la Palestine  
Nordine Saïdi  
Nathalie Preudhomme

Mouvement de Femmes  
Fotoula Ioannidis

Movement against Racism and for Friendship among Peoples (France)  
Renée Le Mignot

Movimiento por la Paz (MPDL)  
Francisco Segovia  
Francisca Sauquillo

Movimondo  
Giulia Franchi  
Luca Tommasini

Netherlands Palestine Committee  
Win Lankamp  
Sonja Zimmermann  
Kees Wagtendonk

Neturei Karta International  
Moshe Cohen (US)  
Eleazer Hochhausser (UK)

Alter Hochhausser (UK)  
Paul Simon Hirsch

Olof Palme International Foundation  
Anna Balletbò  
Svjetlana Duric

One Voice Movement (EUROPE)  
Sayyeda Salam (UK)

Organisation Mondial Contre la Torture (OMCT)  
Laétitia Sedou

Organization of Solidarity among the Peoples of Africa, Asia and Latin America  
Alfonso Fraga Perez

Oxfam GB – Middle East, Eastern Europe  
Commonwealth of Independent States  
Regional Centre  
Richard Stanforth

Oxfam Novib  
Suying Lai

Oxfam Solidarité  
Hilt Teuwen

Oxfam - Wereldwinkels vzw  
Eline Demey

Paix juste au Proche-Orient  
Lilian Catelin  
Christiane Schubert

Palästinensische Gemeinde Duesseldorf e.V.  
Wael Al Saad

Palestine Solidarity Campaign  
Elizabeth Mary Hunter  
Jennifer Najar

Palestine Solidarity Committee of South Africa  
Na'eem Jeenah

Palestinian Grassroot Anti-Apartheid Wall Campaign  
Jamal Juma

Palestinian NGO Network  
Allam Jarrar

Parti de la gauche européenne  
Gregorio Liberté  
Tatiana Calori

Pax Christi International  
Paul Lansu  
Marcel De Prins (Vlaanderen)  
Giovanni de Weerd (Vlaanderen)  
Ferdinando Capovilla (Italia)

Portsmouth Network for a Just Settlement of the Arab-Israeli Conflict  
Angus Geddes

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)  
Victor Makari

Présence et action culturelles  
Dominique Surleau

Progetto Sviluppo CGIL  
Sergio Bassoli

Quaker Council for European Affairs  
Martina Weitsch

Rabbis for Human Rights  
Chaim A. Cohen

Réseau euro-méditerranéen des droits de l'homme  
Sandrine Grenier

Rete Ebrei Contro l'Occupazione (ECO)  
Ester Fano

Service Civil International (Belgium)  
Stephanie Lambrecht  
Malika Dragh  
Valerie Mouton  
Anaele Hermans

Simon Wiesenthal Centre  
Stanley Trevor Samuels

Society for Austro-Arab Relations  
Fritz Edlinger

Solidar  
Conny Reuter

Solidarité socialiste  
Gladys Cifuentes  
Michelle Warriner

Studiedienst  
Kathelijn de Decker

Trócaire (CARITAS)  
Eoin Murray

Union des Progressistes Juifs de Belgique  
Henri Wajnblum  
Thérèse Frankfort-Liebmann  
Adi Raz

Union juive française pour la paix  
Viviane Cohen  
Mireille Mendes France  
Georges Gumpel  
Liliana Cordova Kaczerginsky

UNISON  
Nick Sigler

Vlaams Palestina Komitee  
Ria Cabus  
Johan Bosman

Vrede vzw  
Soetkin van Muylem  
Ludo De Brabander

War on Want  
Ruth Tanner

Women in Black  
Amalia Sangiorgi (Turin)  
Agnese Manca (Turin)  
Margherita Granero (Turin)  
Daniele Giulia (Turin)  
Simona Ricciardelli (Napoli)  
Lily van den Bergh (The Netherlands)  
Edith Rubenstein (Belgium)  
Maria Rita Fontanella

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom  
Sancia Gaetani

World Council of Churches  
Michel Nseir

#### **Public**

Jennifer Dixon, independent volunteer/supporter/researcher within the civil society network  
Piere Urbain - Catholic University of Louvain  
Ziyad Abualrob - Catholic University of Louvain  
Stefan Deconinck - Katholieke Universiteit van Brussel (KUB)  
Hocine Ouazraf - Facultés universitaires Saint-Louis - Centres d'études sociologiques  
Hildegard De Vuyst - Royal Flemish Theatre (KVS)  
Michel Vincineau, Professor Emeritus  
Maria Boffito

Barbara Antonelli  
Anne-Catherine Calonne  
Andreana Verdelocco  
Nicole Urfels  
Paola Pigafetta  
Stéphanie Gomin  
Claudia Ogianni  
Eisa Salloum  
Romano Petronilla  
Sirio Conte  
Francesca Citarelli  
Rima Othman  
Ornella Clementi  
Daniel G. Slatopolsky  
Emilie Van Laer  
Marinelli Sanvito  
Monjia Tanazefi  
Virginie Cossoul  
Elbousaksaki Sabah  
Manuela Carrera  
Serge Palotai  
Guillaume Defosse  
Colle Gauthier  
Elisa Claessens  
Shadjareh Haseoud  
Yvette van Hauwe  
María Rosa Martínez Méndez

### Media

Sally Fitzharris, freelance journalist  
Veronique Vercheval, photographer  
Richard Donk, Reformatorisch Dagblad  
Jan Sliva, *Associated Press*  
Paul Taylor, European Affairs Editor, *Reuters*  
Mark John, Senior Correspondent EU and NATO, *Reuters*  
Daniel Schwammenthal - *The Wall Street Journal Europe*  
Kjell Karlsson Kihberg, freelance correspondent  
Christian Van Rompaey - En Marche  
Karin Kirste, Producer, Austrian Broadcasting Corporation/Radio and Television  
Matthys Nieuwenhuis, *Radio Netherlands*

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## Annex III

### Summaries of workshops

1. The representatives of civil society organizations in the workshop “Fortieth anniversary of the occupation: Building on action taken by civil society and moving forward; connecting with worldwide peace and social movements and initiatives to uphold international law” recalled that in 2005 in Durban, the Palestinian civil society organizations made a statement with one position and one message: the Boycott-Divestment-Sanctions (BDS) campaign. It was very important to supporters of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to continue to call for unity. The ANC in South Africa had a very clear four-part strategy: to mobilize the local population for a symbolic arms struggle; a diplomatic strategy; mobilization of global civil society; and a very defined, clear and direct leadership about how each of those parts fitted together. So, when there was a call for divestment, civil society responded, not because all the details were spelled out, but because the broad framework of divestment was part of the strategy put forward globally to build a non-racial South Africa. In some countries boycott was not feasible, but divestment was, and in some places sanctions were possible. BDS as a whole was a unifying strategy. The principle to rely on was the principle of equality, whether it was one state, two states, no state or three states. Civil society should turn to parliamentarians to ask for the establishment of a Committee to ensure respect for the Fourth Geneva Convention and to meet as quickly as possible.
2. The workshop on the theme “Engaging parliaments and parliamentarians, mainstreams parties and movements, elected local officials and trade unionists”, stressed the importance of building networks in trade unions and to improve the capacity of civil society to apply more effective pressure on parliamentarians to deepen their interventions. The need was also stressed to apply international humanitarian law to violations of the Fourth Geneva Convention, as well as the International Court of Justice advisory opinion. It was therefore important to stress the consequences of not implementing the Fourth Geneva Convention namely of growing insecurity and instability with its effects felt well beyond the Middle East region. Interventions needed to be focused, needed to understand the context and discourse of parliamentary discussion and not simply abstract demands. The need to increase coordination and build a network of parliamentarians across Europe was emphasized.
3. The workshop on the theme “Enhancing European contribution to international peace efforts – The European Year of Intercultural Dialogue in 2008”, stressed the need to take positive action to reframe the conflict while holding Israel accountable for its responsibilities under international law, and to take up the issue of war crimes. The Arab Peace Initiative should be supported. The need for dialogue with all parties was highlighted as recognized by the Foreign Affairs Select Committee of the United Kingdom House of Commons in mid-August when it argued that the decision of not speaking with Hamas in 2007 following the Mecca Agreement was counterproductive. Policies of isolating political groups produced an environment even more conducive to extremism. The EU should take immediate steps to bring its own aid policy in line with its declared foreign policy objectives of furthering human rights and facilitating Palestinian self-determination. It should include the following elements: (a) donors should not allow aid to facilitate Israel’s strategy of maximum control with minimum responsibility; (b) donors should focus on the duty to protect civilians; (c) the EU should develop a more coherent strategy towards Palestinian civil society to assist in the process of developing a democratic and secular Palestinian State. An international campaign should be started to open Gaza, otherwise its future would be horrific. Finally, it was more important to focus on the occupation than intercultural exchange.
4. Participants in the workshop “Strengthening campaigns to end the occupation and to realize the inalienable rights of the Palestinian People” stressed that there were policies important to a global strategy to apply the international Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid to the situation in the occupied Palestinian territory. That did not mean to make a comparison between South Africa and the reality in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. There were ways to identify trends and methods of control of the bantustanization, which were reminders of the apartheid system. Bil’in was a symbol on how a struggle with little resources could be used for maximum efficiency. On the level of strategy, there was a general agreement among speakers and participants about the centrality of the issue of unity of the Palestinian Authority and Hamas. Centrality of international law was a main tool in advocacy and struggle

to legitimize Palestinian rights. On the level of objectives and priorities, Gaza was chosen first as an urgent topic for international mobilization; second, to continue to emphasize the general slogan of “Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions”, and to identify specific targets; third, the education task should continue, specially in the framework of the so-called clash of civilizations, by deconstructing false images of the Arab world and the Palestinians.

5. Participants in the workshop “Empowering women and women’s organizations to play a decisive role in promoting Israel-Palestinian peace”, focused on the dual oppression of Palestinian women: facing a patriarchal society and as any occupied people facing Israeli oppression, as well as Palestinian and Israeli women as activists. The impact of checkpoints on women was discussed, as well as the breakdown of Palestinian families as a result of Israeli policy, when families in the West Bank and Jerusalem could not live together or visit each other and their children were not allowed to visit their father. It was noted that there was an increase of early marriages among Palestinian girls, an increasing number of Palestinian girls dropping out of school, and an increase of domestic violence against Palestinian women by Palestinian men as a result of frustration and as a direct consequence of the occupation, as well as an increase in honour killings. Three concrete proposals were presented: first, one activity that was already taking place, a tribunal on Israel and international law with a focus on Palestinian women and children in Israel, that took place on 26 and 27 January in Denmark; a call for an International Women’s Conference to discuss the situation of Palestinian women and the occupation; and thirdly, to declare every 8 March a global day of solidarity with Palestinian women.

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