



REPÚBLICA DE CUBA
EL MINISTRO DE RELACIONES EXTERIORES

Havana, 29 November 2008

Excellency,

I am honored to address again the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Cuban people, on the occasion of celebrating the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People this November 29th.

Once more, we would like to show our solidarity with the Palestinian people and to reflect on the tragedy of that people, in the framework of the illegal occupation of its territory by Israel. We reaffirm our decision to redouble our efforts to peacefully, justly and comprehensively resolve the question of Palestine, including the adverse situation of its refugees, in accordance with the rules and principles of the International Law and relevant UN resolutions.

Last year, the Palestinian people solemnly commemorated the 60th anniversary of the General Assembly's adoption of resolution 181 (II) in 1947, which partitioned historic Palestine and led to the injustice and tragedy imposed upon its people in 1948, known as Al-Nakba. More than three quarters of the historic Palestine was forcibly seized, 531 Palestinian towns and villages were destroyed and 85% of the population were banished or displaced. As a consequence, some 4.6 million of Palestinian refugees are still scattered all over the Middle East.

For four decades, Israel has carried out deliberate and unlawful policies and practices aimed at altering the demographic composition, character and nature of the Palestinian territories. It has, de facto, annexed those lands, by implementing its illegal settlement policy and, since 2003, its illegal construction of a wall in the West Bank, including in and around East Jerusalem.

In this important date, it is imperative to reaffirm the support the Non-Aligned Movement has given to the fight of the Palestinian people to regain its inalienable rights, a position we have strongly defended through the years. NAM reiterates its concern about the growing deterioration of the political, economic, social, and humanitarian situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, as a result of Israel's continuous illegal policies and practices, including serious violations of the human rights and constant war crimes that have resulted in great suffering and hardships for the Palestinian people.

H.E. Mr. Paul Badji
Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the
Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People
United Nations Organization
New York

The Movement has systematically raised its voice in numerous international fora to support the Palestinian people in its claim for a sovereign and independent State, with East Jerusalem as its capital. The Conferences of Heads of State or Government of the Non-Aligned Movement have reiterated this commitment to the highest level. During the 15th NAM Ministerial Conference, held last July in Teheran, the non-aligned countries reviewed the serious situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and deeply deplored the suffering of its people due to the prolonged and brutal Israeli military occupation. Likewise, they rejected the continuous deprivation of their inalienable rights, namely the right to self-determination and the return of the Palestinian refugees to their territories, as well as the full enjoyment of their sovereign and independent State.

In the face of the especially critical situation in the Gaza Strip, NAM has reiterated its call for an end to the unlawful closure of Gaza and the collective punishment of the entire Palestinian civilian population. It is imperative to halt the wave of violence in that territory, including its expansion towards the West Bank, and to promptly open the borders with Gaza, enabling the movement of goods and people as well as the alleviation of the dire humanitarian crisis.

Our Movement reiterates the need and urgency to put an end to the prolonged and illegal Israeli occupation of all of the Arab territories occupied since 1967, and to establish an independent and sovereign Palestinian State, with East Jerusalem as its capital. Israel continues disregarding the rules of the International Law and systematically failing to comply, with impunity, with over one hundred resolutions of different UN bodies, including over 60 resolutions of the Security Council. The international community should not delay the search for a comprehensive and definitive solution to this issue because the Palestinian people have suffered and waited for too long for justice and freedom.

In the search for peace, the Arab peoples will always count on the total solidarity of the Cuban people. Allow me to reaffirm the aspiration of Cuba to achieve a comprehensive, just and lasting peace for all Middle East peoples, without exclusion, which provides the Palestinian people with the right to self-determination and sovereignty in its independent State, based on the borders prior to 4 June 1967, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

I avail myself of this opportunity, Excellency, to renew the testimony of my highest and most distinguished consideration, and to reaffirm the wholehearted and warm support of the Cuban Government and people to the fulfilment of your important duties as Chairman of the Committee.

Felipe Pérez Roque