

EGYPT



مصر

The Permanent Mission of Egypt
to the United Nations
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Statement
by H.E. Ambassador Maged Abdel Aziz
Permanent Representative of the Arab Republic of
Egypt

Before
the General Assembly

On item (17)

“The situation in the Middle East”

New York
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Mr. President,

The General Assembly meets today to consider agenda item 17 titled "The Situation in the Middle East", which aims at enhancing the international engagement with the Arab - Israeli conflict resulted from the continued Israeli occupation of the Arab territories since 1967 and the catastrophic Israeli practices in the occupied Arab territories. It is a source of optimism that our debate on this item coincides with a new international approach to address the Arab - Israeli conflict more seriously, particularly after the Annapolis Conference, which represented a first step on the way forward to resume Arab Israeli negotiations, specially Palestinian - Israeli, in order to reach a just and lasting solution to the Question of Palestine the core of the Middle East's conflict. Such development come after that the Arabs have reiterated, from this podium and in all international forums, their steady commitment to a just and comprehensive peace, as reflected in the Arab Peace Initiative of 2002 and reemphasized in 2007. This necessitates action by the international community and the General Assembly to generate support for pushing the final status negotiations on the Palestinian track, leading to achieve a just and lasting settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict on all tracks, based on the principle of land for peace and all relevant resolutions of the United Nations.

Expressing international community's opposition to the continued illegal Israeli occupation of the Arab territories, and to express international community's convection of the necessity to end occupation as soon as possible, the General Assembly annually adopts during this time, under the agenda item "The Situation in the Middle East", two draft resolutions of great importance. The first, concerns the question of Jerusalem, the city which all General Assembly and Security Council resolutions have confirmed the necessity of maintaining its special status and the illegitimacy of any measures undertaken by consecutive Israeli governments to alter that status before the conclusion of final status negotiations and the establishment of the Palestinian independent sovereign and viable state. The second deals with the Occupied Syrian Golan and confirms the will of the international community and expresses its determination to end Israeli occupation of Syrian territory by force and to achieve full Israeli withdrawal from the Golan to the borders of June 4, 1967.

Undoubtedly, the convening of Annapolis Conference with the participation of all concerned Arab parties, including Syria, and the agreement on launching negotiations on the Palestinian track aiming at the establishment of the Palestinian independent and viable state with East Jerusalem as its capital before the end of 2008, according to specific timeframe that takes into consideration all relevant references, including the United Nations' resolutions, the Arab Peace Initiative and the Road Map, will provide an international conducive environment to achieve settlement, through Israeli withdrawal's from all Arab territories occupied in 1967, including East Jerusalem and Shebaa Farms and the Golan Heights, leading to attain a just and comprehensive peace to realize the stability of the Middle East, in a context that ensures the establishment of an independent State of Palestine in the west bank and Gaza within the borders of 1967 and the establishment of normal relations between the Arabs and Israel. This is the letter & spirit of the Arab Peace Initiative based on the idea of full withdrawal in return of full peace, which we look forward to realize before the end of 2008.

We look forward to the American leading role to be continued, we also look forward for more effective role by the Quartet which will have the responsibility to follow the implementation of what will be agreed by both Palestinian and Israeli parties and realizing the two states solution by establishing the independent Palestinian state before the end of 2008, side by side with achieving the full withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories in the West Bank, the Golan Heights and Shebaa Farms. The end of occupation must be comprehensive and full, derived from direct negotiations on all tracks, and detached from delay and maneuvers aimed to impose illegal situations on the ground.

Mr. President,

I have the pleasure to present to the General Assembly today two Draft resolutions under Agenda Item 17 "The Situation in the Middle East". They are: a draft resolution concerning "Jerusalem" and a draft resolution entitled "The Syrian Golan". The first draft resolution reaffirms that relevant

General Assembly and Security Council resolutions remain the main terms of reference for the special status of Jerusalem, which confirms the renunciation and repudiation of all legislative, administrative measures and actions undertaken by Israel – the occupying power – aimed at the alteration of the status of Jerusalem. Moreover, the draft confirms that any just and comprehensive solution to the question of this holy city must take into consideration the legitimate concerns of both the Palestinian and Israeli sides, and must include provisions on international guarantees ensuring the freedom of belief and religion to its inhabitants detached from illegal attempts done by Israel to impose Jewish character on the city.

The second draft resolution on the occupied Syrian Golan reaffirms Security Council resolution 497 of 1981 and highlights Israel's continued noncompliance to them. It also confirms the application of The Hague Convention of 1907 and the Geneva Conventions of 1949 on the Syrian territory occupied since 1967 and the illegitimacy of both the decision to apply Israeli law on this territory and the settlement operations there. The draft resolution also renews calls upon Israel to withdraw from the Golan Heights to the borders of June 4 1967, the resumption of peace negotiations on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks, and the respect of commitments reached through previous negotiations.

The sponsors of these two draft resolutions believe that the time has come for the international community to see the Middle East from a comprehensive perspective, particularly in the light of the ongoing efforts to move the peace process. Peoples of the region have suffered from the scourge of war and aspire to achieve peace, stability and development, this cannot be achieved without an international will determined to provide required political support to achieve a breakthrough that can lead to realize the full Israeli withdrawal from all Palestinian and Arab territories occupied since 1967, based on International Law, the principle of the Land for Peace, the Arab Peace Initiative, the Road Map, and on the basis of the Madrid terms of reference and the relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions.

In order to implement such goal with support of the international community, the sponsors look forward for support of all member states to vote in favor of these two draft resolutions and in favor of achieving peace and stability in the Middle East.

Thank you Mr. President.