

**STATEMENT BY**

**H.E. MR. ABDOU SALAM DIALLO**

**CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE EXERCISE  
OF THE INALIENABLE RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE**

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE**

**INTERNATIONAL DAY OF SOLIDARITY WITH THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE**

*29 November 2010*

Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great honour, for the first time in my capacity as Chairman of this Committee, to thank you all for attending this special meeting in observance of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. Our greetings also go to all those joining us through the United Nations webcast.

At this point, I would like to express our Committee's sincere gratitude to the **Secretary-General** for his personal efforts and commitment to achieving peace between Israelis and Palestinians. His leadership on this issue is deeply appreciated by all.

I also warmly welcome **Mr. Joseph Deiss**, President of the General Assembly, and sincerely thank him for honouring today's meeting with his presence. Your country, Sir, as the depositary of the Geneva Conventions, has special responsibilities.

I would also like to extend a special welcome to **Ambassador Sir Mark Lyall Grant** of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in his capacity as this month's President of the Security Council. The active involvement of the Security Council in bringing about a peaceful resolution of the conflict in accordance with the norms of international law is vital. On behalf of the Committee, I warmly welcome that involvement and hope that the Council will use its full authority to seek new ways forward.

We in the Committee welcome and support all the efforts by the Member States and Observers, the Security Council, the Quartet, the Arab League, the European Union, the African Union, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and civil society in support of our common objective.

Our solidarity also manifests itself through the daily work of the United Nations agencies and many other international and civil society organizations doing everything possible to provide basic services to the Palestinians.

Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Sixty-three years ago, the General Assembly adopted resolution 181 (II), which changed the course of history of the Middle East and beyond. It embodied a solemn commitment by the international community to the establishment of two States in Mandated Palestine. Today, the promise stands only half fulfilled. Though a Jewish State, Israel, came into being in 1948, Palestine, the Arab State also supposed to be established, remains a vision yet to be realized.

The question of Palestine weighs heavily on our collective consciousness as the great unfinished business of the twentieth century. The Palestinians and the Israelis continue to pay the price for that failure.

Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I want to dwell particularly on the human tragedy of this situation. For decades now, half of the Palestinians have been deprived of freedom, living under occupation on their own land. The other half have been living as refugees, with all of the hardships that that status brings.

The international community has a duty to restore the political and diplomatic means to give back to the Palestinians a hope of at last recovering a measure of dignity fully equal to that of all the peoples in the region.

Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

You may recall that our Committee wholeheartedly welcomed the peace process launched in 1991 as a guaranteed way of establishing a viable Palestinian State while simultaneously providing Israel with recognition, peace and security, in line with the recommendations of the Quartet's Road Map. We called on the parties to refrain from destabilizing unilateral actions on the ground, including the building of new settlements or the expansion of existing settlements.

Unfortunately, it appears that Israel found itself unable to assume this undertaking, recognized by the entire international community as a minimum confidence-building measure. It is not difficult, therefore, to understand the Palestinian Authority's frustration and reluctance to negotiate under such circumstances.

Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The General Assembly has reaffirmed that the United Nations has a permanent responsibility towards the question of Palestine until the matter is resolved in all its aspects in a satisfactory way, in accordance with international legitimacy.

Not only must the General Assembly continue to call attention to the guidelines required for the parties to commit themselves in good faith to that goal, the Member States, individually and collectively, must demonstrate their active solidarity and take immediate action to improve the lives of the Palestinian people.

The urgent first step to take is to lift the blockade that has unfairly weighed on the civilian population of Gaza for over three years now. The second step is to require all the appropriate international bodies to prevent impunity, particularly during military operations in the Territories, and to ensure that the status of East Jerusalem and the holy sites is respected.

Israel must also be called upon to adhere strictly to international humanitarian law.

Finally, we must demonstrate our solidarity with Palestine by giving our strong backing to the Fayyad Plan. It must be implemented if the Palestinian State is to be viable.

We must do everything to ensure that the Plan is funded.

Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me assure you that our Committee will continue to pursue the mandate given to it by the General Assembly until the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people are fully realized. This goal goes hand in hand with the final settlement of the conflict through a two-State solution in which Israel and Palestine live side by side in peace and security, with mutual recognition.

Thank you all for your attention.