



**CHAIR OF
THE COORDINATING BUREAU
OF THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT**



**STATEMENT TO BE DELIVERED BY THE DELEGATION OF THE
BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA, ON BEHALF OF THE
NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT (NAM), DURING THE QUARTERLY
OPEN DEBATE OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL ON “THE SITUATION IN
THE MIDDLE EAST, INCLUDING THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION”**

New York, 26 April 2018

Mr. President,

1. It is an honor for the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to take the floor on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) at this quarterly open debate on a matter to which we have historically attached special importance; namely, the Situation in the Middle East, including the Question of Palestine, particularly in the current international juncture.
2. At the outset, we would like to transmit our gratitude to [briefers] for their much valuable briefings to the Council.

Mr. President,

3. We currently live in a world that faces multiple, complex and newly emerging threats and challenges to international peace and security, which we believe must be resolutely addressed through multilateralism, within the framework of international law and the relevant resolutions. The Situation in the Middle East, including the Question of Palestine, cannot be the exception. In this regard, we, the 120 Member States of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), reaffirm hereby the full validity of the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, while reaffirming our unwavering commitment to the peaceful resolution of disputes, in accordance with Article 2 and Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations, as well as with the provisions of resolution 26/25 of 24 October 1970.

Mr. President,

4. Throughout 2017 many somber anniversaries took place, and 2018 is equally somber as this year marks the 70th anniversary of “Al-Nakba”; namely, the catastrophe and tragedy that befell the Palestinian people in 1948, by which they lost their homeland in Mandate Palestine and by which the majority of Palestinians were forcibly expelled from or fled their homeland in fear, uprooted from their cities, towns and villages, dispossessed and displaced, becoming refugees, whose tragic plight



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continues until this day. We seize this opportunity to once again call for the exertion and intensification of all necessary efforts to bring an end to this injustice and advance a peaceful and just solution. Let us not allow for the suffering of the heroic Palestinian people to continue to be prolonged in time.

5. In this regard, the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) reaffirms that the ongoing Israeli occupation and the Palestinian-Israeli conflict as a whole continue to pose a serious threat to international peace and security, which requires urgent attention and remedy, in accordance with international law, the relevant United Nations resolutions and, of course, the UN Charter itself. In addition, the Security Council must uphold its Charter duties and must act to uphold its own resolutions, which comprise the foundation for a peaceful, just and lasting solution of the conflict.
6. Moreover, we reaffirm that all measures and actions taken, or to be taken by Israel, the occupying Power, such as its illegal decision of 14 December 1981 that purports to alter the legal, physical and demographic status of the occupied Syrian Golan and its institutional structure, as well as the Israeli measures to apply its jurisdiction and administration there, are null and void and have no legal effect. In this regard, and in line with our principled position, we demand once again that Israel abides by Security Council resolution 497 (1981) and withdraw fully from the Occupied Syrian Golan to the lines of 4 June 1967, in implementation of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973).

Mr. President,

7. In relation to the Question of Palestine, the Member States of the Movement remain ready to contribute to the achievement of a peaceful, just and lasting solution of the conflict, which is why we have welcomed the peace proposal presented by H.E. President Mahmoud Abbas to the Security Council on 20 February 2018, and extended our support to his call for an international peace conference. In this vein, we call for the intensification of international and regional efforts in support of this objective, while recalling the responsibilities of the Security Council and General Assembly in this regard, including as most recently reaffirmed in Security Council resolution 2334 (2016).
8. We believe that this resolution provides the most viable path to peace, setting forth the essential requirements and parameters for a just solution, which would preserve the two-State solution on the pre-1967 lines, in respect of the longstanding terms of reference of peace endorsed by the international community, in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions, the Madrid principles, including the principle of land for peace, the Arab Peace Initiative and the Quartet Roadmap, and ensure the realization by the



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Palestinian people of their inalienable rights, including to self-determination and independence in their State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

9. Similarly, we continue to call for the full respect and implementation of all the relevant resolutions in this regard, for it is this that would create the necessary conditions to bring an end the occupation, justly resolve the conflict in all its aspects, and make Palestinian-Israeli peace and security a reality, for the benefit of both peoples, for the region and for the international community as a whole. It is imperative that action be taken immediately, in line with international law and UN resolutions, to redress the situation on the ground, de-escalate tensions, and foster an appropriate environment for the pursuit of peace.

Mr. President,

10. In relation to Gaza, the situation remains of great concern to the Movement, particularly the grave humanitarian situation, which regrettably continues to deteriorate. In this regard, the Movement reiterates its call for the complete lifting of the Israeli blockade of the Gaza Strip, which continues to impose untold humanitarian, social and economic suffering on more than 2 million Palestinian children, women and men there. The Movement stresses once again that the crisis in Gaza must be comprehensively addressed, in accordance with international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, and the relevant UN resolutions, in the context of the overall situation of the continuation of the illegitimate, belligerent, Israeli foreign occupation of the Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, since 1967, and of the unequivocal calls for an end to this half-century occupation.
11. The recent tragic events that have taken the lives of over thirty (3) innocent Palestinians and injured more than 3,600 in the Gaza Strip in less than a month is yet another reason to direct all efforts towards peace and the peaceful resolution of the conflict, rather than escalation and another reason to put an end to the prolonged tragedy and suffering of the Palestinian people. In this connection, the Movement condemns Israel's excessive and disproportionate use of force against Palestinian civilians that have engaged in the "Great March of Return", a peaceful civilian protest against Israel's illegal occupation, oppression and dispossession of the Palestinian people for a half-century. We call for international action, particularly by the Security Council, to ensure accountability for and a cessation of the violations being committed by the occupying Power.
12. Moreover, the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) welcomes the statements made by the international community, including the Secretary-General of the United Nations, governments, regional organizations and human rights organizations, which reaffirmed the right to peaceful protest and called for independent and transparent investigations into the killings perpetrated by the Israeli occupying forces of Palestinian civilians taking part



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in the peaceful protests. Moreover, as Israel has clearly abdicated its obligations as the occupying Power to protect the civilian Palestinian population, in respect of the IV Geneva Convention, the Movement calls for the international community to ensure the protection of Palestinian civilians in the Gaza Strip and across the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, in order to address the dire state of insecurity of the occupied population and prevent the loss of more innocent human life.

13. In this connection, the Member States of the Movement express their grave concern about the lack of accountability for all the violations committed by Israel, which do nothing more but foster impunity, and further destabilize the situation on the ground and diminish peace prospects, while reaffirming the importance of ensuring that the Occupying Power complies with its duties and responsibilities in virtue of international law. Otherwise, it would be alarming that a country with such a background becomes a non-permanent member of this very body entrusted with the maintenance of international peace and security and the implementation of the resolutions it adopts.
14. To conclude, Mr. President, the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) reaffirms its abiding solidarity with the Palestinian people, as well as its unwavering support for their just cause, while renewing its commitment to further strengthen and coordinate the international efforts to promote a just, lasting, comprehensive and peaceful solution to the Question of Palestine in all its aspects. On the eve of the 70th anniversary of their tragic Nakba, we further reaffirm our commitment to continue supporting the heroic Palestinian people in their quest to achieve justice and fulfill their inalienable rights and legitimate national aspirations, including their right to self-determination, freedom and independence in their independent State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem as its capital. Only a comprehensive solution to the Question of Palestine will allow us to achieve the long-sought peace in the Middle East region.

I thank you, Mr. President.