



BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA

**STATEMENT DELIVERED BY H.E. MR. JORGE ARREAZA
MINISTER OF PEOPLE'S POWER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

**MEETING OF THE MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE OF THE NON-
ALIGNED MOVEMENT (NAM) ON PALESTINE**

NEW YORK, 26 SEPTEMBER 2018

**Distinguished Ministers of Foreign Affairs,
Distinguished Heads of Delegation,
Esteemed Ambassadors,**

1. Please allow me, first of all, on behalf of President Nicolás Maduro Moros and the People of Venezuela, to welcome your participation in this meeting of the Ministerial Committee of the Non-Aligned Movement on Palestine, on the sidelines of the 73rd session of the UN General Assembly. Your participation is evidence of the full commitment and solidarity of us all with the noble Palestinian cause.
2. At present, when more than fifty years of illegal and brutal Israeli occupation have passed, the international community is still failing the heroic Palestinian people in their right to become a full-fledged State to the United Nations, for their enjoyment of total independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity.
3. It is important to always keep in mind the painful legacy of the illegal Israeli occupation: the construction of the wall of shame in the West Bank; the cruel and inhumane blockade that affects more than 2 million Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip; the more than 7,000 Palestinians that languish in Israeli prisons, including more than 500 children and more than 700 people in administrative detention centers; forced displacements; the devastating consequences for the social and economic development of Palestine; the severe humanitarian situation that unfortunately continues to deteriorate day by day; the denial of the most fundamental rights; and this dire list goes on and on. All these actions are part of a deliberate attempt by Israel to destroy every possibility of an independent and sovereign State of Palestine.
4. Unfortunately, the Israeli Government, with full impunity and shielded in the protection provided thus far by its powerful ally, continues to carry out criminal policies and a degrading process of dispossession, unparalleled in contemporary history. Israel keeps on establishing and expanding new settlements for Israeli settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. The land confiscations and destruction of homes have become standard practice by the Occupying Power, with the sole purpose of strengthening their domain over the Occupied Palestinian Territories, including East Jerusalem, eradicating all traces of the Palestinian community, altering the legal, geographic and demographic character and status

of the occupied territories, with the ulterior motive of making the right to self-determination of the peoples unfeasible.

5. In this regard, we reject, once again, any unilateral and provocative measure that intends to alter the *status quo* of the Holy City of Jerusalem, including the decisions made by some Governments of relocating their Embassies to Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, in contravention of Security Council resolutions, which are legally binding to all Member States of the United Nations.
6. The suffering of the Palestinian people cannot continue any longer. The situation on the ground is extremely grave and clearly unsustainable. The international community must act, and the Occupying Power must respect its obligations under international law. Thus the need, among others, that those responsible for the massacres against Palestinians, including women and children, are held accountable for their crimes.
7. In this regard, we underscore the importance of ensuring the full implementation of all relevant UN Security Council resolutions on this matter, including resolution 2334 (2016)- proudly co-sponsored by our country during its non-permanent membership of the Security Council-, which offers the most feasible path towards peace since it lays out the fundamental requirements and parameters for a peaceful, just, and lasting solution that would preserve the two-State solution on the basis of the pre-1967 borders. This is the only way to alleviate the situation on the ground, defuse tensions and foster a propitious climate to achieve peace. We should then bolster the implementation of this solution, which is widely supported by the majority of the international community. There cannot be a plan B.

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8. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela makes the Palestinian cause and the suffering of these heroic people its own. Therefore, we reaffirm today our steadfast and firm commitment with this noble cause. Everything we do will not be enough until the dream of their inhabitants of building a future without foreign interference is realized; and until we put an end to what the UN Humanitarian

Coordinator in Palestine, Mr. Robert Piper, described as the “the most long-standing protection crisis in the UN's history”

9. Furthermore, we wish to express our serious concern for the following three issues:
 - a. Israel's enactment of the so-called “Nation-State Law”, which explicitly endorses the policy of apartheid and ethnic discrimination against Palestinian citizens, and the plans of the Occupying Power of carrying out their policies of colonization, segregation, and discrimination against the Palestinian people.
 - b. The inability of the UN Security Council to fulfill its mandate on the question of Palestine, due to the prevalence of particular interests of one of its permanent members. It is of utmost importance to take measures to ensure the protection, safety and security, and well-being of the Palestinian civilian population in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, particularly in the Gaza Strip, in order to avoid further escalation of violence and bloodshed. In this context, we welcome the proposals presented by the Secretary-General, Mr. António Guterres.
 - c. The decision made by the same country that in the Security Council vetoed the draft resolution aimed at providing international protection to the Palestinian people, and which is now intending to punish the State of Palestine by completely withdrawing its contributions to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), which mandate is no other than providing vital humanitarian and development assistance. This serious decision, arbitrary and unjustified as ever, attempts against the stability in the region while impacting negatively on the well-being of the most vulnerable sectors of the Palestinian people. And this is just the result of the inability to crush the will of the Palestinian people and leaders.
10. Moreover, we believe that today, more than ever before, the international community must be firm in the defense of the just Palestinian cause and take steadfast and concrete actions that lead the parties to sit at the negotiation table. Therefore, we convey our full support to the proposal of President Mahmoud Abbas of convening a Peace Conference on the basis of the long-standing terms of

reference adopted by the international community, by virtue of the relevant UN resolutions, the Madrid Principles, including that of land for peace, the Arab Peace Initiative and the Quartet Roadmap

11. Our country calls for undertaking and intensifying all the necessary regional and international efforts to support this objective, which fundamental scope is to put an end to this injustice and promote a just and lasting solution. In this vein, we reiterate our unwavering support to the Palestinian people and to the realization of their legitimate inalienable rights and national aspirations, including self-determination, freedom and independence of the State of Palestine, a sovereign nation with East Jerusalem as its capital, living in peace with the State of Israel within internationally recognized and safe borders, on the basis of the pre-1967 borders. At the same time, we reiterate our full support to its prompt incorporation as a full-fledged member of the United Nations while we ratify the need of a just solution to the Palestinian refugees, based on the provisions established under General Assembly resolution 194 (III).
12. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela seizes this opportunity to congratulate the State of Palestine on its election as Chair of the Group of 77 and China for 2019 as we wish it the greatest success. Rest assured that you can count on our full support, and we hope to work together, including within the framework of the Joint Coordination Committee of G-77 and NAM.
13. Palestine needs now more than ever before of friendly hands to help them achieve their goal of joining the world as a sovereign nation, of the support of our Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), which has made their cause our priority. The political will that has allowed the adoption of relevant UN General Assembly and Security Council resolutions must be upheld to ensure that these are respected and implemented. Let us move forward, all together, the supportive and dignifying South, side by side with Palestine and its people. It is our duty, our commitment, our fight.

Thank you.