

STATEMENT BY
HIS EXCELLENCY MR. CHRISTOPHER GRIMA
RAPPORTEUR
COMMITTEE ON THE EXERCISE OF THE INALIENABLE RIGHTS OF THE
PALESTINIAN PEOPLE
INTRODUCING THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE
TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Agenda item 38: Question of Palestine
70th session of the General Assembly

23 November 2015

Mr. President,
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is an honour for me, in my capacity as Rapporteur of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, to present to the General Assembly the Annual Report of the Committee, contained in document A/70/35. Allow me to summarize each section of the report.

After the introduction of the report, Chapters II and III outline the mandate entrusted to the Committee by the General Assembly and the organization of the Committee's work during the year.

Under Chapter IV, the report reviews the situation relating to the question of Palestine as monitored by the Committee and contains a detailed factual account of developments that have taken place in the reviewed period, which ended on 6 October 2015. The most recent events will be reflected in the next report.

Chapter V contains the action taken by the Committee, including the Chairman's participation in General Assembly and Security Council debates, statements issued by the Committee and its Bureau, and the continued dialogue between the Committee and members of intergovernmental organizations. This Chapter also informs about the various international meetings and conferences organized by the Committee, as well as other mandated activities carried out by the Division for Palestinian Rights.

Chapter VI provides an overview of the work done over the year by the Department of Public Information in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 69/22 of 25 November 2014.

The last chapter of the report contains the **Conclusions and Recommendations of the Committee**. In view of the faltered bilateral negotiations, the Committee would welcome a comprehensive regional solution – conceivably with support from a reinvigorated Quartet – that includes greater engagement with key Arab States. The Committee also would urge the Security Council and the General Assembly to give positive consideration to all proposals that endeavour to present a way out of the current impasse.

Regarding the reconstruction of Gaza after the 2014 war, the Committee would call for immediate steps to solidify the ceasefire and to accelerate reconstruction efforts, focusing on the physical rebuilding and delivery of affordable energy and sufficient water and the amelioration of dire socio-economic conditions. The Committee would call upon the United Nations and donors to secure funding for the long term, including for UNRWA, and there would be need for continued funding for the Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism.

Welcoming the fact-finding mission established by the Human Rights Council and the report of the United Nations Independent Commission of Inquiry on the 2014 Gaza Conflict as important steps towards bringing accountability for violations of humanitarian and human rights law, the Committee would call on the relevant bodies and authorities to vigorously follow up on the findings and recommendations with a view to ending impunity.

The Committee would welcome the appropriate stance by the European Union on the importation of products from illegal Israeli settlements, and would encourage the EU and other organizations and States to adopt and implement such policies that guarantee the adherence to international conventions in regard of illegal settlements in occupied areas, particularly the Fourth Geneva Convention. It would welcome further steps taken by Governments and private businesses to dissociate themselves from policies which directly or indirectly support settlements.

Expressing its appreciation for the funding in 2015 by the OPEC Fund for International Development (OFID) of the annual training programme for staff of the Palestinian Government, carried out annually by the Division, the Committee would strongly recommend that this important mandated activity be continued and, where possible, further expanded.

The Committee would suggest that its programme of international meetings and conferences in 2016 be focused on amplifying international support for the achievement of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, stressing the role and responsibility of the United Nations in this regard, and to continue to examine the legal aspects of the Question of Palestine.

The Committee would also suggest continuing to utilize the format of round-table meetings, which has proven particularly useful in generating practical proposals for action in the United Nations and beyond.

The Committee would continue to encourage civil society partners to work with their national Governments, parliamentarians and other institutions with a view to gaining their full support for the work of the Committee and the United Nations as a whole. The Committee would encourage its Members and Observers to mobilize their respective civil societies at the national level, in particular the youth, and to establish solidarity committees with the State of Palestine.

Finally, the Committee would reiterate its view that the special information programme on the question of Palestine of the Department of Public Information has made an important contribution to informing the media and the public of the relevant issues, and would request the continuation of the programme, with the necessary flexibility warranted by developments relevant to the question of Palestine.

In closing, I would like to express the hope that the Report that I have just presented will be of assistance to this General Assembly in its deliberations on the Question of Palestine.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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