



BANGLADESH

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Statement by

H.E. Dr. A. K. Abdul Momen

Ambassador and the Permanent Representative

Permanent Mission 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, January 24, 2012

Mr. President,

I begin by thanking your country, South Africa and you personally for steering this important open debate on the situation in the Middle East. I convey our appreciation to Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs Mr. Oscar Fernandez-Taranco for his briefing this morning. We are also grateful to the Deputy Minister of International Relations and Co-operation of South Africa, H.E Mr. Ebrahim Ismail Ebrahim for his presence in chairing the session and delivering the speech.

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.

Mr. President,

May I congratulate Palestine for becoming a member of the UNESCO, the first UN agency to admit it as a full Member in December, 2011. Member States of UNESCO deserve credit for adopting this decision.

My delegation commends the recent meeting for negotiations between Palestine and Israel brokered by Jordan. We appreciate the efforts of King Abdullah II of Jordan and the country's Foreign Minister Nasser Judeh for facilitating this meeting.

Mr. President,

We reiterate our concern over the impact of Israel's continued settlement activity in the West Bank and its adverse effects on economic development and Palestinians' access to basic services. The ongoing blockade of Gaza and the impact the closure has had on economic development and the plight of living in the area is also worrying.

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 also express our concern at the inhuman treatment of Palestinian prisoners languishing in Israeli jails. We also condemn the detention of Palestinian Legislative Council Speaker, Dr. Aziz Dweik and we expect the occupying forces to release him immediately as it is a violation of international law and human rights principles, and secondly, such detention doesn't help in creating a conducive

environment for a dialogue for a two-state solution. We are saddened, puzzled and we find difficulty to understand that Jewish people that suffered discrimination and ill treatment are now perpetuating ill and inhuman treatment on Palestinians.

Mr. 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. It is heartening to note at least 131 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.

Mr. President,

With regard to the situation in Lebanon and in the Occupied Syrian Golan Heights, my delegation calls upon the concerned parties to fully respect Lebanon's sovereignty and stop recurrence of breaches to Security Council Resolution 1701. We further urge the occupying state to 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 us remind the stakeholders that neither occupation nor destruction of Palestinian houses and olive trees can help achieve peace for the people of Israel. Principle of 'Live and Let Live' in harmony within the legal, not occupied jurisdiction, will lead to peace and security to the states of Israel and Palestine. 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, Mr. President.