

EGYPT



مصر

The Permanent Mission of Egypt
to the United Nations
New York

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**Statement of
The Delegation of Egypt**

**Before the Third Committee
on**

**Agenda Item 68:
“Right of Peoples to Self-determination”**

Mr. Chairman,

Despite the progress achieved since the establishment of the United Nations in reinforcing human and peoples' rights, the international community is still unable to realise full respect of the principle of equal rights and duties. This is particularly true concerning the right of peoples to self-determination, one of the most important purposes and principles set out by the Charter as the foundation for developing friendly relations among nations. Notwithstanding our commitment in the International Covenants of Human Rights to support the right of peoples to self-determination and their freedom to dispose of their natural wealth and resources, as inalienable rights, and even though paragraph 5 of the 2005 World Summit Document reaffirmed this commitment in principle, as regards the protection of the right of peoples under colonial domination and foreign occupation to self-determination, the international action has not yet risen to the level of implementing the pledges we took upon ourselves, even after sixty years since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Such established inalienable right is not a donation from the international community. It is rather an acknowledgment of the entitlement of peoples under foreign occupation to resist occupation and be free from colonialization, a right that is not less sacred than the right to self-defence against those who seek to impose illegal situations on the ground, relying on economic or military muscle, in total disregard to their international commitments to protect and promote human rights, and in a flagrant contradiction with their own claims that they are proponents of democracy and freedoms. On top of these freedoms of course comes the right of all peoples to live, on equal footing, in peace and security.

Depriving the Palestinian people from exercising their inalienable right to self-determination and establish their independent state is a stark example. Israel continues to blow its own horns through unfounded proclamations that it is the only democracy in the Middle East, while it continues to occupy others' lands by force and commits incessant violations of the most basic human rights of the Palestinian people in order to suppress their volition and weaken their ability to claim their legitimate rights, in a clear violation of the principles of democracy.

Mr. Chairman,

The report of the Working Group on the Use of Mercenaries as a Means of Violating Human Rights and Impeding the Exercise of the Right of Peoples to Self-determination raises concern about the role of some private security companies in exasperating and exacerbating conflicts, undermining international mechanisms aiming at curbing the illicit trade in small and light arms, which in turn is linked to the illegal exploitation of natural resources. Egypt welcomes the efforts of the Working Group, as mandated by the Human Rights Council, in drafting principles, guidelines and specific standards with a view to developing national and international regulatory mechanisms for the activities of these companies, within a framework that ensures transparency, accountability and prevention of impunity. Egypt also welcomes the recommendations contained in the report of the Working Group, and wishes in the meantime to stress the importance of consolidating efforts to enhance the national capacities of States emerging from conflicts to develop their security sectors, based on the principle of national ownership, and to provide support to the working group in order to enable it to carry out its mandate. Egypt looks forward in this regard to achieving the universality of the 1989 International Convention against the Recruitment, Use, Financing and Training of Mercenaries.

The international community's quest for realising the universal respect of human and peoples' rights would remain incomplete unless we totally divest ourselves of selectivity, politicisation and double standards when dealing with human and peoples' rights, and first of all the right to self-determination. Despite the widespread optimism that existed when the Human

Rights Council was established, and the tangible positive development in its activities, the furtherance of the Council's success in performing its role in addressing the human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories is pending the existence of a solid determination to ensure Israel's full adherence to its international obligations and its full cooperation with the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Palestinian Occupied Territories and the fact-finding missions established by the Council to investigate its gross violations of human rights.

We have carefully considered the report of the Secretary-General entitled "The Universal Realization of the Right of Peoples to Self-determination," and look forward to the inclusion next year of specific recommendations on how to enable the Human Rights Council to perform its role in investigating and dealing with Israel's human rights violations in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. This is particularly necessary in light of the findings of the report by Judge Goldstone and the balanced report by the Special Rapporteur, which identify gross violations in Gaza that mount to war crimes and run counter to Israel's commitments as the occupying power according to international law, on top of which comes the Fourth Geneva Convention. These violations contribute to the dangerously deteriorating situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, and severely curtail the ability of the Palestinian people to enjoy their legitimate right to self-determination to the fullest, and to realise their aspiration for the establishment of their Independent State, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

Undoubtedly, the protracted nature of occupation multiplies the negative effects suffered by the Palestinian people as a result, especially in light of the ongoing blockades, economic stranglehold, obstructing access of humanitarian assistance, demolition of houses, the judaization of East Jerusalem, and other practices that run in their totality in contradiction with the responsibility of the occupying power to improve the living conditions of the Palestinian people. In addition, the continuing policies of settlement expansion, confiscation and razing of lands, closure of crossings and the negative ramifications of the "Separation Wall" are all detrimental to the contiguity of the Palestinian lands and to the confidence building measures. These violations are compounded by the recurring Israeli violations of its commitments under the International Covenant for Civil and Political Rights, particularly so vis-à-vis the right to freedom of expression, freedom of assembly, the right to food and the right to mental and physical health.

Accordingly, we reiterate the importance of invigorating the role of the United Nations to ensure respect of the human rights of the Palestinian people, along with other Arab peoples that are suffering from occupation and are being systematically subjected to incessant violations and intrusions. We aspire for a larger UN engagement in a more serious manner, through its role in the Quartet and confidence building efforts, all the way through to the attainment of a just, comprehensive, and lasting peace... A peace that is founded on the Terms of Reference of the Peace Process launched in Madrid, most important of which is the Principle of "Land for Peace", the Arab Peace Initiative and the Quartet Roadmap... A genuinely negotiated peace on all tracks, in order to realise the full withdrawal from all Arab territories occupied since 1967, and to ensure the enjoyment of the right to self-determination and all other human rights to all peoples, without exception.

As we approach the end of the Second International Decade for the Elimination of Colonialism in 2010, it is incumbent upon the United Nations to reaffirm its commitment to implement the 1960 Declaration on Granting Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, through concrete steps to liberate all peoples from each and every form of foreign domination, and to guarantee their enjoyment of the right to self-determination.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.