



22nd November 2021

Excellency

On the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, on behalf of the Republic of Malta, I wish to reiterate our concern at the continued lack of progress in the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Malta's principled position on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict continues to be guided by our unwavering support for a two-State solution based on the pre-1967 borders, which must aim to address the legitimate concerns and aspirations of both sides, in line with the relevant Security Council resolutions and internationally agreed parameters, thus enabling the Palestinian and Israeli People to live side-by-side in peace and security.

Malta reiterates that settlements are illegal under international law and constitute an obstacle towards the realisation of the two-State solution. They jeopardise confidence-building efforts and imperil the territorial contiguity of a future Palestinian State. Malta is of the view that final status issues can only be resolved through direct negotiations between Palestine and Israel, and therefore, Malta will continue to advocate against any actions which may prejudice final status issues, including any unilateral actions on the Status of Jerusalem.

Intra-Palestinian reconciliation is also a critical step to achieving the two-State solution. From this perspective, the organisation of free, fair, and inclusive elections are a necessary requisite to take this process forward.

Regrettably, the escalation of violence witnessed in May was a stark reminder of the continuation of this long-lasting conflict and its widespread negative repercussions. We once again call for the consolidation of the ceasefire. As long as violence persists, a permanent solution to the humanitarian situation on the ground will remain elusive. Malta remains committed to mitigate as much as possible the dire humanitarian situation which needs to be addressed with the utmost urgency, particularly in Gaza.

Malta has been contributing to Palestine on an annual basis, mostly through the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). UNRWA is a stabilising force in the region, and we express our sincere appreciation for its dedicated staff who continue to provide essential humanitarian assistance to millions of Palestine refugees throughout the Middle East despite the challenging circumstances under which they have to operate. We remain deeply concerned about UNRWA's financial situation, and stress the need for adequate and predictable funding to make sure that the Agency has the necessary resources



to operate under these circumstances. In this context, we thank the Governments of Sweden and Jordan for organising the annual pledging conference earlier this month.

Malta also provides assistance towards Palestine through scholarships and training programmes. Such initiatives are an attestation of our commitment towards achieving a fair and sustainable world. We sincerely believe that investing in the future of Palestine through such capacity building processes not only reaffirms our commitment to the aspirations of the Palestinian people, but also contributes tangibly towards the empowerment of the Palestinian people.

I avail myself of this opportunity to reiterate my Government's solidarity with the Palestinian People and hereby reaffirm Malta's commitment to the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, with a view to achieve a much-needed peaceful resolution and security in the region.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'R. Abela', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Robert Abela
Prime Minister

H.E. Mr. Cheikh Niang
Chair
Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People