

*Permanent Mission
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STATEMENT

BY

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PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE STATE OF KUWAIT
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**BEFORE THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
62Nd**

ON

ITEM (17) THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

FRIDAY, 30 NOVEMBER 2007

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MERCIFUL, THE COMPASSIONATE

Mr. President,

The General Assembly discusses today one of the most important items on its agenda, due to its close relationship to international peace and security. For many decades, the Middle East region did not witness stability, despite its vitality and importance, as a result of the wars that bedeviled it and drained its energies and resources. Perhaps the most outstanding thing the region suffers from, and risks further deterioration of its security and stability is the persistence and continuation of the Israeli Government in its policies and aggressive and illegal practices. The Israeli Government has followed a method based on the use of force to implement security at the same time that it continues its occupation of territories. The events have proven the futility of this formula, and its persistence to maintain this method, will only lead to further deterioration of the security conditions, fuel the sentiments of hatred and the continuation of the cycle of violence and instability in the region.

Mr. President,

Israel continues its practices represented in assassinations, summary executions, excessive and random use of military force, demolition of homes and destruction of Palestinian institutions, closing of crossing points, continuation of the blockade and collective punishment policy, collective arrests, arbitrary detentions, and offensive treatment against detainees in Israeli prisons, as well as its continuation in building the separation wall, despite the confirmation by the International Court of Justice in a ruling on 9 July 2004 of its illegality for its contradiction with the decisions of international legitimacy and demanded its removal as well as compensating the Palestinians who incurred damages due to its building.

All these practices, represent a clear and flagrant violation of the 4th Geneva Convention of 1949 concerning the protection of civilians in times of war, and we see that the states party to this convention must take tangible measures to activate its provisions as part of their commitments in order to assure Israel's respect for the 4th Geneva Convention.

Israel, the occupying power, has exploited the time factor and the inaction of the international community to continue carrying out its illegal policies and measures in the occupied Palestinian territories, including East Jerusalem and as a result, Israel persists in violating the basic human rights of the Palestinian people and further creating an illegal de facto situation in the field, which will exacerbate the humanitarian crisis and further divide the Palestinian lands, which will jeopardize severely the two state solution, which represents the core of any political solution as well as increasing the intensity of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Mr. President,

Despite the fact that forty years have elapsed since the Israeli occupation of Palestinian and Arab land, the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories, including East Jerusalem, remain very grave. The humanitarian economic, social, political and security situation keeps deteriorating in all aspects and at every level. The Palestinian people are still without a state, robbed of their possessions, persecuted and suffering from mounting hardships that they face in the course of their continued struggle to achieve their inalienable rights which they should enjoy, including the right to self-determination. Every year that passes witnesses more oppression for the Palestinian people, including the Palestinian refugees.

In this context, Kuwait renews its support for the struggle of the Palestinian people to obtain all their legitimate rights, by establishing their own state on their own land, with Jerusalem as its capital. We emphasize that while the Palestinian people do not obtain their legitimate rights, in accordance to relevant Security Council resolutions, particularly 242, 338, 1397 and 1515 based on the principle of land for peace, and the Arab Peace Initiative, there will be no lasting, comprehensive and just solution for the Palestinian Question, which represents the center of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Mr. President,

Kuwait renews its demands for Israel's withdrawal of the occupied Syrian Golan, back to the lines of 4 June 1967, in implementation of relevant Security Council resolutions, and emphasizes the illegitimacy of the Israeli activities in the occupied Golan, and stresses that the continued occupation and annexation of the Golan represent a true impediment in the face of realizing a just and lasting peace in the region.

As what concerns the Lebanese question. We renew Kuwait's commitment to stand by Lebanon and support it in preserving its security, unity, territorial integrity and political independence. We also call on Israel to cease its continued violations of Lebanese air space and territories and implement all the provisions of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006).

While we commend the regional and international efforts exerted to achieve national reconciliation between the various Lebanese sides and their return to the negotiations table and national dialogue to address all issues of contention, we call upon the international community to help and support the Lebanese Government in spreading its authority over all its territories.

Mr. President,

The Annapolis Conference for Peace in the Middle East, which concluded its work two days ago with a large Arab and international participation, represents an important and serious resurgence to put an end to the occupation and the creation of the Palestinian state within a specific time frame.

The State of Kuwait welcomed holding this conference, for it represents a turning point for the region, and for the international partners, in the context of the effective support for a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East, as well as it welcomed the renewed commitment for a solution based on having two states living side by side in peace.

While the State of Kuwait affirms the necessity of preserving the momentum created by the Annapolis Conference it emphasizes the importance of discussing all the tracks, including the Syrian and Lebanese tracks in order to achieve a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the region on the basis of the resolutions of international legitimacy, the Arab Peace Initiative and the Road Map; it stresses the importance of discussing the three crucial issues, - Jerusalem, to stop building settlements and grant the refugees the right of return on the basis of resolution 194 (1948).

The coming months will be tantamount to a litmus test of Israel's seriousness to achieve peace, and to provide a chance and a little hope for this conference to realize a breakthrough, put an end to the stalemate in the peace negotiations and spare the region more calamities. Perhaps, the presence of the Secretary-General in the upcoming meeting of the Quartet Group, scheduled to be held on the margins of the donors conference in Paris in mid December will give an added impetus for the peace process.

Mr. President,

In the midst of these environments in which the Middle East region lives, we are hopeful that the negotiations process will resume with a view for reaching a peaceful settlement which will lead to the security and stability that everyone looks forward to achieve, the Israeli Government must recognize that the security factor is a main demand and a right for all the peoples and states in the region, and is not excluded to Israel only.

Such a view of the Arab-Israeli conflict- represent an integral part of Kuwait's comprehensive view of the Middle East region, based on stability, mutual respect and cooperation between all sides. This stability will undoubtedly necessitate confidence building measures, foremost among which is making the region free of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons.

Thank you, Mr. President.