

EGYPT



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The Permanent Mission of Egypt
to the United Nations
New York

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**Statement by
H.E. Ambassador Maged Abdel Aziz
Permanent Representative of the Arab Republic of Egypt**

**Before
The General Assembly**

Agenda Item (18)

“Question of Palestine”

New York, November 29, 2007

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Mr. President,

The General Assembly meets today to consider the "Question of Palestine" in the shadow of cautious optimism regarding the exerted efforts to move the peace process on the Palestinian track, aiming at the establishment of a viable Palestinian State on the entire West Bank and Gaza Strip, including the occupied East Jerusalem, before the end of 2008. Today's meeting comes after one day of Annapolis Conference to re-launch the Palestinian - Israeli negotiations, in order to reach a just and lasting solution to the Question of Palestine, within a growing international effort, aiming at achieving a similar progress on other peace process tracks and realizing the designated full and just settlement of the Arab- Israeli conflict within the same timeframe.

If Annapolis Conference was only a first step on the way to revive the peace process and launching the final status negotiations, the succeed of such effort will require a strong political will and credible continued efforts from Israel to reach a concluding agreement on the six final status core issues, including Jerusalem and the refugees problem, far from procrastination, attempts to gain time, and imposing defacto situation. Such matter necessitates a specific timetable to implement commitments, monitored by an active international mechanism, in the frame of implementing the Road Map under the auspices of the International Quartet, in order to ensure progress of negotiations in the right direction and within the definite timeframe.

Starting from, the consideration of the Question of Palestine by the General Assembly today has a special importance regarding providing support of the most democratic and representative organ of the United Nations for the rights of the people of Palestine and its legitimate endeavor to realize the peaceful and just settlement of his Question, through the ending of occupation, the establishment of the independent State of Palestine and the provision of international protection for Palestinian civilians. Such matter demand the enhancement of the General Assembly's role in addressing the Question of Palestine and realizing the legitimate hopes and aspirations of the Palestinian people, within the new agreed timeframes, side by side with the intensification of international efforts to reach aimed results on all levels, by establishing the Palestinian state before the end of 2008.

Similarly, enhancing the ability of the General Assembly to deepen international respect for human rights in a framework devoid of selectivity, politicization and double standards necessitates from us to intensify efforts to ensure the respect of the Palestinian people human rights until the establishment of his own independent state, through effective measures that guarantee the end of the systematic violations of International law by the Occupying Power and its repeated aggressions against Palestinian civilians. This will break the veil of silence towards what happens of extrajudicial assassinations, permanent closure of crossing points and roads, collective punishment, threats of cutting water and electricity supplies and all means of life on Gaza, the expansion of settlements, territorial annexation, and the construction of the Separating Wall in a breach to the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice and the General Assembly 10th Emergency Special Session resolution (ES-10/17), which Israel reject its implementation without giving attention to the international community's determination and the rules of the International legitimacy.

Egypt believes that success of the new negotiation track between both Palestinian and Israeli parties, after Annapolis Conference, necessitates immediate implementation of a number of confidence building measures, under the supervision of the international community, in order to reach a final and lasting solution to the Question of Palestine according to the relevant international references, in forefront Security Council resolutions 242, 338 and 1397, General Assembly resolution 194, the Arab Peace Initiative of 2002, the Road Map, Madrid terms of reference, and the principle of land for peace. In this context, we renew our call on Israel to cease its practices and collective punishment in the West bank and Gaza and return to September 28, 2000 borders as an indication to build confidence. We also call upon the Quartet to bear its responsibility more effectively, through monitoring the level of implementation by both parties towards their commitments. We look forward for an active role by the United Nations, as a member of the Quartet, to ensure the establishment of the independent Palestinian state by the end of 2008.

In addition to the efforts of the international community and regional concerned parties, both Israeli and Palestinian sides have the responsibility of supporting steps aimed at restoring confidence, through the parallel implementation of the first phase of the Road Map, the halt of settlement policy,

the release of the Palestinian prisoners and officials, and the return of the Palestinian Authority institutions in East Jerusalem, side by side with the stop of firing rockets against Palestinian civilians, as well as against civilian Israeli areas, and the release of the abducted Israeli soldier. In this context, we welcome the political will expressed by President Abass and Prime Minister Olmert towards supporting peace efforts, looking forward that the launching of the final status negotiations will represent a start to break the cycle of violence and counter violence, and to change the humanitarian situation of the Palestinians on the ground, in order to restore their trust and confidence in the peace process and to let them feel that there is a positive outcome to build upon.

Side by side with the supporting endeavors to move the peace process and effectively participating in the launching of the final status negotiations, Egypt do not spare any effort to support all endeavors to achieve the unity of the Palestinian people and to maintain the territorial integrity of the Palestinian territory and the Palestinians in the west Bank and Gaza as one political integrated unit. We hope to consider this item next session where an agreement has achieved regarding the establishment of the Palestinian independent and viable state, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

Thank You Mr. President.