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**PERMANENT MISSION OF THAILAND
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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Statement

by

His Excellency Mr. Chayapan Bamrungphong

Chargé d' Affaires,

Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative,

of the Kingdom of Thailand to the United Nations

on Agenda item 38 “the question of Palestine”

New York, 23 November 2015



*Building Bridges for Partnership
THAILAND*

ASEAN Candidate for the UN Security Council 2017 – 2018

Mr. President,

On the 9th of September this year at the High-level Forum on Culture of Peace in the Trusteeship Council Chamber, a duet of Israeli and Palestinian musicians performed several melodious and joyful songs. That beautiful moment gave us a glimpse of hope for a peaceful coexistence of these two great nations, despite the current heartbreaking and hope-dimming reality on the ground.

We are alarmed by the escalating violence at holy sites in the West Bank and Jerusalem as well as other violent incidents in several cities. The figures of death tolls and casualties on both sides gave us all cause for grave concern. The long-standing conflict in the Middle East for decades has claimed too many innocent lives and deprived many young generations of hope for a bright future. Both sides cannot afford further loss of their invaluable human capitals, let alone the mass damage done to holy sites, historical heritages of mankind, public facilities and private properties.

The confrontations were fueled by incitement and hate speech. Irresponsible rhetoric and distorted facts in social media have worsened the vicious cycle of tension and inflamed violence. They also create profound mistrust that erodes the possibility of a political solution and the path towards a just and lasting peace.

The Kingdom of Thailand joins the international call on all sides to respect the sanctity of all holy sites and to cease any attempt to change the status quo at these sites. We also stress the importance of ending inflammatory rhetoric and provocative actions that will further exacerbate the tensions.

Mr. President,

The current crisis cannot be resolved through security measures alone. Also, violence cannot be solved by violence, which will only heighten tensions and lead to catastrophic outcome for all concerned. Only by working towards a lasting solution through political means will ensure safety of the people and achieve true peace and security in the region.

It is important to promote and support meaningful dialogue and negotiations. The parties involved must exercise maximum restraint and refrain from provocative actions. We urge both sides to genuinely commit to the path of negotiation and to reinvigorate the peace process so as to achieve a comprehensive solution to this decades-long conflict without further delay.

While we are still in the absence of peace process, it is a must to rebuild trust and confidence and to create an atmosphere conducive to future negotiation. In this regard, The Kingdom of Thailand strongly supports the continued efforts of the Secretary-General and regional leaders to normalize the situation on the ground. We also believe that the Quartet can play a crucial role to contribute to progress towards the resumption of peace process.

Mr. President,

Violence results in human misery. The dire humanitarian situation on the ground is of grave concern to us. We call on all parties to respect international law, in particular international human rights law and international humanitarian law. We also join the international call for an unimpeded access of humanitarian aids to Gaza, which must be reconnected to the rest of the world. There is also an urgent need to address the issue of Palestinian refugees. We take this opportunity to commend countries in the region and beyond that have generously embraced and sheltered those in needs.

On our part, Thailand swiftly responded to the Gaza flash appeal by contributing 100,000 USD to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East UNRWA, and an additional 100,000 USD to the Palestine Red Crescent Society, so as to alleviate the humanitarian crisis caused by the deteriorating situation in Gaza, the West Bank, Jerusalem and East Jerusalem. In addition, Thailand joined several countries to commemorate the International Year of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. An exhibition entitled “Solidarity and Support for the Palestinian Refugees” was organized in Bangkok in December last year to highlight their plight and raise support for them.

Mr. President,

We believe that the General Assembly resolutions on this important issue, when duly observed and implemented, constitute an effective means to prevent exacerbation of this protracted conflict. We therefore support and will vote in favour of all the resolutions under these two agenda items. As friend of both the Israeli and the Palestinian peoples, we wish that there would be no more suffering for them. We reaffirm our support to advancing a two-State solution, with Israelis and Palestinians living side by side in peace, harmony and prosperity.
