



**CHAIR OF
THE COORDINATING BUREAU
OF THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT**



Statement by

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On behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement

**General Assembly Joint Debate under agenda items 37: The Situation in the Middle East
and 38: The Question of Palestine**

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In the Name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful

Mr. President

I have the honor to speak on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).

Today is the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian people, a solemn occasion for renewing our shared commitment to a just and lasting solution for the question of Palestine and a durable peace in the Middle East. NAM fully supports the observance of this day, as it provides an opportunity to reflect on the situation of decades of denial of the rights of the Palestinian people and nearly a half century of a foreign occupation that has subjected the Palestinian people to gross and systematic human rights violations and untold pain and suffering, which are at the heart of the Palestinian question and so many other issues in the Middle East.

The Non-Aligned Movement takes this opportunity to reaffirm its longstanding solidarity with the Palestinian people and reiterates its support for the realization of their legitimate national aspirations and inalienable right to self-determination and the right to their independent and viable State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem as its capital, on the basis of relevant international resolutions and references, as well as a just solution for the plight of the Palestine refugees in accordance with resolution 194 (III).

Mr. President,

It is both regrettable and alarming that the situation in Occupied Palestine, including East Jerusalem, continued to dramatically deteriorate over the past year, as a result of Israel's crimes and violations against the Palestinian people.

Too many generations have already been scarred by this tragic conflict and too many innocents have suffered and it is beyond time to bring this tragedy to an end. Peace and justice must prevail over ongoing occupation and conflict. This requires concerted, collective efforts, with international law and moral responsibility at the helm to end this abhorrent Israeli occupation and impunity that has inflicted so much misery.

In this regard, the Movement draws urgent attention to the dangerous situation being precipitated in Occupied East Jerusalem, including at Al-Haram Al-Sharif (Al-Aqsa Mosque compound), by the actions of Israel, the occupying Power, and Israeli extremist elements, including Israeli settlers. The Movement strongly condemns all acts of violence and the provocations and incitement by Israeli occupying forces and extremists at this sensitive holy site, which threaten to further destabilize the already-fragile situation with far-reaching consequences for the region and beyond. NAM calls for full respect for the sanctity of Al-Haram Al-Sharif and for the historic status quo and arrangements at this holy site by all parties. NAM calls for respect for the rights of Muslim worshipers at Al-Haram Al-Sharif to worship in peace, free from violence, threats and provocations.

NAM believes that the continuation of Israel's illegal settlement campaign, which is at the core of this foreign occupation, remains the major obstacle to peace, undermining all efforts to resume a credible peace process, and casting serious doubts on Israel's alleged commitment to end its foreign occupation of the Palestinian land and achieve the two-State solution on the basis of the pre-1967 borders and a just, lasting and comprehensive peace. NAM calls, once again, upon the international community to act collectively and forthwith to compel Israel, the occupying-Power, to cease these destructive and illegal practices and to abide by all of its obligations under international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. The Security Council, in particular, has clear responsibilities in this regard.

NAM must also express its grave concern over the critical situation of the Palestine refugees. According to the Commissioner-General's report, the occupation in Palestine continues to adversely define every aspect of the daily lives of youth and camp residents, affecting everything from security and freedom of movement to livelihoods and employment. Palestine refugees continued to face serious protection challenges due to ongoing occupation, armed conflict and displacement and are sinking deeper into poverty and desperation. NAM expresses its deep appreciation for the invaluable work done by UNRWA in all fields of operations in assisting the Palestine refugees in all fields of operation, in spite of widespread instability in the region and serious financial challenges. We reaffirm that UNRWA remains essential for ameliorating the tragic plight of the Palestine refugees, pending a just solution based on resolution 194 (III), and call upon the international community to support the Agency.

Mr. President,

It is necessary to also highlight the extremely critical situation in the Gaza Strip, where the entire Palestinian civilian population, the majority Palestine refugees, is being collectively punished by the illegal and inhumane Israeli blockade. This now eight-year blockade continues

to affect every aspect of life in Gaza, destroying the economy, obstructing humanitarian aid and basic materials from reaching them, impeding reconstruction of the thousands of destructed homes and infrastructure, and obstructing economic and social recovery.

At the same time, we must express our grave concerns over the plight of the thousands of Palestinian prisoners and detainees, including children and women, being held in the occupation's jails. We call for respect of their human rights in accordance with international law, call for international monitoring of their conditions, and call for their release.

NAM calls on the international community to uphold its moral, political and legal responsibilities to bring an end to Israel's illegal policies and practices against the Palestinian people, and calls upon Israel, the occupying power, to immediately and fully abide by its obligations under the Fourth Geneva Convention, all of the relevant UN resolutions, including Security Council resolution 1860 (2009).

Mr. President,

Lebanon also continues to suffer from consecutive Israeli violation of its borders and incursion against its territory, followed by subsequent years of occupation and aggression. Unfortunately, Israel still continues to violate Lebanese airspace, intensifying its incursions over Lebanon. Such activities are a blatant violation of Lebanese sovereignty and the relevant international resolutions, in particular resolution 1701 (2006). The provisions of that resolution should be implemented in a manner that guarantees the consolidation of the foundations of stability and security in Lebanon and prevents Israel from undertaking its daily violations of Lebanese sovereignty.

With regard to the occupied Syrian Golan, the Movement condemns all the measures taken by Israel, the occupying Power, to alter the legal, physical and demographic status of the occupied Syrian Golan, which have intensified after the outbreak of Syrian crisis. The Non-Aligned Movement demands once again that Israel abide by resolution 497 (1981) and withdraw fully from the occupied Syrian Golan to the borders of 4 June 1967, in implementation of resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973).

Mr. President,

In closing, NAM wishes to once again urgently appeal for collective international action, particularly by the Security Council, based on its Charter duties, to justly and decisively address the long simmering Arab-Israeli conflict, with the question of Palestine at its core. NAM supports the resolutions of this Assembly for the peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine and calls on the Security Council to implement its own resolutions to contribute to the realization of a just, lasting, comprehensive and peaceful solution and the realization of long-overdue justice and independence for the Palestinian people.