

**Statement by Ambassador Gabriela Shalev  
Permanent Representative  
General Assembly, 26 February 2010**

Thank you, Mr. President.

We are convened here today to vote on a draft resolution presented by the Arab Group in reaction to the Secretary-General's report of February 4th 2010.

In the aftermath of Operation Cast Lead, Israel is conducting and will continue to conduct, investigations that are independent, credible and in conformity with international law. Such investigations are conducted by us after any military operation, as part of our law and practice. The investigations after Operation Cast Lead are detailed in the reports of the State of Israel that were shared, and will continue to be shared, with the United Nations.

On the other hand, the Palestinian submission to the Secretary-General cannot genuinely address the conflict between the State of Israel and the Hamas terrorist entity. For who exactly is the "Palestinian side" in the proposed resolution, the side urged to undertake "investigations that are independent, credible, and conform to international standards?"

Can the Palestinian Authority conduct an investigation in Gaza from which it was violently ousted in a bloody coup? Or, in contrast, do we really believe that the terrorist Hamas organization will investigate its use of human shields, its appalling methods of targeting civilians, and its cynical use of schools, hospitals, and mosques as weapons of terror?

Mr. President,

The Goldstone Report fails to address the threat of asymmetric warfare and terrorism that uses civilians as shields and targets.

Let me state clearly: Israel will never neglect its duty to defend her citizens, her existence, her democracy, and her freedom. We will do so with vigor — against Hamas, Hizbullah, or any other terrorists, wherever they may be. As Israel faces this existential threat, we remain committed to acting in accordance with international law and the law of armed conflict.

This basic obligation is a reflection of our values as a democracy, and our belief that human life must be protected. It is this belief that drives our call to resume peace negotiations without preconditions. It is this belief that drives our desire for peace.

Thank you, Mr. President.