



Secretary-General

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Secretary-General, in Message to Special Meeting of Palestinian Rights Committee, Urges Israeli, Palestinian Leadership to Find Way Back to Negotiations

Following is UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's message, as delivered by Oscar Fernández-Taranco, Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, to the Special Meeting of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People to Commemorate the 10th Anniversary of the [Advisory Opinion](#) of the International Court of Justice on the Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, in New York, today.

It is a pleasure to convey my greetings to the [Special Meeting](#) of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.

The meeting takes place against the backdrop of an increasingly precarious situation on the ground. I have strongly condemned the recent murders of [Israeli](#) and [Palestinian](#) teenagers. There can be no justification for the deliberate killing of civilians. I am also concerned about the tragic repercussions on the civilian population due to ongoing operations. I reiterate my call on all parties to abide by their obligations under international law and to refrain from any actions that could further escalate this highly tense situation.

It is critical that the Israeli and Palestinian leadership, with the support of the international community, do their utmost to find their way back to meaningful negotiations. Any action to prejudice the outcome of final status negotiations must be avoided.

In its [advisory opinion](#), the International Court of Justice determined that the wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, and its associated regime, is contrary to international law.

The [opinion](#) also makes it clear that all States are under an obligation not to recognize the illegal situation resulting from the construction of the wall, and that all State parties to the [Fourth Geneva Convention](#) have the additional obligation to ensure compliance by Israel with international humanitarian law. I reiterate my call on all Member States to comply with these obligations.

The implications of the wall go far beyond its legality. The wall severely restricts Palestinian movement and access throughout the West Bank, cuts off land and access to resources needed for Palestinian development, and continues to undermine agricultural and rural livelihoods throughout the West Bank. Moreover, the wall and increased settlement expansion have worsened the fragmentation of the Palestinian Territory, compounding the increasing isolation of East Jerusalem from the rest of the Territory.

Based on the General Assembly's request following the advisory opinion, I established the Office of the Register of Damage caused by the wall, which became operational in 2008. It has collected 42,600 claims and over 1.1 million supporting documents. I am hopeful that it can finish the collection of claims by the end of 2015.

Both Israelis and Palestinians have the right to live in peace and security, with dignity and prosperity. Violence on all sides must stop. Adhering to the [advisory opinion](#) is an essential step towards ending the occupation that began in 1967; making way for an independent, sovereign, viable and prosperous Palestinian State, living side-by-side in peace with Israel within secure and recognized borders; and a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East. Thank you.

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