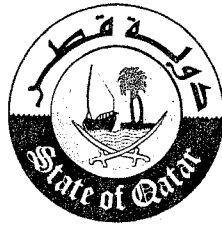


بِسْمِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



STATEMENT
OF
THE GROUP OF ARAB STATES

DELIVERED BY

**His Excellency Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser
Permanent Representative of the State of Qatar
to the United Nations
Chairman of the Group of Arab States**

BEFORE

**The Resumed Tenth Special Emergency Session of
the United Nations General Assembly:
Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and
the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory**

NEW YORK, 17 NOVEMBER 2006

Madam President,

I would like, first of all, to thank you on behalf of the Group of Arab States for accepting our request for the resumption of the Tenth Special Emergency Session of the United Nations General Assembly to consider the Israeli aggression in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, especially after the latest escalation of acts of aggression in the Gaza Strip since the beginning of this month.

In response to that serious escalation, the Group of Arab States has requested an emergency meeting of the Security Council and submitted to it a fair and balanced draft resolution after consulting with the Council members, but the Council failed to shoulder its responsibility towards the maintenance of international peace and security, and the resolution never saw the light because one of the Council's permanent members used its veto power, repeating what happened last July. Consequently, and according to the resolution adopted by the Council of Arab Foreign Ministers in its meeting in Cairo on 12 November 2006, the Group of Arab States has requested the resumption of the Tenth Special Emergency Session of the General Assembly to consider the Israeli aggression.

Madam President,

The latest Israeli aggression has led to the deaths of dozens of Palestinian civilians and the injury of hundreds in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank in one week only. It has destroyed numerous vital facilities of the Palestinian people, in grave violation of international law, international humanitarian law and human rights law. In particular, it represents a clear and flagrant violation of the relevant provisions of the 1949 Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilians in Time of War, and contravenes relevant Security Council resolutions.

The consequences of Israel's military operations have also affected most of the population of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Gaza has become a vast prison in which the people have been seriously short of their basic needs and their freedom of movement, leading to a further deterioration of the already deteriorated humanitarian situation of the Palestinian population.

Madam President,

The excessive and indiscriminate use of armed force and other illegal practices of the occupation forces, like the firing at Palestinian women during a peaceful demonstration in Beit Hanoun, are proof that the military campaign has exceeded its declared objective, and that it falls within the context of policies of killing, suppression, intimidation and collective punishment implemented by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people. Israel's right to defend its citizens does not give it the right to resort to such illegal and inhumane excessive practices, which only result in hindering the opportunities for the revival of the peace process.

Madam President,

It is truly confounding that the international community should remain silent in the face of Israel's blatant aggression against defenseless Palestinians. That silence has only encouraged Israel to commit further offences against the Palestinian people, culminating in the massacre committed on 8 November against innocent civilians in the sight of the entire world, in which the occupation forces fired several artillery shells on a residential neighborhood, killing about 20 people and injuring more than 40, most of them innocent women and children, and which was condemned by the Human Rights Council in its resolution adopted on 15 November, by which the Council also decided to send a fact-finding mission to the region. We condemn that massacre, which is in continuation of the violations repeatedly committed by the occupying Power in the occupied Palestinian territories, which have killed more than 100 Palestinian children since the beginning of this year alone.

For this reason, the international community is called upon to act fast in order to stop the Israeli aggression against the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, to hold accountable those who are responsible for these crimes, and to begin to take definitive and concrete steps to revive the stagnant Middle East peace process on all tracks, within the framework of the agreements reached to date and in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions, the terms of reference of the peace process, the road map and the Arab peace initiative.

The international community, as represented by the General Assembly after the failure of the Security Council to address the Palestinian issue, is called upon to take these steps and to consider actions to protect the Palestinian civilians through an international mechanism for stemming Israel's aggression, ending the suffering of the Palestinian people and for the return to the table of negotiations in order to reach the desired comprehensive settlement.

Madam President,

Allowing Israel to continue its disregard for international law and its flagrant defiance of the resolutions of the Security Council, the General Assembly, the former Human Rights Commission and the Human Rights Council will result in the loss of the credibility of the Organization and will instill frustration and a sense of hopelessness that do not serve the purposes of peace and stability in the Middle East. The failure of the Security Council last week to adopt a resolution that condemns that flagrant Israeli aggression and calls for the protection of civilians and the resumption of the peace process obstructs the role of the Security Council in addressing the developments of the Arab-Israeli conflict, and is considered a message that encourages Israel to take its aggression further, thereby increasing the level of tension and resulting in the continuation of the cycle of violence.

Therefore, the Group of Arab States has decided to submit to the General Assembly a draft resolution that is fair and whose language is balanced. We call upon all Member States to vote for this resolution.

Thank you, Madam President.