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**Statement by the
Chair of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights
of the Palestinian People
at the Special Meeting in observance of the
International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People
29 November 2017**

**Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Today, as we gather once again to observe the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, we are reminded that this year marks 100 years since the Balfour Declaration.

When the United Nations undertook to address the question of Palestine in 1947, a decision was made by the General Assembly, in its resolution 181 (II) on 29 November 1947, to partition Palestine for the formation of two sovereign, adjoining States.

However, one of those States, the State of Palestine, has yet to attain its independence and sovereignty over its territory.

It is worth reflecting that while the General Assembly continues to reaffirm annually with overwhelming support the right of the

Palestinian people to self-determination, regrettably, today, there is still much to be done for the Palestinian people, including the Palestine refugees, to enjoy their universal human rights.

As an internationally Community, we must do more for the realization of their rights, in line with the United Nations Charter, international law and the relevant United Nations resolutions.

We must also act to ensure that our collective desire for a future where the Palestinian and Israeli people live peacefully and in security, without fear or prejudice, becomes attainable and that not another generation will have to endure this tragedy.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This year, we also marked the passage of 50 years since the beginning of occupation of Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem.

Fifty years of occupation and conflict have immeasurably deepened the divisions and mistrust between Palestinians and Israelis and compounded the conflict.

The ten-year blockade of the Gaza Strip, the disproportionate use of force against the Palestinian civilian population; measures

undermining the historic status quo at the holy sites, including in East Jerusalem; the construction of illegal settlements, and the demolition of homes and structures; and the issue of detentions are all actions that run counter to international law, and relevant United Nations resolutions, including resolution 2334 (2016).

As a Committee, we also condemn all acts of violence, terrorism and incitement, regardless of the perpetrators.

These actions and the negative reality on the ground constitute serious setbacks to the goal of a just, lasting and peaceful solution to this conflict. And we, in the international community, this Organization, must act, in line with our clear long held positions, to support the Palestinian rights and to enhance peace, stability and prosperity in the Region.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is fair to say that the two-State solution is in peril, gravely diminished by the occupation and colonisation but also by violence and mistrust between the Parties.

Regrettably, as we all know, this situation is being exploited by extremists, whose violence imperils the two-State solution further.

Nevertheless, a ray of light has emerged this year in the efforts to promote the intra-Palestinian reconciliation. Unity among the Palestinian political leadership and bridging of the divide between Gaza and the West Bank are welcome steps towards addressing many critical issues, including the dire humanitarian situation in Gaza, and unifying and strengthening Palestinian engagement in the peace process.

While commending the efforts undertaken by Egypt in this regard, we urge the Israeli authorities, in line with their commitment, to seize this opportunity to respond constructively to this reconciliation by undertaking decisive measures that can enable peace.

It is critical that Palestinian reconciliation is followed by an outcome-oriented and definitive peace process, based on the longstanding terms of reference in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions, the Madrid principles, the Arab Peace Initiative and the Quartet Roadmap

In this connection, we lend our support to the ongoing efforts aimed at relaunching the Peace process, namely by the United States, the Russian Federation and Egypt.

On this International Day of Solidarity, let us pledge, on behalf of the Palestinian and indeed also the Israeli people, with all our

diplomatic and moral might, to keep our commitment and resolve to materialise the ultimate goal of the two-state solution, on the basis of pre-1967 borders.

In closing, let me reiterate that for its part and, in line with the mandate bestowed upon it by the General Assembly, this Committee will continue its work to promote the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to self-determination and independence.

I thank you.