



BANGLADESH

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Statement by

H.E. Mr. Abul Hassan Mahmood Ali

the Hon'ble Chairman, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Member of Parliament of the People's Republic of
Bangladesh
at the Security Council Open Debate on the agenda item "The situation in the Middle
East, including the Palestinian question"

New York, October 24, 2011

Madam President,

I begin by thanking your country, Nigeria and you personally for steering this very important open debate on the situation in the Middle East. At the outset, I express our sincere condolence at the demise of Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia. We also express our condolence at the loss of lives and property in the recent earthquake in Turkey.

I convey our appreciation to Under Secretary General, Mr. Lynn Pascoe for his comprehensive briefing this morning.

Bangladesh delegation aligns itself with the statements delivered by the distinguished representatives of Egypt and Kazakhstan on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Organization of the Islamic Cooperation, respectively. In addition, I wish to briefly make certain points that Bangladesh believes to be of importance.

Madam President,

In order to achieve a lasting solution in the Middle East, it is very important to address the key issue, which is prolonged and illegal occupation of the Arab territories by Israel. We believe that the occupying power should immediately cease its continued settlement activity which remains the key blockage to the resumption of direct negotiations between Israel and Palestine.

We commend President Mahmoud Abbas' leadership of the Palestinian Authority, and continued Palestinian State-building efforts, especially in the areas of governance, rule of law and human rights, livelihoods, productive sectors, education and culture, health, etc.

But, we are concerned at the destruction by the occupying Power, of properties, homes, economic institutions, construction of the wall, contrary to international law, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, which have hampered the already critical socio-economic situation being faced by the Palestinian population. We are also worried because of the Israeli military operations and the continuing Israeli policy of closures and severe restrictions on the movement of people and goods, including humanitarian personnel as well as food, medical, and other essential supplies, in the Gaza Strip, which are causing civilian casualties and therefore call for maximum restraint with respect for international humanitarian law.

Madam President,

We express our concern at the inhuman treatment of Palestinian prisoners languishing in Israeli jails. My delegation is however pleased at the recent Egyptian-brokered prisoner-exchange deal according to which Israeli soldier "Gilad Shalit" has been released in exchange for more than 1000 Palestinian prisoners.

Madam President,

My delegation believes that the Fourth Geneva Convention, the relevant General Assembly resolutions, particularly Security Council Resolutions, 242, 338, and 425, the principle of "land-for-peace", and the Madrid Conference Terms of Reference, which guarantee Israel's withdrawal from all occupied Arab and Palestinian territories back to June 4, 1967 line, the Road Map, the Arab Peace Initiative - are the best guides for achieving a two-State solution.

The principled support of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination from all corners of the globe, both bilaterally and multilaterally, has been an essential pillar of Palestinian resilience over the decades. My delegation welcomes in this regard the Palestinian President Abbas's Speech of 23 September 2011 at the General Assembly and his formal submission of application for membership to the Secretary General of the United Nations. It is also heartening to note that more than 130 countries have recognized the state of Palestine on the basis of 1967 borders. It would therefore be morally befitting for this august body to unanimously respect the will of the majority of the member states and to endorse the application of Palestine.

Madam President,

Let's turn to the situation in Lebanon and in the Occupied Syrian Golan Heights. We call upon the concerned parties to fully respect Lebanon's sovereignty and stop recurrence of breaches to Security Council Resolution 1701. We further demand that the occupying state immediately halt its actions to alter legal, physical and demographic status of the Occupied Syrian Golan Heights in accordance with the Security Council Resolution 497.

In conclusion, let me reiterate Bangladesh's long-standing position that the continued illegal occupation of Palestine over the past six decades is the root cause of violence, unrest and destabilization in the region. Let me also reiterate our full support for a lasting peace for all inhabitants of the region both Arabs and Israelis and our strong commitment for the realization of an independent, sovereign and viable State of Palestine with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital, living side-by-side and in peace with all its neighbors.

I thank you, Madam President.