



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



**Statement by H.E. Mr. Rodrigo Malmierca Díaz, Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, at the General Assembly debate on agenda item 18: "Question of Palestine"
New York, 29 November 2007.**

Mr. President,

I have the honor to address the General Assembly on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Today we are commemorating the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, a date in which the international community reaffirms its support of this heroic people's efforts to exercise its inalienable right to self-determination and to achieve independence and freedom. Today, we recall that the Palestinian people have for nearly 60 years suffered from statelessness, dispossession and dispersal in exile, awaiting fulfilment of their right to return, and have for more than 40 years suffered under a brutal foreign occupation, denied their inalienable human rights, and on this occasion we must pledge to redouble our efforts to bring an end to this injustice by exerting the necessary efforts to resolve the question of Palestine in all its aspects and to achieve the peace and justice that are long overdue.

Mr. President,

The Non-Aligned Movement expresses its grave concern about the constant deterioration of the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, particularly as a result of the excessive and indiscriminate use of force by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian civilian population and its many other illegal policies and practices.

NAM condemns the prolonged Israeli military occupation of the Palestinian Territory since 1967 and expresses grave concern over the distressing developments in the recent period. For four decades, Israel has been unrelentingly violating international law, including international humanitarian and human rights law, in its actions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. During this time, the occupying Power has been committing grave human rights violations against the Palestinian people, including reported war crimes.

Moreover, for four decades, Israel has carried out deliberate and unlawful policies and practices aimed at altering the demographic composition, character and nature of the Palestinian land and at de facto annexing that land, particularly via measures such as the confiscation of large areas of Palestinian land, implementation of its illegal colonial settlement policy and, since 2003, its illegal construction of a Wall in the West Bank, including in and around East Jerusalem. Israel continues to pursue these illegal policies and measures to this day in total disrespect for and in contravention of international law, including in particular the Fourth Geneva Convention, U.N. resolutions and the 9 July 2004 Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice.

In addition, Israel continues to impose a humiliating and discriminatory network of hundreds of checkpoints and roadblocks throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, seriously fragmenting and undermining the contiguity and integrity of the Territory and completely isolating East Jerusalem from the rest of the West Bank, to impose closures, to seal-off the Gaza Strip, to arrest and detain thousands of Palestinian civilians, and to carry out intense military raids and incursions in Palestinian population centers, causing extensive loss of life and injury to Palestinian civilians, including children, and the deliberate and widespread destruction of property and land.

NAM condemns all such illegal actions by Israel, the occupying Power, and calls for their immediate cessation. Furthermore, NAM believes that these illegal Israeli actions, including ongoing military attacks, have seriously undermined the functioning of the Palestinian Authority and have undoubtedly contributed to the growing polarization in the Palestinian society. NAM expresses hope for the speedy restoration of Palestinian national unity, which is important for the achievement of their legitimate national aspirations and goals.

Mr. President,

NAM underscores the severity of the critical situation being faced by the Palestinian civilian population in the Gaza Strip due the suffocating siege and closure of all its crossings by Israel, the occupying Power. Such unlawful collective punishment of the Palestinian civilian population has caused the further deterioration of socio-economic conditions, leading to the widespread of incidence of poverty and hunger, and has caused the humanitarian situation to continue to deteriorate to deeply disturbing levels. Israel, must respect its obligations under international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, and cease all such illegal and inhumane practices against the Palestinian people in Gaza.

In a dangerous development on the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, Israel's Security Cabinet decided to declare the occupied Gaza Strip as a "hostile territory", declaring its intention to cut off power and fuel supplies to the already isolated and imprisoned Palestinian civilian population in the Gaza Strip. This cruel decision by Israel amounts to a violation of international law, including international humanitarian law, and the collective punishment of the entire Palestinian civilian population in the Gaza Strip. It is totally unjustifiable under any pretext and should be condemned.

Israel, the occupying Power should comply with its legal obligations under the Fourth Geneva Convention, which is applicable to the entire Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. In this connection, it must be emphasized that the Gaza Strip clearly remains a part of the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

NAM calls upon Israel, the occupying Power, to halt all of its violations and grave breaches of international law and to scrupulously abide by international humanitarian law by which it is bound as an occupying Power.

In this regard, the Movement calls for the opening of all crossings to allow for the movement of persons and goods and the unfettered access and movement of humanitarian personnel and supplies, including those of the United Nations agencies on the ground. Moreover, NAM calls for Israel's fulfilment of its responsibility to repair all of the damages caused to the infrastructure of the Gaza Strip.

Today, we also call upon all States and the international community as a whole to urgently provide economic and financial assistance to the Palestinian people during this critical period in order to alleviate the current financial and humanitarian crisis they continue to face.

Mr. President,

The NAM member countries, once again, call upon the Security Council to take on its responsibilities, take the necessary actions to fulfill its own resolutions and take necessary steps to compel Israel to respect international law and end its occupation and the illegitimate and illegal practices in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem.

It is unacceptable that the Security Council, which is mainly responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security, continues failing to fulfill its permanent responsibility regarding the Palestinian question, while it has not been solved in all its aspects, on the basis of International Law.

The unilateral measures applied by Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, are a serious threat to the prospects for peace and the possibility of achieving a negotiated agreement, based on the two-state solution on the basis of the pre-1967 borders.

Mr. President,

NAM sincerely hopes that the international meeting held this week in Annapolis will effectively contribute to the efforts by the international community to re-launch the Middle East peace process with the aim of addressing all final status issues of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as well as the Arab-Israeli conflict as a whole, the peaceful resolution of both of which are of the highest importance to all of the members of NAM and of critical importance to international peace and security.

In this regard, the Movement reaffirms the importance and centrality of international law, United Nations resolutions, the ICJ Advisory Opinion, the Arab Peace Initiative and the Road Map for the achievement of a just, lasting and comprehensive settlement of the question of Palestine and the Arab-Israeli conflict as a whole.

NAM acknowledges the common understanding agreed by the Israeli and Palestinian sides at the Meeting, and stresses the urgency to resume direct, substantive and accelerated negotiations between the parties that will address all final status issues and will ultimately bring an end to the occupation of all of the Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967 that remain occupied, namely the Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan, and lead to the establishment of the independent State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem as its capital, wherein the Palestinian people can exercise their inalienable right to self-determination as a free people and enjoy all of their other fundamental human rights, and the achievement of a just solution to the problem of the Palestine refugees in accordance with resolution 194 (III) and international law.

Mr. President,

NAM will continue to support the Palestinian people and its leadership in order to bring an end to the Israeli occupation that began in 1967, in accordance with the rules and principles of international law and the relevant UN resolutions.

On this occasion, we reaffirm our unwavering commitment to a just and peaceful solution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and to the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to exercise its self-determination and sovereignty in its independent State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

Thank you.