



PERMANENT MISSION OF SOUTH AFRICA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS
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His Excellency Mr. Fodé Seck,

On behalf of the Government of South Africa, I wish to convey the attached statement from the South African Government for the United Nations International Day of Solidarity with the People of Palestine which is commemorated annually on the 29th of November.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurance of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Mamabolo'.

Kingsley N. Mamabolo
Ambassador and Permanent Representative
of the Republic of South Africa

His Excellency Mr. Fodé Seck
Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of
the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People
United Nations
New York

STATEMENT ON THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF SOLIDARITY WITH THE PEOPLE OF PALESTINE 2015

The South African Government joins the international community today in commemorating the United Nations International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.

South Africa is concerned about the intensifying and increasing violence between the Israelis and Palestinians which has now spread across the country from the Old City of Jerusalem. This poses a threat to the realisation of the two-state solution. The violence is an unfortunate consequence of the failure by the world community to bring an end to the illegal occupation of Palestinian territory. South Africa calls on the Israeli and Palestinian leadership to engage in constructive dialogue to resolve all outstanding issues. No amount of force will ever extinguish the burning desire of the Palestinians for a homeland of their own.

In 1977, the United Nations passed the resolution that inaugurated the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian people and we have steadily seen increase in the levels of international solidarity throughout the world. There has been groundswell of international support for the Palestinian struggle. Evidence of this can be seen through the growing number of Parliaments of EU member states voting with overwhelming majorities to extend recognition to the State of Palestine.

South Africa is proud to have been among the overwhelming majority that voted for the raising of the Palestinian flag in front of the United Nations headquarters.

South Africa has recognised the State of Palestine since 1995 and we support international efforts aimed at the establishment of a viable Palestinian state, existing side by side in peace with Israel within internationally recognised borders, based on those existing on 4 June 1967, prior to the outbreak of the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

South African-Palestinian bilateral relations can be traced back to the days of the liberation struggle, when the African National Congress maintained friendly and fraternal relations with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) which was also leading its own struggle for self-determination and independence against Israel.

The on-going Palestinian moves to internationalise the struggle, including accession to international organisations and treaties such as the ICC, are injecting a new dynamic into the pursuit of the Palestinian cause. It however remains to be seen what impact these developments might have in forcing Israel's hand to relax its inflexible negotiating position.

South Africa will continue unabated its support for the freedom of Palestine and South Africa remains steadfast in her support for the just cause of the Palestinian people and regrets the loss of life of both Israeli and Palestinian citizens who were victims of the recent spate of violence engulfing the Holy Land and urges both parties to recommit themselves to negotiations in order to realise the two state-solution with Israel and Palestine living side by side in peace and harmony.