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Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People

Summary record of the 335th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Friday, 30 September 2011, at 10.30 a.m.

Chair: Mr. Diallo (Senegal)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.40 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

1. *The agenda was adopted.*

Update on developments since the previous meeting of the Committee

2. **The Chair**, summarizing some of the activities and developments that had taken place since the Committee's previous meeting, said that the Israeli Government had continued its expansion of settlements in the Occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem by approving the construction of nearly 4,000 homes in August and September. On 25 August and 27 September, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Mr. B. Lynn Pascoe, had briefed the Security Council on the Palestinian question.

3. In August, the Governments of El Salvador, Honduras and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines had recognized Palestine as an independent State and on 9 September, the Government of Belize had announced that it officially recognized Palestine as an independent and sovereign State within the 1967 borders.

4. On 2 September, the report of the Panel of Inquiry on the 31 May 2010 Flotilla Incident had been submitted to the Secretary-General. A group of five independent United Nations human rights experts, including Mr. Richard Falk, United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, had criticized the report, and particularly the conclusion that Israel's naval blockade of the Gaza Strip had been legal.

5. On 6 September, the Chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement had announced that during the sixty-sixth session of the United Nations General Assembly, members of the Movement would support Palestinian efforts for recognition of an independent State of Palestine based on the borders of 4 June 1967 with East Jerusalem as its capital, and for admission as a full member of the United Nations.

6. On 18 September, the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee had commended the Palestinian Authority for its implementation of the government programme and confirmed that it had the necessary institutions in place needed to form a Palestinian State.

7. On 23 September, the President of the Palestinian Authority had submitted to the Secretary-General an application for Palestine's membership in the United Nations. Later that day, the Secretary-General transmitted the application to the President of the Security Council. On the same day, the Quartet had met and issued a statement proposing a series of steps and a timetable for reaching a lasting Middle East peace agreement by the end of 2012.

The situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and developments in the political process

8. **Mr. Mansour** (Observer for Palestine) said that the international community had witnessed history the preceding week when the President of the Palestinian National Authority had submitted to the Secretary-General Palestine's application for full membership in the United Nations. The majority of the General Assembly had received the President's announcement of that effort during the General Debate warmly, thereby honouring the Palestinian people's struggle for independence. The President had not acted on his own behalf, but had manifested the will of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians, particularly those living under occupation and in refugee camps. The bid for membership had peacefully ushered in the beginning of a "Palestinian spring" and was a sign that the Israeli occupation must end immediately.

9. The fact that the Secretary-General had transmitted Palestine's application to the President of the Security Council within an hour of receiving it indicated that the bid met all of the membership provisions of the Charter. The President of the Council, too, had acted quickly and had immediately circulated the application to Council members. In a short open meeting, the Council had unanimously decided to include the application of Palestine in its agenda under the item "Admission of new members" and to defer the matter to the Council's Committee on the Admission of New Members. The Council was currently deliberating on the content of the application; the outcome of that discussion would give a clearer picture delegations' positions.

10. With the help of Member States, and in particular the present Committee, over the past two years, Palestine had built governance institutions that had been recognized by the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the European Union and United

Nations agencies. To date, 129 States had officially recognized Palestine as a State and two other Governments had announced their intention to do so in the coming days, bringing the total to 131 — more than two thirds of the membership of the General Assembly. It was clear that the international community wished to move towards an endgame to the two-State solution.

11. He hoped that the Council would shoulder its responsibility and not deny Palestine its natural and historic right to statehood. While certain parties were exerting pressure on delegations to block that bid, he relied on Palestine's many friends in the Committee to help convince the Council to approve its application and refer it to the General Assembly. In both open and closed meetings, a powerful country with veto power had expressed its intention to obstruct Palestine's efforts, but that would not deter his delegation from moving forward. Other options, including working through the General Assembly, would be considered if necessary.

12. In response to a statement recently issued by the Quartet, the President of the Palestinian Authority had indicated that Palestine endorsed some aspects of the Quartet's position and required clarification of others. Regardless of how the Quartet wished to proceed, the President had made it clear that Palestine was willing to negotiate if Israel accepted talks on the basis of the 1967 borders and agreed to cease all settlement activities in the occupied territories, including East Jerusalem, since they were illegal. However, just days after the Quartet had issued its statement, the Israeli Government had authorized the construction of 1,100 illegal units in occupied East Jerusalem, obviously rejecting its obligations under the Road Map to Mideast peace. Through that action, Israel had closed the door to negotiations before a first step could even be taken.

13. The Palestinian Authority had sent many letters to the President of the Security Council and the Secretary-General in order to document such crimes and would not relent on the issue of settlements. He urged the Committee to continue to condemn such activities and to demand their cessation. Settlement activities were in direct contradiction with negotiations. The international community should find ways to collectively force Israel to comply with its obligations, which would create an incentive for it to cease its illegal actions and open the path to negotiations.

14. The Palestinian people were counting on Member States to convince Security Council members to support its application for membership and to make it difficult for one country to stand in the way of history. The process had begun and he was certain that with the help of the Committee, which had supported Palestine for 35 years, the day would come that the flag of Palestine would be raised in front of the United Nations.

Consideration of the draft report of the Committee to the General Assembly (A/AC.183/2011/CRP.2)

15. **Mr. Borg** (Malta), Rapporteur, introducing the draft report of the Committee to the General Assembly (A/AC.183/2011/CRP.2), said that in accordance with established practice, the Secretariat would update the report as necessary, in consultation with the Rapporteur, in order to reflect any new developments that might take place before it was submitted to the General Assembly.

16. **Mr. Govender** (South Africa) said that while paragraphs 5 and 19 of the draft report summarized Palestine's recent efforts to gain recognition as a State, chapter VII (Conclusions and recommendations of the Committee) made no mention of that development. He proposed that a new recommendation, before paragraph 88 of the report, should express the Committee's support for Palestine's bid for United Nations membership.

17. **Mr. Núñez Mosquera** (Cuba) supported the proposal made by the representative of South Africa and suggested that a paragraph 87 bis, stating that the Committee encouraged the Security Council to consider the Palestinian bid for statehood in a favourable manner, might be added.

18. **Mr. Mansour** (Observer for Palestine) welcomed the proposal and said that a statement of the Committee's support for Palestine's application before the Security Council would be useful should the bid for statehood be brought to the General Assembly.

19. **Mr. Borg** (Malta), Rapporteur, invited the delegations of South Africa and Cuba to offer a formulation to the Bureau for consultation and eventual inclusion in the draft report.

20. **The Chair** invited the Committee to adopt the draft report chapter by chapter.

Chapters I to VI

21. *Chapters I to VI were adopted.*

Chapter VII

22. **The Chair** said he took it that the Committee wished to amend chapter VII along the lines proposed.

23. *It was so decided.*

24. **The Chair** said he took it that the Committee wished to adopt the draft report as a whole.

25. *The draft report, as a whole, was adopted.*

Other matters

26. **The Chair** said that two trainees from the Occupied Palestinian Territory had started the annual training programme for staff of the Palestinian Authority. In addition, two staff members of the Palestinian Authority had completed a three-week training programme in Geneva, organized by the Division for Palestinian Rights and the Assistance to the Palestinian People Unit of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). The trainees had attended meetings of the UNCTAD Trade and Development Board, the World Trade Organization Public Forum and the Human Rights Council and had consulted with United Nations agencies.

27. Lastly, he recalled that the special meeting to observe the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People would take place on 29 November and requested delegations to be represented at the ambassadorial level.

The meeting rose at 11.40 a.m.