Permanent Observer Mission of the State of Palestine to the United Nations



البعثة المراقبة الدائمة لدولة فلسطين لدى الأمم المتحدة

Statement by H.E. Riyad Mansour, Minister and Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations, before the United Nations Security Council, Emergency meeting on the Situation in the Middle East, including the Palestine question, 30 October 2023

Mr. President.

Dag Hammarskjold said: "the United Nations was not created in order to bring us to heaven, but to save us from hell".

Gaza is now hell on earth. Saving humanity from hell today means for the United Nations to save Palestinians in Gaza.

The 2.3 million Palestinians living there are enduring suffering that no human beings should endure. They are besieged and bombed, with nowhere safe to go.

Half the homes in Gaza have been destroyed or damaged. Gaza population is comprised of 70% of refugees. Over 1.4 million Palestinians have been forcibly displaced from their homes.

Now virtually all of our people in Gaza are homeless, displaced, moving from one family home to another, from a hospital to a church, from a mosque to an UNRWA school, sleeping in their cars, sleeping in the streets, and still being killed wherever they go to convince them they will not be safe anywhere in Gaza.

A leaked document prepared by the Israeli intel Ministry confirms that in fact relocating Palestinians from Gaza to tent cities in Sinai is not a threat we imagined but a reality Israel is trying to impose.

Over 8000 Palestinians have been killed, including over 3000 in the south of Gaza, where Israel has pushed – forcibly transferred – hundreds of thousands of people.

These staggering figures keep rising with every minute that action is delayed to stop the onslaught against our people.

One figure more than any other explains the magnitude of this man-made tragedy.

3500 Palestinian children have been killed by Israel in just three weeks, more than the annual number of children killed across the world's conflict zones since 2019, according to Save the children.

Let me repeat, 3500 Palestinian children have been killed by Israel in just three weeks, more than the annual number of children killed across the world's conflict zones combined since 2019.

Every 5 minutes, a Palestinian child is killed. How many more days will you wait to say enough, to recognize this is a war against our children. Our children. Our children who are, like yours, children of God, children of light. Enough darkness, enough death.

Mr. President

The General Assembly, representing the countries of the world, adopted a resolution grounded in humanity, morality, legality, and the rejection of double standards, and of any justification for the killing of innocent civilians, the siege against them, their captivity and their forced transfer.

It took a stand that we will not forsake humanity, we will not forfeit international law.

The General Assembly called for an immediate, durable and sustained humanitarian truce. This must happen immediately. It stressed that humanitarian aid and access cannot be further delayed or obstructed

and must be at levels that correspond to the immense needs created by this inhumane Israeli siege and the indiscriminate attacks it is perpetrating as we speak. Thousands more lives hang in the balance. This resolution must be immediately and fully implemented.

This Security Council must take example on the General Assembly and its wisdom and uphold its responsibilities to put an end to this bloodshed, which constitute an affront to humanity, war crimes and crimes against humanity, and a clear and imminent danger for regional and international peace and security.

I want to thank the Arab group and the OIC Member States for their relentless mobilization, the countries of the global south for their support as well as all the countries which engaged constructively and responsibly to allow us to adopt a substantive resolution with overwhelming support from across the globe.

Given that 11 members of this Council have voted in favor of the resolution, that 3 abstained and one voted against, it is clear that the text enjoys broad support and must serve as basis for a clear and unequivocal position of the Council at this critical juncture.

Mr. President.

2.3 million Palestinians in Gaza face death every day and every night. Save them. We have 2000 people under the rubble. Allow us to find them, save those who still can be saved, and bury in a dignified manner those who have perished.

Allow the 20,000 wounded to be properly treated. Allow doctors to fix broken bodies and God to heal wounded souls.

Allow humanitarian workers to perform their life-saving duties even as they mourn their colleagues, 63 alone among UNRWA staff killed in Israeli attacks.

Allow them to conduct their sacred mission in safety and not under the bombs. Allow hospitals to resume their work to save lives and not be transformed into morgues.

Allow members of the same families who have survived to embrace each other and to mourn their loved ones who did not.

Allow us to pay the tribute owed to the families wiped off the face of this earth and whose names join the long list of bereaved families etched in our collective memory.

Allow people who still have homes standing to go home and allow millions of people to start thinking once more about how to rebuild their lives despite the depths of the death, devastation, and destruction they endured, despite the indelible traumas.

Treat us as human beings, with the respect we deserve. Show respect for our inherent dignity, not in words but in deeds. No one should justify our killing or find reasons to give more time to the killer. Call for an end of this assault on an entire nation. Stop the killings in the West Bank by settlers and occupation forces and the forced displacement underway there.

Palestinians, as human beings, have rights that must be upheld and they are entitled to protection. They have, as a people, rights that have long been denied and must now be recognized so we can all live in peace and security.

No assault or war will ever end this conflict or resolve this injustice, it will only deepen and widen it. We have said time and time again there is no military solution to this conflict. We are yet to demonstrate there is a peaceful one. Every minute counts. Every minute is the difference between life and death for Palestinians in Gaza.