

STATEMENT TO BE DELIVERED BY THE DELEGATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN, ON BEHALF OF THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT (NAM), ON THE OCCASION OF THE SPECIAL MEETING IN OBSERVANCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF SOLIDARITY WITH THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

Vienna, 10 December 2020

Mr. President,

1. I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.
2. In this solemn observance of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, the Non-Aligned Movement reaffirms its unwavering solidarity with the Palestinian people and support for their inalienable human rights, including to self-determination and independence, and renews its abiding commitment in the efforts to achieve a fair and lasting solution to the Palestine question and genuine peace and security in the Middle East on the basis of international law and the relevant United Nations resolutions.
3. The Non-Aligned Movement renews its appreciation to the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and to the Division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat of the United Nations for their important work and much valued assistance in this regard, in line with their General Assembly mandates.
4. Similarly, the Movement once again commends the efforts of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) in providing essential humanitarian, development and emergency assistance and protection to the 5.6 million Palestine refugees in all fields of operation, as well as expresses its sincere appreciation to all United Nations agencies with special programs providing needed support to the Palestinian people, including children and women. In light of the grave financial situation being faced by UNRWA at this time, the Non-Aligned Movement reiterates its appeal to all States to provide predictable and sufficient financial support to ensure the continuity of its vital assistance programs at a time of increasing need and of its tangible contribution to regional stability.

Mr. President,

5. This past June regrettably marked 53 years since the illegal Israeli military occupation of the Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, and other Arab territories in 1967. This year also marks the seventy-third anniversary of the General Assembly's adoption of the resolution 181 (II) partitioning Mandate Palestine and May 2020 marked the seventy-second anniversary of the 1948 Al-Nakba that tragically befell the Palestinian people. These solemn occasions prompt the Non-Aligned Movement to reiterate its longstanding calls for the exertion and intensification of all necessary efforts to bring an end to this injustice and advance a peaceful and just solution. The international community is called upon to act forthwith to uphold its responsibilities and obligations towards the Palestine question until it is justly resolved.

Mr. President,

6. In October 2019, the Ministerial Committee of the Non-Aligned Movement on Palestine was convened in Baku, Azerbaijan, to review the latest developments in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. Regrettably, the situation there remains critical and unsustainable. The Ministers underscored their deep regret that the Palestinian people continue to suffer under brutal Israeli military occupation, blockade and oppression and continue to be deprived of their fundamental human rights. All of their rights are being deliberately and systematically violated by the occupying Power, which continues its settlement colonization of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and its oppression and collective punishment of the defenseless and innocent Palestinian children, women and men and continues to perpetrate grave human rights violations, many of which may amount to war crimes. This is causing deep trauma and suffering among the Palestinian civilian population, especially in the Gaza Strip where the humanitarian situation is dire, and the situation is becoming untenable and unlivable.
7. In its unanimously adopted Political Declaration, the Ministerial Committee, *inter alia*, renewed the Movement's calls for a cessation of all these violations of international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, and for compliance with international law and all relevant United Nations resolutions, and reaffirmed its abiding solidarity with and unwavering support for inalienable rights and just cause of the Palestinian people.
8. NAM stresses that a just, lasting and comprehensive solution to the question of Palestine remains a permanent responsibility of the United Nations until it is justly and satisfactorily resolved in all its aspects. The Movement emphasizes the need for urgent mobilization and exertion of multilateral efforts to advance the realization of a political horizon and solution and, until its achievement, for efforts to alleviate the humanitarian and socio-economic hardships being endured by the people of the Palestine. In this regard, the Non-Aligned Movement endorses the call by Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas for the timely convening of an international peace conference to advance the achievement of a just and lasting solution based on international law and the relevant resolutions.
9. On this day, the Movement must express its deep regret that, despite decades of their participation in peace efforts, in good-faith; despite their proven commitment to the two-State solution for peace; despite their adherence to international law; and despite the painful compromises made, the plight of the Palestinian people has worsened and a just solution remains elusive.
10. As the Security Council remains paralyzed on this issue, in spite of its Charter duties, the situation only continues to further deteriorate and destabilize. This must be cause for great concern among the international community and should prompt urgent action to hold Israel, the occupying Power, accountable for its violations and to bring them to a halt, including all illegal settlement and annexation activities in all parts of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. Only such action can salvage the prospects for peace, bring an end to the Israeli occupation, and realize the two-State solution based on the pre-1967 borders in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions, the Madrid principles, and the Arab Peace Initiative. All relevant Security Council resolutions and the obligations under the international law, including the 1949 Fourth Geneva Convention, must be implemented.
11. NAM also condemns the provocations and incitements by groups of extremist settlers, including against the holy sites in occupied East Jerusalem, including Al-Haram and Al-

Sharif, and the vandalization of mosques and churches which are fueling tensions and religious sensitivities that risk further destabilization, and calls for respect for the sanctity of Holy Sites and for full respect for the historic and legal *status quo* that has been in place for decades.

Mr. President,

12. Today, the Non-Aligned Movement also reiterates its demand for the full and immediate lifting of the illegal blockade of the Gaza Strip by Israel, which continues to severely impair all aspects of life of the Palestinian civilian population in Gaza, imposing a dire humanitarian crisis on them, further exacerbated by the current COVID-19 pandemic, and constituting a massive collective punishment.
13. Moreover, the Non-Aligned Movement reiterates its grave concern about the lack of accountability for the countless violations being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, including the killing and injury of innocent and defenseless Palestinian civilians, among them children and women. Such lack of accountability continues to fuel a culture of impunity and destabilize the situation on the ground, while diminishing the prospects for peace, and requires urgent action by the international community to address these grave violations and bring an end to this unjust situation.

Mr. President,

14. The solidarity of the international community with the just Palestinian cause must be directed to all relevant efforts in support of the independence and sovereignty of the State of Palestine in all of the Palestinian Territory occupied by Israel in 1967, with East Jerusalem as its capital, in accordance with the relevant resolutions, and to support of the admission of Palestine to the United Nations as a full Member State.
15. To conclude, on this important day the Non-Aligned Movement reiterates its unwavering commitment to a just, lasting, comprehensive and peaceful solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which is at the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Such a peaceful solution remains a long-standing objective of the Movement. In this regard, the Non-Aligned Movement reaffirms today its unwavering commitment to the restoration of the inalienable rights of the heroic Palestinian people to self-determination, including the right to their independent, democratic and viable State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem as its capital, and a just solution for the plight of the Palestine refugees on the basis of General Assembly resolution 194 (III), the pillars of a just and lasting peace.

I thank you, Mr. President.