



**General Assembly
Security Council**

Distr.: General
2 December 2013
English
Original: Spanish

**General Assembly
Sixty-eighth session
Agenda item 36
Question of Palestine**

**Security Council
Sixty-eighth year**

**Identical notes verbales dated 29 November 2013 from the
Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations addressed to the
Secretary-General and to the President of the Security Council**

The Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations has the honour to transmit a message of solidarity from Mr. Marcelino Medina González, Minister for Foreign Affairs a.i. of Cuba, in observance of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People (see annex).

The Permanent Mission of Cuba requests the circulation of this note and its annex as a document of the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 36.



**Annex to the identical notes verbales dated 29 November 2013
from the Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations
addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the
Security Council**

Havana, 25 November 2013

On behalf of the Cuban people and Government, I have the honour to address the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People on the occasion of the observance of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.

As has already become a tradition, in accordance with resolution 32/40 B, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1977, each year this date represents an opportunity to recall the day on which the General Assembly adopted resolution 181 (II), in 1947, on the partition of Palestine. That decision gave rise, the following year, to the tragedy known as al Nakba, as a result of which more than three quarters of historic Palestine was seized by force, 531 Palestinian towns and villages were destroyed and 85 per cent of the population was expelled or displaced. As a result, some 4.6 million Palestinian refugees are now scattered throughout the Middle East.

On this occasion, we reaffirm our unequivocal solidarity with the Palestinian people and the firm and decisive support of Cuba for all action aiming to promote recognition of the State of Palestine on the basis of the pre-1967 borders with its capital in East Jerusalem, and its right to join the United Nations as a full member.

Cuba supports the initiative of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People to request the General Assembly to proclaim an International Year of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, in order to increase global awareness and empathy for the cause.

On 29 November 2012, the General Assembly adopted, by a large majority, the historic decision to grant Palestine the status of observer State in the United Nations. The Security Council must take action and accept without further delay the request for recognition as a State Member of the United Nations submitted by Palestine in 2011, in line with the expressed desire of the great majority of States.

The first vote by Palestine in the General Assembly, on 18 November 2013, was an important step towards the full membership of the State of Palestine in the United Nations.

Palestine has demonstrated its commitment to the multilateral system by working with a high degree of responsibility and professionalism in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, to which it was admitted as a full member in 2011.

The Palestinian authorities have made progress in strengthening their State institutions in recent years. Numerous reports of the United Nations and other institutions have recognized the solidity of the Palestinian institutions and the capacity of the Palestinians to exercise their sovereignty in an independent State.

However, Israel's military occupation, and its increased aggression against the Palestinian people, particularly against the Gaza Strip, along with the policy of illegal settlements and other colonizing practices, which reveal its ambition to seize

the entire West Bank, erase, on the ground, the contours of a viable Palestinian State within the pre-1967 borders and, therefore, the possibility of resolving the conflict in a just and equitable manner.

We call for a peaceful, just and lasting solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and uphold the inalienable right of the people of Palestine to exercise sovereignty in an independent State. The successive resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council calling for the withdrawal of Israel from the occupied territories must be implemented.

We reiterate the need to intensify efforts to resolve the dire situation of the Palestinian refugees, in accordance with the norms and principles of international law and the relevant resolutions of the United Nations.

The steady deterioration of the political, economic, social and humanitarian situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, as a result of Israel's persistent illegal policies and practices, including grave violations of human rights and constant war crimes, is of grave concern to Cuba and to the other members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

Cuba reiterates its condemnation of the constant expansion of illegal Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, the most recent example of which was the announcement of new permits to build 1,061 dwellings in the West Bank and 1,225 in East Jerusalem, on 3 and 4 November.

This policy is a grave violation of international law, in particular article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, which prohibits the occupying Power from transferring parts of its own civilian population into the territory which it occupies; has a serious impact on the Palestinian population in general, and in particular, on the precarious living conditions of the 1.9 million Palestinian refugees registered in the Occupied Palestinian Territory; and is contrary to the objectives of the peace process.

The continuing confiscation of Palestinian lands; the illegal construction of settlements; the alteration of the demographic composition of the population; excavations; the imposition of arbitrary and racist restrictions on movement throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, especially within and around East Jerusalem; the demolition of homes; the eviction of Palestinian families in East Jerusalem and the systematic destruction of the rudimentary Palestinian economic infrastructure; among other illegal acts of incitement, provocation and aggression perpetrated by extremist settlers against the Palestinian population and their sacred sites, must end immediately, as called for in many resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly and in the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the construction of the wall, issued in 2004.

Cuba also calls for an end to the prolonged and illegal Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories, the immediate, unconditional and complete lifting of the cruel and illegal blockade against Gaza and the opening of the border crossings and checkpoints so as to allow unimpeded access of humanitarian aid, essential goods and supplies and to facilitate the transit of persons from and to the Gaza Strip. Cuba also condemns the continued existence of the Wall of Shame, which isolates entire communities and obstructs the formation of the Palestinian State.

The indiscriminate and disproportionate use of Israeli military force against the defenceless civilian population of Palestine, forced detentions, and the torture, maltreatment and humiliation of political prisoners in Israeli prisons, must come to an end. Hundreds of civilians, including 33 children and 13 women, were killed and over 1,500 wounded during the large-scale offensive by the Israeli military forces known as the “Operation Pillar of Defense”, along with over 3,000 Palestinians who were detained during that time, in addition to the thousands who remain in Israeli prisons and detention centres.

The international community cannot remain impassive and silent in the face of the abuses and violations against the Palestinian people; the cycle of violence in this territory, and its spread towards the West Bank, must be stopped. The historical debt to the Palestinian people must be paid.

On this significant date, Cuba reiterates that it will not cease to call for comprehensive, just and lasting peace for the Palestinian people and for the peoples of the Middle East in general and strict respect for all their rights. The Arab peoples, without exception, will always be able to rely on the full solidarity of the Cuban people.

(Signed) Marcelino **Medina González**
Minister a.i.
