



BANGLADESH

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Statement by

Dr. A.K. Abdul Momen
Permanent Representative
Of the People's Republic of Bangladesh to the United Nations
at the Security Council Open Debate on the agenda item "The situation in the Middle
East, including the Palestinian question"

New York, 15 October 2012

Mr. President,

I thank Guatemala for scheduling this very important open debate on the situation in the Middle East. Allow me to express our appreciation to Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Jeffrey Feltman for his comprehensive briefing this morning.

Bangladesh delegation aligns itself with the statements of the distinguished representatives of Iran 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,

The people of Palestine are being denied of their fundamental rights to self-determination and to live freely in their own land, and displaced Palestinians have been denied of their rights to return home and live with dignity and safety. Achieving a lasting solution in the Middle East, requires Israel's complete and unconditional withdrawal from the occupied Palestinian territories, including East Jerusalem.

Mr. President,

The extensive destruction by the occupying Power, of properties, homes, economic institutions, construction of newer walls, confiscation of land and farms, settlement activity and indiscriminate Israeli airstrikes and incursions that are contrary to international law, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, have seriously hampered the already critical dire socio-economic situation being faced by the Palestinian population. In this regard, we support the invitation from the Palestinian Observer Mission to the Security Council to visit the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

The humanitarian situation in Gaza remains an issue of concern. One could duly concur with Palestinian resentment that the Paris Protocol has been implemented selectively in favor of Israel, insofar as provisions that would have allowed the Palestinian Authority to enter into free trade agreements with other states and that mandated access to Israeli markets have not come about. We urge Israel to lift its harsh restrictions in order to ease the plight of civilians and bring an end to the blockade of Gaza. Walls and blockade don't work in the long run and no wonder, Berlin Wall had to come down.

The situation of the Palestinian prisoners in Israeli detention centers aggravated the plight of those who truly believe in human rights and fairness of justice. Those detained must be charged and face trial with judicial guarantees, or released without delay. We know, 'Justice delayed is Justice denied'.

Mr. President,

During the last general debate of the General Assembly on 27 September, 2012, the Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas indicated that Palestine intended to seek upgraded status at the UN—from “permanent observer” to “non-member observer state”—via a resolution in the General Assembly. Since the Palestinian application for becoming an UN member remains unresolved in the Security Council since September 2011, we believe the Palestine’s current demand warrants due consideration from the world body.

However, we are saddened to see that there is very little momentum this year to break the impasse as compared to September 2011 when the Quartet (comprising the UN, the EU, Russia and the US) issued a new timeline for the Middle East peace process that called for each side to submit a comprehensive proposal on borders and security within three months followed by direct negotiations leading to a solution by the end of 2012. Though the Palestinian Authority submitted its proposals soon after, the Israeli government did not meet the initial three month deadline, and no direct negotiations have taken place. May I add, the EU has got added responsibility by receiving the Nobel Peace Prize this year and let it prove its worth by taking a lead role in realizing peace and security in the Middle East.

Mr. President,

We believe that the best guides for achieving a two-States solution are the relevant General Assembly and Security Council resolutions, i.e 242, 338, and 425, the principle of “land-for-peace”, the Madrid Conference Terms of Reference, the Road Map and the Arab Peace Initiative.

Mr. President,

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. Here, 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, Mr. President.