



PAKISTAN

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

8 EAST 65th STREET – NEW YORK, NY 10021 – (212) 879-8600

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STATEMENT

BY

AMBASSADOR FARUKH AMIL
DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE

IN

THE SPECIAL POLITICAL AND DECOLONIZATION
(4TH) COMMITTEE

ON

THE REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO
INVESTIGATE ISRAELI PRACTICES AFFECTING THE
HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AND
OTHER ARABS OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

New York,
12 November, 2007

Statement by Ambassador Farukh Amil, Deputy Permanent Representative, in the Special Political and Decolonization (4th) Committee on the Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories – 12 Nov. 2007

Mr. Chairman,

1. On behalf of the Pakistan delegation I would like to thank the Chairman of the Special Committee for his briefing. The important work being done by the Special Committee is highly commendable and has our full support. We endorse the findings and recommendations of the Special Committee.

2. The Committee's report, once again, presents a grave picture of the human rights of the Palestinian people and other Arabs of the Occupied Territories that continue to be affected by the Israeli policies and practices. The Committee has reported serious deterioration of the human rights situation across the spectrum in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and also in the Occupied Syrian Golan, arising from occupation. The Committee has also noted the despondency of the populations of those areas as regards prospects for an improvement in the situation of human rights. These findings are corroborated by a number of UN reports, especially by WFP, FAO, UNWA and OCHA. Stirring and heartbreaking images of this human tragedy, we witness frequently on our television screens and print media.

3. Pakistan is deeply concerned over the continuing plight of the Palestinian population and their collective punishment under Israeli occupation. The cycle of violence and continuing military aggression especially the indiscriminate and disproportionate use of force resulting in deaths and injuries among civilian populations and damage to property and infrastructure is condemnable. We denounce the loss of innocent civilian life on both sides.

Mr. Chairman,

4. The continuing illegal construction of the separation wall, expansion of settlements and by-pass roads, restrictions on free access and movement of Palestinian populations and goods through closures, checkpoints and roadblocks are human rights violations in themselves. They also trigger other violations of human rights and hardships including denial of right to property, access to work, business, education, health and social services, private and family life, as well as depriving the Palestinian people of their scarce water resources. The damages resulting from these and other aspects of occupation must be compensated in accordance with the principles of international law. Deterioration of the socio-economic and humanitarian situation has a particularly devastating impact on women and children. We are also concerned over the continuing extra-judicial killings, abductions and disappearances, arbitrary and illegal detention, and torture and inhumane treatment of the detainees in Israeli prisons.

5. The General Assembly has repeatedly reaffirmed the applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 12

August 1949, to all the occupied territories. We call upon all sides to shun violence and respect their respective obligations under international human rights and humanitarian law.

6. Of particular concern is the situation in the Gaza Strip. The illegal declaration by Israel of the Gaza Strip as an "enemy entity", the imposition of further restrictions including steps to cut essential supplies of electricity, fuel and other goods to the civilian population will lead to further worsening of the human rights and the critical humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip. These steps are contrary to Israel's obligation towards the civilian population under international humanitarian and human rights law. The siege of Gaza must be brought to an immediate end.

Mr. Chairman,

7. The question of Palestine is the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Its just and final settlement is imperative for the attainment of comprehensive and lasting peace and stability in the Middle East. This important discussion is yet another demonstration and reaffirmation of the permanent responsibility of the United Nations towards the question of Palestine until it is resolved in all its aspects in a satisfactory manner in accordance with international legitimacy. It is also an occasion to underline the need for just, lasting and comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict in its entirety including the Syria-Israel and Lebanon-Israel conflicts.

8. It is evident that the root cause of the Arab-Israeli conflict is the Israeli occupation of the Arab territories. The human rights violations, including the denial of the fundamental and inalienable right to self-determination, are a direct result of occupation. End to occupation of all the Arab territories is therefore a necessary prerequisite and sine-qua-non for peace. In the search for peaceful and durable solutions, the futility of use of force and unilateral actions is manifest. It is clear that the only way forward is through dialogue and negotiations.

9. An end to Israeli practices affecting the human rights of the peoples in the occupied territories is also important for building an environment of trust and confidence for dialogue. Both sides, Israel in particular, should put an end to the circle of violence and hostilities. Socio-economic insulation and strangulation of the Palestinian people must be stopped. Israel must also halt deliberate policies of changing the facts on ground that could affect final settlement including the territorial integrity of the future Palestinian state and the contiguity of Palestinian lands. Inter-Palestinian harmony is also essential in the face of occupation. The revival of the spirit and substance of the Makkah Agreement on ground as well as in the political process would be in the interest of lasting peace.

10. Pakistan supports serious and constructive engagement by the international community aimed at seeking a comprehensive solution to the Palestinian issue, based on legality, morality and justice. Previous agreements, the relevant Security Council resolutions, the principle of land for peace, the road map, and the Arab Peace Initiative provide the framework for advancing towards a permanent two-state solution, with an independent and sovereign Palestinian State living side by side in peace and security

with Israel. We welcome the current efforts being exerted, including the initiative for an International Conference, for the resumption of dialogue and negotiations between the two sides. We believe that these negotiations must be substantive, addressing the key final status issues and an agreement on clear timeframe for the attainment of the two-state solution.

11. I would like to reiterate Pakistan's firm commitment and steadfast support to the Palestinian people in their legitimate struggle for self-determination and freedom and the realization of a viable independent Palestinian state.

12. In our view, efforts will also need to be undertaken in parallel to achieve negotiated lasting settlements of Israel's conflicts with Syria and Lebanon.

13. It is high time to definitively resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict to usher in an era of peace, stability and progress in the Middle East. Undoubtedly, this would have a positive impact on regional and international peace and security. The task may be difficult but not beyond the diplomatic ingenuity, political will and the craving for peace from all sides. The international community, in particular the United Nations must fulfill their obligations and throw their full weight behind the objective of a comprehensive and durable peace in the Middle East.

Thank you.