



# General Assembly

Tenth Emergency Special session

**50<sup>th</sup>** plenary meeting

Friday, 10 May 2024, 3 p.m.

New York

Official Records

*President:* Mr. Francis . . . . . (Trinidad and Tobago)

*The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.*

## Agenda item 5 (continued)

### Illegal Israeli actions in occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

#### Draft resolution (A/ES-10/L.30/Rev.1)

**The President:** Before giving the floor for explanations of vote after the voting, may I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

**Ms. Concepción Jaramillo** (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): After careful consideration and deliberation, Panama decided to support resolution ES-10/23. That decision stems from our commitment to upholding the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, including the right of all peoples to self-determination. Panama is nonetheless of the firm belief that both peoples — Palestine and Israel — deserve to live in peace, within secure and recognized borders. In calling for two States with recognized borders and guarantees of security and peaceful coexistence, Panama seeks to contribute to the stability and prosperity of the region.

However, Panama wants to make clear in this Chamber that there are still outstanding issues to be resolved. The reason for voting in favour of Palestinian membership is our belief that Palestine, too, should have a forum in which it can express its desire for peace, just as Israel does. But we also wish to convey our grave concern about the fragility of its composition as a

matter of international law within the United Nations system. It is necessary for the Palestinian authorities to be an entity of real power that has control over its territory and imposes the rule of law and that provides guarantees of peace and security to the State of Israel, on behalf of both Palestine and those countries and organizations that are in conflict with Israel. There is a genuine need to conclude peace agreements, recognize the State of Israel and establish diplomatic relations with the State of Israel in order to consolidate a lasting peace among all actors.

That decision is grounded in our commitment to fostering dialogue, trust and a peaceful settlement to the protracted conflict in the Middle East. We see the vote as reflecting our dedication to promoting a just and sustainable peace for all parties involved. It is therefore of paramount importance that those Israeli hostages who have not yet been released be released and that an immediate ceasefire be established.

We urge the international community to redouble its efforts to secure a just and lasting solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on the basis of international law and the relevant United Nations resolutions, with the two States living in peace and security.

**Ms. Grade Zacarias** (Portugal): Seventy-seven years ago, the General Assembly adopted the landmark resolution 181 (II), laying down the foundations for the settlement of the Palestinian question. Israel was admitted as a full Member of the United Nations 75 years ago but the same right was not granted to Palestine.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room AB-0928 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (<http://documents.un.org>).



Therefore, today we voted in favour and welcome the adoption of resolution ES-10/23.

We also welcome the enhancement of the rights of Palestine until the Security Council ultimately agrees to recommend its full membership. The resolution is, in our view, in compliance with the Charter of the United Nations and it constitutes a positive step towards a free, democratic and independent State of Palestine, living side by side with Israel in peace and security within internationally recognized borders. Portugal remains committed to taking concrete, meaningful steps towards peace and the implementation of a two-State solution. In the light of those objectives, we note the most recent bilateral recognitions of the State of Palestine and we remain engaged in discussions with our partners in that regard.

Despite the numerous warnings against a ground offensive in Rafah, Israel issued an evacuation order to displace more than 100,000 Palestinians. The rest of the Gaza Strip continues to face bombardments and destruction, and there are more impediments to humanitarian aid reaching those in need. The basic standards of international humanitarian law are incompatible with such evacuation orders, which may amount to forcible transfer. Preventing further loss of life is an urgent priority.

Once again, Portugal condemns the horrific acts of terror perpetrated by Hamas against Israel on 7 October 2023. We reaffirm our call for the immediate and unconditional release of the hostages held captive by Hamas and other militant groups in Gaza. And we once again uphold the need to fully respect international humanitarian law and reiterate that the collective punishment of the civilian population is unacceptable. Therefore, we reiterate our call for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza and the immediate use of every humanitarian land crossing and entry point into the Strip, to maximum capacity and for as long as necessary. Furthermore, Portugal fully supports all credible diplomatic efforts for a sustainable peace process. The war must come to an end. The world is calling for it.

**Ms. Schwalger** (New Zealand): New Zealand voted in favour of resolution ES-10/23, which the General Assembly adopted today, approaching the resolution in a constructive and practical manner. We consider it a positive step on a pathway to an eventual two-State solution. We support its intent to make a

strong statement on Palestine's aspirations and the international community's expectations for progress on a political solution. We hope it will reinvigorate momentum towards peace and security in the region. At the same time, we voted with the clear intention that our support for the resolution does not imply recognition of Palestinian statehood. Nor does the resolution confer full United Nations membership, which requires a recommendation from the Security Council, in accordance with Article 4 of the Charter of the United Nations.

A Palestinian State is an integral part of New Zealand's long-held position on the fundamental right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and on our support for a two-State solution. We view this as a "when" rather than an "if" question. New Zealand also recognizes the importance of Palestinian participation in the United Nations and other international bodies. We supported resolution 67/19 in 2012. We believe that recognition of Palestinian statehood and admitting it as a full Member of the United Nations is inevitable. We do not consider now, in the middle of the current crisis, to be the optimal time to advance the issue of full statehood. Some important issues, such as the political authority of a future Palestinian State, remain unsettled. New Zealand calls on the parties to the conflict in Gaza, and on all who exercise influence over the parties, to focus attention on the needs of the moment. We must see an immediate ceasefire, the release of the hostages and a significant increase of aid into Gaza in order to avoid further humanitarian catastrophe and create a lasting pathway to peace.

**Ms. Horváth** (Hungary): Hungary is strongly committed to the Charter of the United Nations, and that has informed our vote today on resolution ES-10/23, on the admission of new Members to the United Nations. Our position does not prejudice or jeopardize our long-standing commitment to a two-State solution. Hungary recognizes the people of Palestine's right to self-determination, and in a spirit of solidarity we also recognized the declaration of the Palestinian State in 1988.

Our position here today is guided by our desire to preserve legal clarity and diligent processes within the institution of the United Nations regarding both the admission process and participation in the General Assembly's work. We believe that at present the resolution is not conducive to easing the situation or

finding a peaceful solution to the conflict in the Middle East. In fact, it may directly contribute to its escalation.

We should recall our condemnation of the terrorist attacks committed by the terrorist organization Hamas on 7 October, which ignited the current war in Gaza and have affected regional and global stability alike. We also reiterate our call for the immediate and unconditional release of the remaining hostages taken by terrorist organizations. While we are debating the resolution under discussion, we cannot disregard those serious facts, which are contrary to the spirit of the United Nations at the height of an ongoing crisis.

As for the procedure of admission of new Members, Article 4 of the Charter of the United Nations and rules 136 and 137 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly set out a clear process. It starts with the Security Council's recommendation, which by its very nature must be positive. It is our view that in the absence of such a recommendation, as required by Article 4, paragraph 2, of the Charter, the General Assembly is not in a position to make the determination contained in paragraph 1 of today's resolution. We see that as an ultra vires action that is not in line with the relevant rules and that could set a detrimental precedent for the future.

Hungary reiterates its commitment to working with all partners to end the crisis in Gaza without delay, and to implementing Security Council resolution 2728 (2024), including by achieving an immediate ceasefire and the unconditional release of all hostages, as well as providing full, rapid, safe and unhindered access to humanitarian aid at scale for Palestinians in need.

We believe that the only way forward to a lasting solution will be based on direct negotiations between the parties, bearing in mind that unilateral actions should be avoided, as they could further escalate the situation, especially amid the current flaring tensions. In that vein, we reiterate our support for a two-State solution that will enable the State of Israel to live side by side in peace, security and mutual recognition with an independent, sovereign and viable State of Palestine.

**Mr. Rae (Canada)** (*spoke in French*): In 1947, the General Assembly adopted resolution 181 (II) and agreed that the only viable solution for peace in the Middle East was the creation of two States. However, 75 years later, that vision has still not been realized. Canada's position on questions relating to Israel and Palestine remains and has always been guided by

our historic and unwavering commitment to a two-State solution.

The date of 7 October 2023 will forever be seared into our memories. On that day, Hamas killed more than 1,200 people, kidnapped more than 240 and committed brutal acts of sexual violence. Canada did not hesitate to condemn that attack by Hamas and to demand the release of the hostages, and it has continued to do so since then. And we will continue to ask the General Assembly to shoulder its responsibilities regarding the attack.

Thousands of Palestinian civilians have been killed since 7 October in the military conflict that has followed that fateful day. Nearly 2 million people have been displaced and an even greater number are now facing imminent starvation. The scale of the humanitarian crisis — we have to admit it and say it — is catastrophic. Canada has mourned the loss of all of those lives, and we will continue to make every effort to ensure that the rights of Israelis and Palestinians are protected in all of our activities and policies.

(*spoke in English*)

An immediate ceasefire is urgently needed. Hostages must be released. Rapid, safe and unimpeded humanitarian relief must be provided to civilians. Israel should refrain from further military operations in Rafah, which are already having devastating humanitarian consequences. Canada's approach to the crisis and to today's vote is guided by three key principles.

First, Israel has the right to exist and to defend itself, in accordance with international law.

Secondly, the Palestinian people must be able to realize their right to self-determination.

Thirdly, the protection of civilians — not just on both sides of this conflict but in all conflicts everywhere — is paramount and a strict requirement under international humanitarian law.

As the General Assembly has considered granting additional privileges for the Palestinian delegation at the United Nations, recommending that the Security Council reconsider full United Nations membership for Palestine, Canada decided to abstain in the voting on resolution ES-10/23. Let me explain why.

We agree with confirming the enhanced participation of Palestinian representatives in the United Nations, and I must say that I have appreciated

the flexibility that the Palestinian delegation has shown in finalizing resolution ES-10/23. We had good, fair, frank and detailed discussions, and I think that those discussions resulted in a better resolution. But we still have concerns about the resolution, despite best efforts, which is why we abstained in the voting. The resolution goes too far in determining that Palestinian statehood and its right to full membership have actually been achieved on the ground, as opposed to being an aspiration. The other fact we must grasp is that Hamas, which many States, including Canada, consider to be a terrorist organization — a view that was totally confirmed by their behaviour on 7 October 2023 — currently controls areas in Gaza, an essential part of the territory of the future State of Palestine. Hamas continues to hold hostages and has yet to lay down its arms or end its violent opposition to the existence of Israel. All Palestinians deserve to be led by a legitimate and representative Government, without the participation of a terrorist organization.

At the same time, the Netanyahu Government has made clear in its words and actions that it rejects the two-State solution. The numbers of illegal settlements and instances of settler violence in the West Bank are growing at alarming rates, often with impunity. We believe that there must be continued progress towards Palestinian self-determination, and we cannot afford to and will not give up. It is clear that we must urgently rebuild a credible path to achieving the two-State solution — one that gives hope to both Palestinians and Israelis that they may live side by side in peace, security and dignity. That process cannot delay the creation of a Palestinian State indefinitely. Canada is prepared to recognize the State of Palestine at the time when that is most conducive to lasting peace and — let me make it clear — not necessarily as the last step along that path. There is still work to be done, but Canada's commitment to the two-State solution, including recognizing the State of Palestine when it is appropriate, is very much there.

We will also continue to support efforts towards peace and regional stability. We will maximize pressure on Hamas and the Iranian regime, including through sanctions. We will impose sanctions on extremist settlers. We will support strengthening the Palestinian Authority and the introduction of reforms to deliver for Palestinians. We are also committed to supporting the recovery and reconstruction of Gaza in the context of a sustainable peace. The solution must also be

regional and include the full integration of Israel into the Middle East. Canada will continue to work with the international community and will keep at the centre of its efforts the need for long-term security guarantees for Israel and the national aspirations of Palestinians.

Together we must redouble our efforts to fully realize the vision that was first articulated by the General Assembly in 1947. We owe it to the Israeli and the Palestinian peoples, who deserve a brighter future and a sustainable peace. Above all, peace requires empathy. It requires an understanding of every nation's and every people's search for dignity and recognition. Let us be very clear: there are many States that still do not recognize the State of Israel today. It has been a Member State of the United Nations since 1948. At the same time, it has taken us a long time to provide Palestinians with the recognition that they deserve to allow them to become a member not only of this Organization but of others. As I have said, that work still remains to be done, but in order to do it we are going to require a leap of faith and imagination that takes us past some of the words we have heard spoken here today. We must all understand that not all Palestinians are terrorists, and it is important for us to understand that the Israelis are a people whose deep suffering, confirmed earlier in the week with the commemoration of Yom Hashoah, deserve their place as well.

**Ms. Romualdo (Cabo Verde):** It is my honour to take the floor in explanation of vote after the voting on resolution ES-10/23, entitled "Admission of new Members to the United Nations".

Cabo Verde voted in favour of the resolution, guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and stresses in that regard the principle of the equal rights and self-determination of peoples. We also recognize the importance of maintaining and strengthening international peace founded on freedom, equality, justice and respect for fundamental human rights. Our Constitution underlines that our country "is governed in international relations by the principles of national independence [and] respect for international law and human rights" and also "participates in the international fight against terrorism and transnational crime". For that reason, my country did not hesitate to condemn the heinous attacks perpetrated by Hamas on 7 October 2023. We also condemn the holding of hostages and reiterate our call for their release.



Cabo Verde condemns all forms of terrorism and/or extremism and recognizes the right of the State of Israel to live in peace and security and its right to defend itself, in compliance with international humanitarian law. However, we condemn the escalation of violence and destruction that has taken place in Palestine — in particular Gaza — since October 2023, resulting in dramatic losses of human life, including those of children, women and humanitarian workers. The Government of Cabo Verde has always made and continues to make a clear distinction between extremist movements and the Palestinian people, who deserve the full support of the international community, especially in the current context of humanitarian catastrophe. For the Government of Cabo Verde, it is important that the mechanisms of dialogue for peace be preserved, humanitarian aid be strengthened in that context and the principles of international humanitarian law be observed, with strict respect for the Charter of the United Nations and the Geneva Conventions.

Cabo Verde recognizes the right of the Palestinian people to establish their own State, in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions, and encourages all efforts to achieve that goal through negotiations. Two States and their respective peoples living side by side in peace and security — that is the only durable solution to the conflict.

The Government of Cabo Verde reiterates its position on the Israel-Hamas conflict and stresses that the Palestinian population deserves the full support of the international community, especially in the context of the current severe humanitarian situation. For the reasons we have given, Cabo Verde voted in favour of today's resolution.

**Mr. Von Uexküll** (Sweden): Sweden remains committed to a just and comprehensive resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, with the State of Israel and an independent, democratic, contiguous, sovereign and viable State of Palestine living side by side in peace and security and mutual recognition, with Jerusalem as the future capital of both States, in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the Security Council. Sweden's position on the status of the State of Palestine under international law, and its support for a two-State solution, remains unchanged. The European Union has jointly expressed its commitment to working with partners to end the crisis in Gaza without delay and to implement Security Council resolution 2728 (2024). We will continue to work for an immediate humanitarian

ceasefire, full respect for international law, including international humanitarian law, and the immediate release of all remaining hostages.

The humanitarian situation in Gaza is appalling. The entire population is suffering from acute food insecurity. The humanitarian needs are immense and the delivery of humanitarian aid into and within Gaza must increase radically to prevent further human suffering. We are facing a terrible crisis in the Middle East and the Charter of the United Nations must be followed. We believe that it would have been better if the regular process in the Security Council could have been followed, as at the moment this is not helping the efforts to achieve a two-State solution. For that reason, Sweden abstained in the voting on resolution ES-10/23.

**Ms. Del Águila Castillo** (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): We welcome the convening of a resumption of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly to take action on resolution ES-10/23, entitled "Admission of new Members to the United Nations".

Since 1947 my country has maintained a firm belief in the peaceful coexistence of the Israeli and Palestinian peoples, based on the pre-eminence of international law, in order to reach a peaceful, comprehensive and definitive solution to this conflict. That will be possible only through a two-State solution that addresses Israel's legitimate security concerns and enables the consolidation of a politically and economically viable Palestinian State. We believe that such a Palestinian State should coexist with Israel within clearly defined, secure, peaceful and internationally recognized borders, in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council. Based on those precepts, on 8 April 2013 Guatemala recognized the State of Palestine as an independent, sovereign and free nation.

We understand the need to seek a peaceful solution to the conflict, advocating for it to be facilitated by the international community, and for the United Nations to sponsor a political process aimed at promoting a just and sustainable peace in the region, with the involvement of all parties concerned.

However, if we are to achieve peace in the region, we cannot tolerate terrorist acts in the region. Guatemala condemns in the strongest terms the attack committed on 7 October 2023 by the terrorist group Hamas against the Israeli population. Those acts are contrary to every principle that this Organization is

founded on. In that connection, we continue to demand the release of all Israeli and other hostages still held by Hamas since that fateful day. As a State with a strong pacifist vocation, we recognize that the response to such attacks cannot be translated into disregard for the human rights of Palestinians, much less for obligations under international humanitarian law. We urge the parties to agree to a ceasefire immediately. A ceasefire is not antithetical to the release of hostages but a necessary measure to ensure both security and the protection of Palestinian rights. It is time to return to the path of a political solution to the conflict, not a military one. Guatemala also stresses the importance of guaranteeing access to humanitarian aid, in accordance with the order issued by the International Court of Justice on 26 January 2024, as well as the obligation to protect the Palestinian civilian population.

Allow me to reiterate what my country expressed on 1 May before the General Assembly (see A/78/PV.74) — that the veto of the Security Council's draft resolution S/2024/312, on the State of Palestine's admission to the United Nations as a full member, has once again made evident the paralysis of our highest organ in charge of maintaining international peace and security and has necessitated the convening of this meeting. It is undeniable that the admission of new Members — in this case, Palestine — to our Organization is a step forward in the quest for peace and security and justice among nations. Making a decision in that regard must be an act based on law, not subjective considerations. Article 4 of the Charter of the United Nations establishes a closed list of requirements for the admission of new Members. Moreover, the International Court of Justice stated unequivocally in its advisory opinion of 28 May 1948 that Member States are not entitled to make their consent to the admission of a new State to the Organization dependent on conditions not expressly provided by that Article. It is clear that those precepts have not been duly complied with in this case.

Finally, I want to reiterate unequivocally the urgent need to put an end to all indiscriminate aggression and to seek a peaceful and negotiated solution to the long-standing conflict. Faithful to the principle of the peaceful settlement of disputes, Guatemala expresses its willingness to support all efforts aimed at establishing a lasting peace in the region, based on mutual respect and full adherence to international law. It is for those reasons that Guatemala supported the

resolution entitled "Admission of new Members to the United Nations".

**Mr. Jackman** (Barbados): Barbados voted in favour of this important resolution (resolution ES-10/23) and strongly supports Palestine's application to join the United Nations as a full Member. In that regard, we must register our regret at the veto that was cast in the Security Council and triggered today's session (see S/PV.9609). The Council must reconsider its decision and allow the State and the people of Palestine to take their rightful place in the United Nations.

I also want to take this opportunity to inform the Assembly that the Government of Barbados decided three weeks ago to recognize and establish diplomatic relations with the State of Palestine. We did so because we firmly believe in the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and in their right to live in safety and security. We also firmly believe in the right of the State and the people of Israel to exist in safety and security, and we have repeatedly condemned the attacks of 7 October 2023. As we gather at this grave moment for our brothers and sisters in the Middle East, I would like to make two further points.

First, we reiterate our earlier calls — the calls of the Caribbean Community, the calls of countless other countries, the calls of the Secretary-General and the calls of the General Assembly — for an immediate and lasting ceasefire in the war in Gaza. We also reiterate the many calls for the immediate, unconditional release of all hostages and the provision of humanitarian assistance in all its dimensions to the people of Gaza. That surely is a condition for any further developments in that terrible conflict, which has cost thousands of innocent lives on both sides. It is also in our view an essential condition for any broader settlement for the Middle East as a whole.

Secondly, the parties to the conflict must now, even in the face of the death and destruction that they are visiting upon one another, come together to find a path to lasting peace in the Middle East. That requires all parties and their allies to negotiate in good faith, with the welfare of the people of Palestine and Israel as their guiding principle. At the heart of that lasting peace is a viable Palestinian State, in accordance with United Nations resolutions and international law. It is a State that, in accordance with resolution ES-10/23, should be a full Member of the United Nations.

**Mr. Sarufa** (Papua New Guinea): My delegation respectfully notes with interest the various positions of the States Members of the United Nations and observer States on the issue of Palestine's statehood, including those expressed in the Security Council last month, which prompted the General Assembly to address that issue today. With regard to Papua New Guinea, we have formal ties with both Israel and Palestine.

Papua New Guinea remains concerned about the serious state of affairs in Palestine and Israel, given the ongoing humanitarian peace and security challenges, their continuing impact on the lives and livelihoods of Palestinians and Israelis alike and their wider implications for the Middle East region and beyond. We therefore reiterate our call for the unconditional release of all the 7 October 2023 hostages still held by Hamas and others. We also reaffirm our call for the settlement of the ongoing serious situation by peaceful means.

We further encourage direct negotiations, including through the two-State solution, between all relevant stakeholders in Israel and Palestine, towards finding a mutually amicable and lasting political solution for Israel and Palestine to live side by side in peaceful coexistence rather than talking past each other.

Today Papua New Guinea voted against resolution ES 10/23, based on our view that any rights and privileges to be granted to parties seeking United Nations membership and their obligations arising from such an undertaking must be accorded in a manner that is fully in accordance and compliant with the Charter of the United Nations. Repeatedly circumventing the Charter for any purpose, while professing its importance, is a serious matter that is not to be taken lightly in our considered view.

As a member of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, Papua New Guinea would like to place on record, regrettably, that it disassociates itself from the statement to be delivered by the representative of Uganda on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries on today's tenth emergency special session and resolution ES 10/23, as elements therein are inconsistent with our national position on the issues before us today.

**Mr. Vasconcelos y Cruz** (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): From 1947 until today, no other matter has taken up so much of the United Nations attention as the question of Palestine. Since that year, the vast majority of the States Members of the United Nations Organization

have agreed here in the General Assembly that the existence of two States — one Jewish, one Arab — is one of the indispensable conditions for putting an end to the conflict in the Middle East.

Such is the mandate of resolution 181 (II), which led to the creation of the State of Israel in 1948 and its subsequent admission to the Organization, with my country's support. In line with that vision, Mexico has repeatedly expressed its support for the decisions of the General Assembly, which have contributed to consolidating the Palestinian State, as represented by the national Palestinian Authority. We reiterated our commitment to a just peace in the Middle East today by voting in favour of resolution ES-10/23 expanding Palestine's rights in the General Assembly. We reiterate our call on the Security Council to positively consider the request of admitting Palestine as a full Member of the Organization.

By declaring to the General Assembly in the resolution just adopted that Palestine meets the conditions provided for in Article 4 of the Charter of the United Nations, Mexico believes that a further veto to admission by the Security Council would lack any basis. We urge the permanent members of the Council to honour the statement of June 1945, in which they promised not to use "their 'veto' power wilfully to obstruct the operation of the Council".

To those who insist that the current conditions do not allow for progress towards peace, I remind them that the States represented here are the primary ones responsible for creating those conditions. I therefore urge the parties to the conflict to resume the political process as soon as possible, with the support of the international community, so as to put an end to the destructive and risky spiral of current violence.

Mexico reiterates its unequivocal condemnation of the terrorist attacks perpetrated by Hamas on 7 October last year against Israeli civilians, including women, children and older people, and calls for the unconditional release of all hostages, including one Mexican national. We echo the call by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict to allow access to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the International Independent Investigation Commission. We also reject indiscriminate attacks and violence, to which the Palestinian civilian population has been subjected by Israel.

Mexico condemns the military offensive against Rafah in view of the humanitarian catastrophe and regional escalation that could ensue. All parties, including non-State groups, are compelled to abide by international humanitarian law.

My delegation demands that an independent investigation be conducted into the alarming reports of mass graves discovered in the areas surrounding the Al-Shifa and Al-Nasr hospitals. Mexico, together with Chile, has requested the International Criminal Court to investigate the situation in Gaza. We are convinced that those found responsible of criminal conduct must be held accountable for their actions. Victims have a right to justice and accountability. That is key to the success of future efforts aimed at reconciliation.

Mexico believes that negotiation is the only peaceful way out of the spiral of violence. We therefore support the idea of convening an international peace conference in order for the parties to return to the negotiation table. We also support the diplomatic efforts that are currently under way to establish a permanent ceasefire and secure the unconditional release of all hostages. Mexico reaffirms its support for resolving this conflict in a manner that entails the existence of two States, ensures Israel's security and allows for the consolidation of an economically and politically autonomous Palestinian State coexisting with Israel within internationally recognized borders, in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions. Let us welcome Palestine as a Member of the Organization with full rights. Doing so will contribute to finding an effective solution to a problem that has plagued the international community for too many decades now.

**Mr. Wallace** (Jamaica): Let me begin by thanking you, Mr. President, for reconvening the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly today.

On 22 April 2024, the Government of Jamaica took the decision to recognize the State of Palestine. With Barbados having done so earlier that week, and Trinidad and Tobago and the Commonwealth of the Bahamas joining the list of States Members of the United Nations that recognize the State of Palestine, it is worthy of note that all 14 member States of the Caribbean Community have now recognized Palestine.

Consideration of the question of Palestinian membership in the United Nations must be made in the context of recent developments in the Middle East, notably the attacks by Hamas on Israel on 7 October

2023 and Israel's sustained military response in Gaza since that time. The Government of Jamaica not only condemned the abhorrent action of Hamas, but it also joined the international community in reiterating its deep concern about the significant loss of lives and displacement and the still unfolding humanitarian crisis arising from the ongoing hostilities in Gaza. We have been lending our voice to efforts at the regional and multilateral levels to bring an end to the hostilities in order to ensure that the humanitarian crisis is addressed as a matter of urgency.

Jamaica has also supported several United Nations resolutions on the situation in Palestine and supported the invocation by the Secretary-General of Article 99 of the Charter of the United Nations to have the Security Council consider the unfolding humanitarian crisis. We have also consistently called for the release of all hostages.

Palestine's renewed request on 2 April 2024 for the formal consideration by the Security Council of its application for United Nations membership (see A/78/837) follows an unsuccessful application for membership in 2011 (see A/66/371). In 2012, Palestine was granted the status of Permanent Observer to the United Nations by the General Assembly, a position which Jamaica also supported then.

Jamaica's position on this matter is based on our commitment to the Charter, our strong advocacy for the right of peoples to self-determination, our fundamental belief in multilateralism and the rule of law and the promotion of human rights and international humanitarian law. We have long maintained a balanced position in support of a peaceful resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, with a two-State solution that guarantees the security of Israel and the right of Palestine to an independent, viable and sovereign State within the pre-1967 borders, pursuant to Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973).

I also want to make it clear that Jamaica's recognition of Palestine is not an endorsement of Hamas, the posture and constant refrain of which have been a consistent call for the destruction of Israel. We reject that unconscionable ideology, as we reject the use of terrorism in all its forms. Our support for Palestine is within the context of our recognition of the Palestinian Authority as the internationally recognized representative of the Palestinian people and of our



belief that the promotion of a two-State solution will be strengthened by their recognition.

In the light of that, Jamaica voted in favour of the resolution, and we reiterate our position that the State of Palestine should be accorded full membership of the United Nations, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and consistent with the established procedures and practice of the Organization. We therefore join the call for the Security Council to reconsider the application for membership of the State of Palestine, taking due note of the position expressed by the General Assembly here today. In the interim, we further support the enhanced participation of the State of Palestine as an Observer State in the activities of the General Assembly, as set out in the annex to the resolution.

**Mr. Kimani** (Kenya): The Palestinian people honour us with their application to become a full Member of the United Nations. Kenya was proud to vote in favour of today's historic resolution (resolution ES-10/23), granting additional rights and privileges to the State of Palestine, and to urge the Security Council to reconsider that application as soon as possible. For decades, we have supported the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination. After all, our very identity as a free people and as an independent State was forged through self-determination. When the United Nations was created in 1945, we were a colonial territory in which formerly free nations were under the brutal yoke of an imperial Power. It was our struggle for independence, as African nationalists joined with other worldwide struggles, that won us independent Kenya. We cannot deny others who legitimately seek self-determination any more than we can deny our very being as a nation.

The Palestinian people aspire for all facets of their governance to be sovereign and peace-loving and to be reflected in a State that embraces the obligations of full membership, as demanded by Article 4 of the Charter of the United Nations.

However, in the embattled Gaza Strip and the increasingly troubled West Bank, the elusive grace of peace is a distant dream. The brutal Hamas assault on Israel on 7 October 2023, which claimed more than 1,200 lives and led to the abduction of 240 civilians and soldiers, stands as a grievous chapter in the annals of conflict. That act of terror, which Kenya sternly and unequivocally condemns, is a stark violation of the

sanctity of life and peace. Terrorism, irrespective of its professed justifications, is a scourge that erodes the pursuit of negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement and resort to regional arrangements or other peaceful means that we have embraced as Members of the United Nations.

Following the devastating assault by Hamas, Israel's justified military response has had immense ethical, legal and humanitarian consequences. Sadly, the scale and intensity of the military operations in Gaza have led to severe humanitarian harms, with multiple reports indicating that many of the casualties are non-combatants, a distressing number of whom are children. The logistical restrictions imposed on Gaza by Israel have severely limited access to essential services and goods for the non-combatant population. The impacts on non-combatants, critical civilian objects and humanitarian workers, including those working for the United Nations, have frequently deviated from international law and international humanitarian law.

Over the years, Kenya has consistently backed multiple resolutions that advocate for Palestinian statehood and self-determination. Our commitment is firmly held, reflecting our belief that full membership in the United Nations is foundational to any State's sovereignty and equality. We therefore urge a united Security Council to play its role in supporting the conditions for the secure and peaceful existence of Palestinian independence. Those efforts must begin with an immediate humanitarian ceasefire in Gaza and the unconditional release of all hostages, followed by a resumption of dialogue without preconditions that is aimed at realistically achieving the two-State solution. That approach is not merely a pathway to peace but also a strategic necessity that addresses the core aspirations of both Israelis and Palestinians. We urge all States, leaders and organizations with influence on Israeli and Palestinian leadership to make every effort to encourage and facilitate a ceasefire and the resumption of dialogue. That is the only way to marginalize the extremists who find relevance and agency in violence. It would empower the leaders, who understand that the peace their people deserve can only come from recognizing the peace that the opposite side also deserves.

Kenya experienced devastating loss and outrage following terrorist attacks on our citizens. We fully empathize with Israel's security concerns. However, we also recognize that counter-terrorism with no limits makes future acts of terror almost inevitable. We

condemn all the military actions by Israel in violation of international law and international humanitarian law that were taken in the past and that will be taken in the future. In that vein, we therefore strongly urge Israel to refrain from an assault on Rafah, where a large number of displaced non-combatant civilians have sought refuge, as such an action could risk atrocities and crimes against humanity due to the inevitable significant civilian casualties and immense humanitarian repercussions.

Meanwhile, Hamas's continued holding of hostages is not only a violation of international law but also a gross act of cruelty that demonstrates their disregard for human life. Hamas must release all hostages immediately and relinquish its claims to political and administrative leadership. Its reign of terror must end to pave the way for leaders who genuinely seek negotiation, dialogue and reconciliation as part of a process leading to the Palestinian people's self-determination and statehood. A peace-loving State of Palestine cannot include an organization that is committed to the destruction of a people and murders civilians and oppresses its own in the name of a cause. We recognize the Palestinian Authority as the rightful representative of the people of Palestine.

As we look to the future, we hope to pave the way for the next resolution that is adopted on Palestine's full United Nations membership to reflect not just hope but real progress towards lasting peace and mutual respect.

As I conclude, we are at a fork in the road. This Organization was created by the most powerful countries in 1945 with a promise to the most oppressed and the most vulnerable. We must decide whether the dictates of those with the most power will define our way forward. That way will lead to a dangerous, deadly, dignity-killing multipolarity. We must stand together for the Charter and resist its trampling, as it represents our key defence for a world in which the most powerful are impelled towards lawful conduct. This vote for Palestine is a vote for the promise of the United Nations.

**The President:** We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote after the voting. As agreed earlier, the Assembly will now continue its debate on agenda item 5.

**Mr. Mohamed Laghdaf** (Mauritania): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of States Members of the United Nations that are

members of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), in my capacity as Chair of the Group.

Let me begin by commending you, Mr. President, for the resumption of the tenth emergency special session to deliberate on the ongoing Israeli aggression against the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including the Gaza Strip.

The United Nations and all peace-loving countries of the world have made unrelenting efforts with regard to the ongoing escalation of violence and the resulting humanitarian catastrophe in Palestine, particularly in Gaza. That situation has continued to deteriorate owing to the absence of a decisive response by the Security Council — despite the clarion calls by world leaders and world public opinion on the need for urgent action in the face of the colossal loss of innocent lives, including the looming threat of starvation and ethnic cleansing in the occupied Palestinian territory.

It is very unfortunate that despite the rays of hope that followed the adoption of resolutions ES-10/21, of 27 October 2023, and ES-10/22, of 12 December 2023, as well as the subsequent adoption of Security Council resolution 2728 (2024), of 25 March 2024, on a ceasefire in Gaza, the atrocities of the occupying Power against the Palestinian civilian population in Gaza have multiplied considerably. The number of martyrs, the majority of whom are women and children, has reached the unprecedented figure of 35,000 at the last count. In addition to injuring more than 75,000 people and displacing hundreds of thousands more, who have since fled their homes in Gaza, Israeli forces have launched a military attack on the city of Rafah, which houses more than 1 million inhabitants. In that regard, we condemn the Israeli military attack on Rafah and we demand an immediate ceasefire and halt to all Israeli military activities.

There is no doubt that the convening of this meeting has become necessary due to the failure of previous démarches to secure a lasting ceasefire in Gaza and mitigate the untold sufferings of the civilian population in the Gaza Strip. Since the adoption of resolution ES-10/22 at the previous meeting of the emergency special session of the General Assembly, the series of diplomatic measures undertaken at the United Nations have not led to decisive action by the Security Council to stem the dangers of starvation and ethnic cleansing in Gaza and elsewhere in the occupied Palestinian territory. Regrettably, Security Council resolution

2728 (2024), which called for a humanitarian ceasefire during the past month of Ramadan, has remained largely unimplemented, while Security Council draft resolution S/2024/312 calling for the granting of permanent membership to the State of Palestine was defeated owing to the veto cast by a permanent member of the Security Council (see S/PV.9609).

Notwithstanding that gloomy picture, we wish to reiterate our appreciation for the measures taken by the Secretariat to providing relief and humanitarian assistance to the besieged Palestinian people of Gaza. In that regard, we commend the support services provided by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and commiserate with the Secretary-General and the families of those aid workers who made the ultimate sacrifice in Palestine. Those humanitarian services have remained very valuable, as they provide relief as well as social and humanitarian services to the inhabitants of the occupied Palestinian territory, in the face of the persistent military aggression and organized terrorism perpetrated by Israeli settlers supported by the occupying Power.

We would like to take this opportunity to congratulate UNRWA on the outcome of the most recent report of the Independent Review Group on UNRWA, which confirmed the Agency's adherence to effective procedures and mechanisms for promoting the values of the United Nations humanitarian principle of neutrality. We are convinced that the report has put paid to the campaign of calumny launched by the Israeli authorities to turn States Members against UNRWA and cause it to discontinue the invaluable life-saving services it provides to the Palestinian people. In that regard, we commend those countries that recently resumed their financial contributions to UNRWA, including those that made additional contributions to the Agency. We also urge Member States to review their positions on the Agency in the light of those revelations so that UNRWA can continue to render its humanitarian services to millions of Palestinian refugees, among others.

Equally commendable was the display of overwhelming support of more than 140 States Members of the United Nations for the admission of the State of Palestine as a fully-fledged member of the United Nations Organization, while additional countries, including Jamaica, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago,

and the Commonwealth of the Bahamas, have recently announced their recognition of the State of Palestine.

There is no further proof of the failure of the Security Council to discharge its responsibilities under the Charter of the United Nations on the maintenance of peace and security in the Middle East than its latest inability to recommend the application of Palestine as a fully-fledged Member State of the United Nations. The non-adoption of draft resolution S/2024/312 on 18 April, owing to a veto, despite the positive votes of the overwhelming majority of members of the Council, is indeed a regrettable contradiction of the internationally agreed two-State solution to the Israeli-Palestinian crisis, in line with the relevant United Nations resolutions.

Given the stalemate in the Security Council, the General Assembly is better placed to assume its role under the "Uniting for peace" principle and sustain the momentum of the peace process in the Middle East. To that end, we reiterate the OIC's call on all members of the United Nations to support the adoption of practical measures aimed at putting maximum pressure on the Israeli authorities to comply with the international consensus on the restoration of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including the right of return and the establishment of an independent State of Palestine along the borders of June 1967, with East Jerusalem as its capital. Those practical measures include the implementation of the previous resolutions of the tenth emergency special session, especially the provisions concerning the humanitarian ceasefire and access for the besieged people of Gaza, the protection of the civilian population, the prevention of a further escalation of violence and the exercise of maximum restraint, among other measures. We also call on Member States to continue to encourage the Security Council to assume its primary responsibilities to bring about a permanent ceasefire by supporting the convening of an international peace conference to chart the path for a comprehensive, expeditious and durable resolution of the Palestinian peace process.

In addition, the OIC commends all States Members that have supported the ongoing judicial process at the International Court of Justice and urges them to continue to demand the immediate implementation of the provisional measures issued by the Court against the Israeli occupying authorities of Palestine. In addition, we call on the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court to expedite the criminal investigation

into war crimes against the Palestinians in the occupied Palestinian territory, as demanded by some members of the United Nations.

Similarly, and in the context of the application of practical and deterrent measures, we call on the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention to assume their responsibilities under Article I of the Geneva Convention to prevent the grave violations committed by the Israeli occupation authorities against Palestinians. In addition, we request the Secretary-General to include the Israeli occupation army in the appendix of the Secretary-General's annual report on children and armed conflict, among the parties that commit grave violations against children. In that regard, we reiterate the call by the Joint Arab-Islamic Extraordinary Summit to the States Members of the United Nations to exert diplomatic, political and legal pressures and take the necessary deterrent measures to stop crimes against humanity being perpetrated by the Israeli occupation authorities in the occupied Palestine territory and Gaza. Those additional options and practical measures are crucial for achieving the desired strengthening of the Middle East peace process and the long-delayed restoration of the national rights of the Palestinian people.

I would like to conclude by commending the Assembly's adoption today of resolution ES-10/23 on the expansion of the membership of Palestine in the United Nations, and I look forward to its immediate implementation, leading to the admission of Palestine as a full Member.

**Mr. Moncada** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela has the honour to take the floor on behalf of the Group of Friends in Defence of the Charter of the United Nations.

Despite the international consensus enshrined in numerous General Assembly and Security Council resolutions on the question of Palestine, the recent developments demonstrate that the independence and rights of the Palestinian State have been obstructed by nearly 57 years of colonization and annexation by Israel — a fact that is recognized even by the occupying Power's own leaders. The systematic violation of their right to self-determination is part of the oppression under which the Palestinian people live. As responsible members of the international community, we have the opportunity today to fulfil our promise of independence

to the Palestinian people and redress that historic injustice with concrete, practical and positive measures.

For more than 76 years, Israel has refused to recognize the very existence of the Palestinian people and their right to self-determination. For more than 76 years, the occupying Power has done it all — from apartheid and occupation policies to illegal settlements, from sieges and blockades to home demolitions, and from military brutality and generalized terror to war crimes and crimes against humanity — all with the objective of undermining the two-State solution and the permanent independence and sovereignty of the State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem/Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital and within the pre-1967 borders, which is the cornerstone for achieving a just and lasting solution. Those criminal policies and practices that the Palestinian people has endured with resilience and dignity are proof that Israel believes that it is above the law and can flout it without being held to account. That dangerous perception is the result of years of impunity, which have only emboldened the occupying Power to pursue its colonial plans for the expansion and annihilation of the Palestinian people through violence and terror, in blatant disregard for the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the rules of international law, including international humanitarian law, and the resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council on the Palestinian question. Security Council resolutions, in particular, are legally binding; Israel must abide by and implement them with immediate effect. The occupying Power's contempt for international law is nothing more than the result of a framework of impunity historically afforded to it by one of the permanent members of the Security Council — the United States of America — which recently vetoed draft resolution S/2024/312, on the admission of the State of Palestine as a full State Member of the United Nations (see S/PV.9609), even though an overwhelming majority in the Council supported it. It is precisely that veto, which Israel *de facto* exercises through one of its closest allies in the organ responsible for maintaining international peace and security, that has led the occupying Power to believe that it should have a say in the question of the State of Palestine's independence, sovereignty and admission to the United Nations as a Member State. Israel thinks that it can frustrate the realization of that right indefinitely.

Some have stated that it is premature to take action on the issue of the admission of the State of Palestine



as a Member State of the United Nations. We ask those countries, which are now the main impediment to peace and stability, in both Palestine and the wider Middle East, the following. How is it possible for a decision to be premature 12 years after the State of Palestine submitted its application for membership to the Security Council? How can it be premature when Palestine, a peace-loving State within the meaning of Article 4 of the Charter of the United Nations, has waited 50 years as an observer in the Organization? How can it be premature to realize the legitimate national aspirations of the Palestinian people when they have been deferred for more than 75 years?

We cannot continue to perpetuate this matter ad infinitum, which is why we demand that if the political will really exists, as is claimed, promises must be translated into concrete action that will lead us to the end of one of the most painful conflicts of our times. A return to the status quo ante is not an option. The situation on the ground is catastrophic and tragic, especially during the last seven months, when we have witnessed a horrific carnage against the Palestinian people in Gaza that has claimed the lives of almost 35,000 civilians, especially women and children. A ceasefire is urgently needed to allow unimpeded and safe humanitarian access to the Gaza Strip and to safeguard the political prospects for establishing a platform for the liberation of the Palestinian people from Israel's colonial oppression — a platform that is precisely the admission of the State of Palestine, which 144 nations now recognize, as a full Member State of the United Nations.

For all the reasons I mentioned, we conclude by reiterating our commitment to the just cause of Palestine and our solidarity with the heroic people in their struggle. We also call for the issue of the admission of the State of Palestine as a full Member State of the United Nations to be addressed as an act of justice and decolonization that will allow the realization of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to freedom, self-determination and independence — an act that will allow the State of Palestine to take its rightful place in the international community.

**Mr. Kwoba** (Uganda): I deliver this statement on behalf of the 121 member States of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (NAM).

Members will recall the resumption of the emergency special session on 12 December 2023

(see A/ES-10/PV.45) and the General Assembly's subsequent adoption of resolution ES-10/22, entitled "Protection of civilians and upholding legal and humanitarian obligations." The General Assembly once again convenes, under resolution 377 A (V), entitled "Uniting for peace", today's meeting of tenth emergency special session in view of the veto cast in the Security Council on 18 April 2024 (see S/PV.9609), which once again blocked Council action, this time on the recommendation for the admission of the State of Palestine as a full Member of the United Nations, further obstructing the international community's prolonged efforts to address that urgent matter of international peace and security and undermining the mandate of the Council in that regard.

The military action of Israel, the occupying Power in the Gaza Strip, has led to mass killings and the forced displacement of two thirds of the Palestinian population in Gaza. More than 34,000 Palestinians have been killed in the Gaza Strip in the period between October 2023 and April 2024 — more than 70 per cent of them children and women. In addition, more than 77,000 Palestinians have been injured in bombardments by the Israeli occupying forces, over 1.9 million have been displaced and the entire population is in dire need of humanitarian assistance. The conflict has also become a danger to humanitarian workers, medical personnel and journalists.

NAM deplores the punitive and inhumane siege imposed by Israel on the Gaza Strip, which is depriving the Palestinian civilian population of basic needs — including access to food, water, medicines and fuel — causing widespread hunger, disease and the onset of famine and epidemics. NAM condemns the Israeli military attack on Rafah, which is home to more than 1.4 million Palestinians, and warns against the catastrophic implications of inflicting yet another massacre on the 2.3 million Palestinians who are starving due to the Israeli siege in Gaza. In that regard, NAM calls on the international community to act collectively to halt such an attack immediately.

NAM reaffirms its long-standing, common and principled position on the question of Palestine and is deeply concerned about the implications of the conflict in Gaza for the region. Action must be taken immediately to help de-escalate the volatile situation. That must include a halt to all unilateral and unlawful measures by Israel, the Occupying Power, in the occupied Palestinian territory, including in

East Jerusalem. Actions that violate Security Council resolutions, including violations of the historic and legal status quo of Jerusalem and its holy sites, are provocative and dangerous and destroy the prospects for peace. International law, including humanitarian and human rights law, must be respected and the Palestinian civilian population must be protected.

NAM calls for the admission of the State of Palestine on the basis of the two-State solution, which itself is based on the 4 June 1967 borders, as a just and viable path to peace. Independent statehood for Palestine will restore the dignity of the people of Palestine as a full Member State of the United Nations, with sovereign rights, privileges and obligations, alongside all other nations in the international community. We call on all countries that have not recognized the State of Palestine to do so forthwith, as an expression of their sincere commitment to peace and their respect for international law and legality, in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions.

NAM is gravely concerned about the failure to end Israel's aggression and siege against Gaza, and about the grave breaches of international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, that it is perpetrating. We note with alarm the warnings by United Nations special rapporteurs of the genocide unfolding in the Gaza Strip. We have also taken note of the case initiated by South Africa, a member of the Movement, against Israel at the International Court of Justice, seeking provisional measures to halt the aggression against the Palestinian people, and we stress the imperative of accountability for all war crimes and crimes against humanity.

NAM member States once again demand an immediate ceasefire and full implementation of Security Council resolutions 2712 (2023), 2720 (2023) and 2728 (2024). We reiterate our call for continued provision of the humanitarian and socioeconomic assistance that the Palestinian people need, including Palestine refugees. The Movement reaffirms that the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), along with other United Nations agencies and international organizations, continues to be essential to alleviating their plight, and urges the international community to provide the Agency with sufficient and predictable funding. Ensuring UNRWA's continuity and supporting its significant contribution to regional stability, in accordance with its General Assembly mandate, must be of concern to all of us.

To conclude, the Movement would like to take this opportunity to reiterate its call for collective international efforts to uphold international law with a view to bringing this historic and grave injustice to an end. We reaffirm our commitment to promoting a just, lasting, comprehensive and peaceful solution to the question of Palestine in all its aspects, including the plight of Palestinian refugees, and our support for the Palestinian people in their struggle to achieve justice and to fulfil their inalienable rights and legitimate national aspirations, including to self-determination, freedom and independence in their sovereign and independent State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem as its capital. We stand ready to cooperate with and support the Security Council and the General Assembly in the fulfilment of all their respective responsibilities in that regard.

**Mr. Mahmoud** (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): Egypt aligns itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of the United Arab Emirates, on behalf of the Group of Arab States (see A/ES-10/PV.49), Uganda, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, and Mauritania, on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

We would like to thank all the countries that have stood by what is right today and voted for resolution ES-10/23, supporting Palestine's right to full membership in the United Nations, which will provide it with further rights within the Organization.

The ongoing Israeli war against the Gaza Strip is entering an eighth consecutive month with a record number of Palestinians killed or injured. The total number of martyrs is more than 34,000, most of them women and children, with an additional more than 78,000 injured. On top of that, the destruction in the Strip has been unprecedented, rendering it ruined and uninhabitable and forcing Palestinians into displacement. That is a result of Israel's overwhelming desire for retaliation against the Palestinian people and for an opportunity to annihilate their noble cause and destroy the territory that Israel has occupied in their State. Today, before the General Assembly, where all countries stand on an equal footing and there is no right to an unjust or biased veto, Egypt would like to stress the following basic points.

First, the rogue Israeli war machine has perpetrated crimes against humanity that have been widely publicized by the media and have resulted in unprecedented

numbers of deaths, especially of children. That is in addition to the recently discovered mass graves that will undoubtedly anger an entire generation of Arabs as yet more evidence of the crimes committed against the Palestinian people. That generation has lost faith in the international community and the United Nations. There is a growing belief that the significant numbers of civilian deaths, including 12,000 children, would not have happened if those people had been from countries siding with the aggressor or from Western countries. History has shown us through many such events what the repercussions of such a sense of injustice can be.

Secondly, we must all agree that ending the brutal war and preventing crimes against humanity are genuinely possible tasks and not as difficult as some are saying. The necessary tools and mechanisms that are available to the international community, which have already been used in many other crises, must be used today to ensure the rule of law internationally. We must end the prevailing perception in Israel that it is a country above international law that can enjoy impunity, free of accountability or punishment for its refusal to abide by all the binding resolutions of the Security Council, the General Assembly, the International Court of Justice and the Human Rights Council, resolutions that have the authority to stop the war, protect civilians and cease the export of weapons to Israel. That would bring a halt to its crimes, which have even killed United Nations personnel and destroyed United Nations facilities in acts that are unprecedented for Member States. Besides that, the evidence of mass graves that has recently come to light must be investigated and those responsible must be named. We want to once again warn the Assembly about the potential repercussions of the growing sense that killing Palestinians is acceptable, and to sound the alarm about these acts undermining the United Nations and its binding resolutions.

Thirdly, Egypt stresses that Palestinian rights are inalienable, including the right to live freely in Palestinian territory and the right to the establishment of a Palestinian State within the borders of 4 June 1967, with East Jerusalem as its capital. That also includes full membership in the United Nations. Those are inherent and fundamental rights that are not subject to conditions or political considerations but based on the principle of equal human rights. While we greatly appreciate today's resolution, we therefore call on all Member States to swiftly adopt a resolution granting the State of Palestine full membership as soon as

possible, stressing that this is an inherent right, and that there is no need to establish a new right. Granting Palestine full membership in the United Nations is the best way to revive the peace process and safeguard the possibility of a two-State solution. Israel has done everything it can to abort that possibility in recent decades, either through illegal settlement activities that are unparalleled in the contemporary world or through criminal practices that violate the rights of Palestinians, including seizures of land, demolitions of homes and Palestinian properties and the expulsion of Palestinians from their own homes.

Egypt was the first to make peace with Israel, on a foundation of strength, self-confidence and a full awareness of our history and civilization. It continues its efforts to ensure a ceasefire, the entry of aid and open humanitarian crossings, in coordination with Qatar and the United States of America. Egypt calls upon the entire international community to pressure Israel to respond to its tireless mediation efforts. Egypt also calls upon all those who want stability in the Middle East to condemn and reject the Israeli military operations in Rafah and its vicinity, stand against any Israeli schemes aimed at expanding the scope of those military operations and seek to stop them immediately, in order to allow the Rafah land crossing to reopen and start operating normally and ensure that assistance is delivered in line with Security Council resolutions, especially Security Council resolution 2720 (2023). Egypt also calls for supporting the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East and for fully funding it.

There is no longer any time to lose or to make justifications and excuses, while the blood of innocent people is being shed. It is incumbent upon all of us to put an immediate end to the war, protect civilians and treat the injured. It is our duty to save the affected innocent people and the credibility of the United Nations itself. We must stop the war and the aggression now before it is too late.

**Mr. Fu Cong** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Palestinian-Israeli conflict has continued in cycles for decades. Generations of Palestinians have lost their homes and have lived in displacement under occupation. It is a wound of the world that is constantly left open and bleeding. Independent statehood has been a long-cherished aspiration of the Palestinian people and full membership in the United Nations is a crucial step in that historic process. Palestine should have the same

status as Israel and the Palestinian people should enjoy the same rights as the Israeli people.

It is the collective responsibility of the international community to support and advance the process of Palestine's independent statehood and provide strong support for the implementation of the two-State solution and a lasting peace in the Middle East. Regrettably, Palestine's application for full United Nations membership was ruthlessly vetoed by the United States in the Security Council on 18 April (see S/PV.9609). On the Palestinian-Israeli issue, the United States has repeatedly exercised the veto in an unjustified attempt to obstruct the international community's efforts to correct the historical injustice long visited on Palestine. That is not commensurate with the role of a responsible major country.

The General Assembly adopted by an overwhelming majority resolution ES-10/23, which reaffirms the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, including the right to the independent State of Palestine, determines that the State of Palestine is qualified for full membership in the United Nations and recommends that the Security Council reconsider favourably its application to join the United Nations. China welcomes that historic resolution, which reflects the will of the international community, and was a co-sponsor. China supports the Security Council's early reconsideration of the application of the State of Palestine, as mandated by resolution ES-10/23, and hopes that the relevant country will not create further delays or hurdles.

The resolution just adopted also includes modalities for the State of Palestine's participation in United Nations activities and relevant meetings, granting it new rights and privileges. We understand that they are special modalities, which were decided in the absence of other options as a remedy for the historical injustice long endured by Palestine and a rectification of the United States' abusive use of the veto. We believe that those special modalities, which were adopted within the limits permitted by the Charter of the United Nations, will enable the international community to listen more adequately to the voice of Palestine and help it to talk and negotiate with Israel on a relatively equal footing. The resolution makes it clear that those modalities were adopted on an exceptional basis, without setting a precedent. We believe that they will not be permanent, because one day the State of Palestine will become a full Member of the United Nations and will enjoy

full and equal rights in the United Nations like other Member States.

The crux of the intractable Palestinian-Israeli issue lies in the stalled implementation of the two-State solution. Over the years, Israel, as the occupying Power, has worked ceaselessly to erode the basis of the two-State solution, while the ongoing conflict, which is already seven months old, threatens to completely bury the prospect of a two-State solution. China urges Israel to stop its collective punishment of the Gaza population, halt its military offensive on Rafah and effectively remove all restrictions on the entry of humanitarian goods into Gaza. In the West Bank, Israel should cease all settlement activities and effectively curb the rising settler violence. China will continue to play a constructive role and make unrelenting efforts for an immediate ceasefire, the revitalization of the two-State solution, the early realization of peaceful coexistence between Palestine and Israel, and a lasting peace and stability in the Middle East.

**Ms. Al-Thani** (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): We would like to thank you, Mr. President, for resuming the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly. We align ourselves with the statements made on behalf of the Group of Arab States (see A/ES-10/PV.49), the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

The State of Qatar expresses its pride at the adoption by the General Assembly of the historic resolution ES-10/23, with an overwhelming majority. We would like to thank all countries that voted in favour of the resolution and we stress that our participation as a co-sponsor exemplifies our firm historic and principled position in support of the brotherly Palestinian people and their just cause. The adoption of resolution ES-10/23 represents an important victory for our brothers, the Palestinians. It also provides the Security Council with another opportunity to adopt a unified position in recommending the admission of the State of Palestine. The resolution reflects the purposes of the United Nations and the resolutions of international legitimacy, in particular the right to self-determination, the equality of rights among peoples and the principle of sovereign equality. The admission of the State of Palestine as a full-fledged Member is a primary step towards achieving the two-State solution, which is an essential entry point for reaching a just and comprehensive political solution to the Palestinian question, in line with international legitimacy.



Despite the importance of what has been achieved today, the Israeli aggression continues on the Gaza Strip, in clear defiance of international law, international humanitarian law and the resolutions of the Security Council, the General Assembly and the International Court of Justice. In that regard, the State of Qatar condemns in the strongest terms the bombardment of the Israeli occupation forces of Rafah's municipality, the invasion of the land crossing and the threat of forcefully displacing people from their shelters. We call on the international community to act quickly in order to avoid the invasion of the city, prevent the perpetration of genocide and provide full protection for civilians, in line with international law and international humanitarian law. The State of Qatar warns against the forced displacement of civilians from the city that has become a last resort for hundreds of thousands of displaced people inside the Gaza Strip. It constitutes a grave violation of international law and will exacerbate the humanitarian crisis in the Strip.

We stress that we will continue our mediation efforts with Egypt and the United States. We hope that our sincere efforts will bear fruit so that an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Gaza can be reached, the prisoners and detainees can be freed, humanitarian aid can continue and increase and civilians can be protected. That will pave the way for a serious political process that could lead to a just and comprehensive settlement of the Palestinian question.

*Mr. Valtýsson (Iceland), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

In conclusion, Qatar reiterates its firm traditional position in support of the resilience of our brother Palestinian people and their just cause, in line with the resolutions of international legitimacy and the Arab Peace Initiative, which support an independent Palestinian State along the 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital. We reiterate our call on the Security Council to take the appropriate and just decision to recommend the admission of the State of Palestine as a full-fledged Member State of the United Nations.

**Mr. Mythen (Ireland):** I would like to thank the United Arab Emirates for submitting an important and historic resolution (resolution ES-10/23), which has been resoundingly endorsed by the members of the General Assembly and the international community.

Let me start by saying that Ireland fully supports the resolution. We co-sponsored it and voted in favour of it. Twelve years ago, when the General Assembly accorded non-member observer State status to Palestine, an overwhelming majority of States voted in favour of that, and also made clear their support for the State of Palestine's full membership of the United Nations. Moreover, that overwhelming majority of States reaffirmed the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, which importantly and crucially includes the right to an independent State for Palestine.

And now, as we return to this issue in truly desperate circumstances for the Palestinian people — when even as we speak, the suffering, hunger and horror continue in Gaza, and a negotiated settlement that allows both the Palestinian and Israeli peoples to live in peace and security and dignity seems so very far away — it is clear that lack of international support for Palestinian self-determination is not the issue. That support is real and tangible, here in this Hall but also far beyond it. The real problem is the failure over many years to act on that support in a tangible way, the international community's failure to insist on concrete and irreversible measures and actions to demonstrate that they take the rights, dignity and security of the Palestinian people as seriously as they rightly take the rights, dignity and security of the Israeli people. We know that a two-State solution remains the only viable option to secure a just and lasting peace that fulfils those rights for both peoples. This Hall must have heard the phrase "support for a two-State solution" uttered by world leaders, foreign ministers and ambassadors hundreds of thousands of times. But today is the day that we take one small step to convert that phrase from a comforting platitude into a concrete reality and to declare clearly and unequivocally that Palestine is, as the resolution says,

"qualified for membership in the United Nations in accordance with Article IV of the Charter of the United Nations and should therefore be admitted to membership in the United Nations."

We are under no illusions as to the challenge that converting the resolution into reality will entail. There is no easy pathway, no soft or magic solution. In today's vote, we have seen an unambiguous expression of the will of the international community, but it will take a vote in the Security Council to give today's General Assembly vote real meaning and full effect — to enable

Palestine to take its rightful place among the nations of the world.

As a country with hundreds of years of colonial history behind us and hundreds of years of colonial experience, we know exactly how precious that place among the nations is. In the 101 years of our existence as an independent State, we have faced partition, civil war, poverty, mass emigration, conflict, terrorism and deep and abiding political divisions. The freedom to exercise sovereignty does not guarantee peace, progress or prosperity. But it is an essential starting point on a journey towards those blessings, and it is one that the Palestinian people have been denied for far too long.

Please allow me briefly to address the argument put forward by Israel that a vote in favour of the resolution at this time is somehow a reward for terrorism or for Hamas. Nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, it is precisely the opposite. Today's resolution is a testament to the power of diplomacy, international law and the global multilateral system. What Israel has referred to in recent years as "diplomatic terrorism" or "legal terrorism" is, in reality, smart, committed and whole-hearted diplomacy. When Palestine brings a draft resolution to the Security Council or General Assembly, when it utilizes the mechanism of the International Court of Justice or the International Criminal Court and when it successfully advocates for the creation of a commission of inquiry by the Human Rights Council, that is not terrorism. It is the polar opposite of terrorism.

It is a vocal and public declaration that despite the horrors of occupation, displacement and dispossession, Palestine will keep faith with the multilateral system, international law, the Geneva Conventions and the Charter of the United Nations. It is a declaration that Palestine will maintain its commitment to using politics, diplomacy and the international legal system, advocacy and the power of persuasion, rather than violence and terror. It is a declaration that Palestine will take seriously the obligations and commitments contained in the international treaties and resolutions that we have collectively agreed on, and that Palestine will demand of us that we, the 193 States Members of the United Nations, take them seriously, too. And Ireland, for one, is inspired and humbled by that example.

Today should be a step not just towards full United Nations membership for Palestine but towards a comprehensive and sustained regional peace for

all, towards a future where every State in this Hall recognizes every other State in this Hall. Where instead of 143 States recognizing Palestine and 165 States recognizing Israel, all States recognize both Israel and Palestine. There is a long road ahead to get to that point. It will not be easy. It will mean difficult choices and painful compromises, but it must mean an end to occupation and full adherence to international law by all parties. Vitally, it must also mean an equal right to security, dignity and self-determination for the Palestinian and Israeli peoples.

That is why we sponsored and voted in favour of today's resolution, and that is why in the coming weeks, Ireland will formally recognize the State of Palestine. I repeat that in the coming weeks, we will formally recognize the State of Palestine.

**Mr. Alwasil** (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation aligns itself with the statements made by the representatives of Uganda, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, Mauritania, on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and the United Arab Emirates, on behalf of the Group of Arab States (see A/ES-10/PV.49).

We would like to thank the President of the General Assembly for resuming the Assembly's tenth emergency special session to consider the resolution introduced today (resolution ES-10/23), which calls on the Security Council to reconsider the State of Palestine's request for admission as a full Member of the United Nations. Unfortunately, the negative vote on 18 April of a single member of the Council prevented its adoption of the draft resolution submitted by our sister nation of Algeria (S/2024/312).

We deeply deplore the fact that the Security Council was unable to adopt draft resolution S/2024/312. We believe that obstructing full membership of the State of Palestine in the United Nations will contribute to Israeli intransigence and an increase of Israel's unchecked violations of international law, which will take us farther away from achieving the desired peace.

The General Assembly adopts a package of resolutions every year that reaffirm the rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to self-determination. Resolution ES-10/23, just adopted, is in line with those annual resolutions and is aimed at achieving the will of the international community and contributing to establishing genuine peace in the region on the basis of the two-State solution. It is time for the

international community to take the right decisions, as the world can no longer turn a blind eye to the suffering that the Palestinian people have endured for decades, as well as their rights to self-determination, their own State and membership in the United Nations.

Israel, the occupying Power, has committed crimes of all kinds against the Palestinian people, disregarding the resolutions of international legitimacy, international law and international human law. Israel believes that it is above those resolutions and laws and that it has immunity that protects it from accountability, which explains its hostile and brutal policies and its determination to commit crimes of all kinds. The past seven months represent just one chapter in the story of that suffering, which has continued for decades. In only a few months, the brutal Israeli practices have claimed the lives of more than 35,000 Palestinians, most of whom are women and children, as a result of systematic bombing, killing, destruction and starvation, which have led to a major humanitarian disaster that is getting worse every day. We see that those practices and acts of aggression are now targeting the city of Rafah, the last safe haven for Palestinians. It is a densely populated city as a result of forced displacement. That is why we need a firm international stance to stop all Israeli practices that lead to bloodshed in the Gaza Strip.

Resolution ES-10/23, which was adopted by an overwhelming majority, reflects the international community's belief in the right of the Palestinian people. In addition to the moral duty reflected in the resolution, there is also a historic entitlement that cannot be postponed, because it is essential to revive the peace process and put an end to the barbaric Israeli practices. Accordingly, we thank all peace-loving countries that voted in favour of resolution ES-10/23.

In conclusion, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, as a founding member of the United Nations, will continue to support Palestinians' rights to self-determination and the establishment of a Palestinian State along the 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital. We also support establishing a just and comprehensive peace, in accordance with the Arab Peace Initiative and the relevant resolutions of international legitimacy.

**Mr. Nasir** (Indonesia): Our meeting today underscores our commitment to resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through diplomacy. The call to end the Israel-Palestine conflict based on the two-State solution also continues to reverberate through the Hall.

Even the strongest supporter of Israel has called for the two-State solution. It is therefore time for us to walk the talk. If we believe in peace, if we believe in the Charter of the United Nations and international law and if we believe in humankind, we must take the brave step to free Palestine, recognize the existence of Palestine and accept Palestine as a full Member of the United Nations. That will allow Palestine to be on an equal footing with Israel in negotiating the two-State solution and bringing lasting peace to the people of Israel and the people of Palestine.

The adoption of resolution ES-10/23 shows the readiness of the United Nations membership to work beyond business as usual to bring peace and the two-State solution closer to reality. It was also an important step towards the admission of Palestine as a full Member of the United Nations. We must continue to call on the Security Council to take the necessary steps to make that a reality.

For 216 days, the people of Gaza have endured a brutal Israeli onslaught, resulting in death, destruction, famine and even genocide. Enough is enough. In our multilateral toolbox, we have at least three emergency special session resolutions, three Security Council resolutions and two International Court of Justice provisional measures, all aimed at addressing the situation in Gaza. It is time for us to use those tools available to fix the situation in Gaza and prevent a further humanitarian catastrophe and spillover to the wider region. In that regard, allow me to highlight two points.

First, we must renew our call for the two-State solution. In the past few weeks, four Caribbean States have announced their recognition of Palestine, bringing the tally to 144 countries. That is a testament of strengthening support for the Palestinian cause. With that momentum, the peace process must be revived. We must rally behind an international conference to kick-start direct peace negotiations. That is where Palestine's full membership at the United Nations becomes crucial. There can never be a fair and equitable negotiation until Palestine and Israel stand on equal footing.

Secondly, we must keep pushing for an immediate and permanent ceasefire. Stopping the violence in Gaza must continue to be our top priority. Seventy-six years ago this month, the Nakba took place. We must not be complicit in allowing the millions of Palestinian refugees to experience another Nakba today. We must

be resolved in our call to stop the attack on Rafah. All parties involved must work hard to reach an agreement for a permanent ceasefire, provide humanitarian assistance at scale and continue supporting the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East.

Let today mark a turning point in history, but let it also lead to a stronger path towards Palestinians' rightful place in the global community.

**Mr. França Danese (Brazil):** The day of Palestine's admission to the United Nations, as an equal among us, is finally coming. Resolution ES-10/23 just adopted is a meaningful achievement towards full United Nations membership for the State of Palestine. The determination today by a large majority of the membership that Palestine meets the criteria set out in Article 4 of the Charter of the United Nations and is ready for membership leaves no doubt that the process of considering Palestinian admission must not linger indefinitely at the Security Council. The General Assembly, the main United Nations organ entrusted with the authority to take the final decision on such matters, must be allowed to exercise its powers under the Charter.

A majority exceeding two thirds of the votes made today's determination possible. That is the same qualified majority that will manifest itself, when the time comes, to admit Palestine as a Member of the United Nations. We are confident that that will happen immediately after the Security Council, as we expect it to, accepts the recommendation issued by the General Assembly today.

The recommendation that the Council reconsider Palestine's request enjoys more than just moral authority and political legitimacy. We recall the 1948 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice that no Member State should be entitled to withhold consent for membership based on political considerations not included among the criteria set out in Article 4 of the Charter, which the Assembly today has determined that Palestine unequivocally fulfils. A politically motivated veto contradicting the Assembly's determination would be unjustifiable.

The time has come to fulfil the United Nations promise of a Palestinian State. We can no longer abandon the Palestinians to a fate that is being unilaterally imposed by force by those denying Palestinians their right to self-determination. What we are witnessing

in Gaza — now specifically in Rafah — is a shocking reminder of that undeniable reality. Today's resolution, if acted upon by all relevant actors, will pave the way to a future with a viable State of Palestine living side by side with Israel in peace and security, within internationally recognized borders, consistent with the relevant United Nations resolutions. Just as importantly, the admission of Palestine as a Member State — to be effected soon, I am sure — will help restore full trust in the United Nations and in multilateralism.

The tenth emergency special session resumed for the twentieth time since it was first convened in 1997. That means 27 years of the Assembly attempting to fill a significant void left by the Security Council in performing its responsibility to address threats to international peace in connection with the situation in the Middle East. For the past 27 years, every time the Assembly convened or reconvened for this emergency session, it has done so in response to a blatant failure by the Council to address illegal actions in the occupied State of Palestine.

Have we not had enough? Have the Palestinians not suffered enough? Israeli settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem are clearly illegal. They alter the demographic composition and status of the Palestinian territory, and they threaten the prospect of a comprehensive peace settlement in the Middle East. Yet, those settlements, which justified our first convening of the tenth emergency special session back in 1997 (see A/ES-10/PV.1), have continued unabated. And that has only been met with Council inaction, apart from a 2016 resolution that recalls what we already know: that the settlements violate international law (Security Council resolution 2334 (2016)).

Legal words without action have encouraged further contempt for the law. The occupation lingers on indefinitely, crystallizing a discriminatory system against Palestinians and the annexation of the Palestinian territory. The unlawful nature of actions against Palestinians has become the pervasive reality in the occupied Palestinian territory.

The catastrophe in Gaza, whose latest chapter is unfolding in Rafah as we speak, cannot be dissociated from our failure to put an end to this prolonged occupation. It cannot be dissociated from our repeated failure to put an end to violations of international law and ensure compensation for the victims in Palestine. It cannot be dissociated from the failure of the United



Nations failure to fulfil the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination — the same self-determination, statehood and United Nations membership that Israelis have enjoyed since 1948.

It is clear that the General Assembly's response, in the face of Council inaction, must go beyond just convening, adjourning and reconvening the tenth emergency special session. The resolution adopted today should not add to the pile of documents that point to a solution but do little to get us there.

Brazil has recognized since 2010 the State of Palestine within the 1967 borders, which includes the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, with East Jerusalem as its capital. Brazil is hopeful that, as a result of today's resolution, which other bodies of the United Nations shall not ignore, the admission of Palestine as a full Member of this Organization, bound and protected by the Charter, will be achieved soon. That will be an important step, with other steps that must seriously follow, in the path towards the realization of the two-State solution.

**Mrs. Shino (Japan):** The situation in Gaza is worsening by the day. Amid the suffering, destruction, spread of disease and a full-blown famine in the north, the people in Gaza need an immediate ceasefire and humanitarian assistance more than ever. Considering the already catastrophic humanitarian situation, Japan reiterates that a full-scale Israeli military offensive into Rafah must not proceed. In addition, Japan is closely following the developments in East Jerusalem, including the incident regarding the headquarters of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). UNRWA plays an indispensable role in providing relief to refugees, and such destruction of United Nations facilities is unacceptable.

To prevent further tragedy in Gaza, it is imperative that an agreement for a ceasefire and the release of hostages be achieved as soon as possible. In that regard, we strongly support the ongoing efforts made by the United States, Egypt and Qatar. A cessation of hostilities is the only path that could lead to a peaceful way forward. We believe that an immediate and sustainable ceasefire that includes the release of the hostages remains crucial.

A few weeks ago, Japan voted in favour of the proposed draft Security Council resolution (S/2024/312) that would have recommended Palestine's admission

as a full United Nations member, recognizing that Palestine meets the criteria for admission, while also taking into account the perspective of promoting the establishment of a Palestinian State through peaceful negotiations between the parties concerned.

Today Japan also voted in favour of the General Assembly resolution that grants Palestine additional rights as an Observer State (resolution ES-10/23) on the understanding that those rights are not inconsistent with the framework of the Charter of the United Nations. Those actions reflect our principled position that upholds Palestine's right to self-determination through the establishment of an independent Palestinian State living side by side in mutual peace and security with Israel. We look forward to seeing Palestine, as an Observer State, play an even more constructive role at the United Nations.

In conclusion, we are at a critical juncture, and our next steps will be defining moments for the future of the region. Both Israel and Palestine have a right to exist as peaceful and independent States, and Japan remains unwavering in its support for the two-State solution. Let us make every effort to realize an immediate ceasefire so that we can see peace and stability appear on the horizon.

**Mrs. Zalabata Torres (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*):** Colombia would like to emphasize the importance of reconvening this meeting of the tenth special emergency session of the General Assembly, following the veto on 18 April in the Security Council (see S/PV.9609) of Palestine's application for admission as a full member of the United Nations. The Preamble to the Charter of the United Nations establishes that we the peoples are determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which has brought untold sorrow to humankind. To that end, we commit to practising tolerance and living together in peace as good neighbours.

However, the conflicts intensifying around the world have called into question the Organization's ability to fulfil its fundamental mandate of maintaining international peace and security. In the Middle East, the spiral of atrocities committed since the Hamas attack on 7 October 2023 has to stop. The unacceptable escalation of violence has claimed more than 34,000 lives and injured more than 78,000 people, mostly women and children. It has caused massive displacement of the civilian population, famine and

indiscriminate destruction of vital infrastructure. In that regard, Colombia strongly condemns Israel's threatened attack on Rafah, which will have disastrous consequences for the more than 1.4 million people crowded into the city. There are no words to describe the magnitude of the tragedy in the Gaza Strip, its irreparable costs for current and future generations and its harmful implications for stability and peaceful coexistence in the region. A strong international response is imperative. The Members of the United Nations have a collective obligation to demand an immediate humanitarian ceasefire, compliance by all the parties concerned with their obligations under international law and international humanitarian law, an immediate and unconditional release of all hostages and guaranteed access for humanitarian aid.

In addition, we are faced with the urgent need to guarantee a peaceful, definitive and comprehensive settlement of the Palestinian question, based on a two-State solution, in accordance with the borders agreed on in Security Council resolution 242 (1967), and based on the understanding that both Palestinians and Israelis have a right to live in peace within secure and internationally recognized borders. Colombia has advocated for the importance of holding a peace conference to resolve the war in Gaza and return to a path of negotiation that can lead to a permanent solution to the conflict, and we reaffirm the support of President Petro Urrego's Government for that aim. One fundamental step that would make progress towards a peaceful, definitive and comprehensive solution to this conflict possible is Palestine's admission as a full Member of the United Nations. As we have just witnessed, that application, with the vote of 143 Member States (resolution ES-10/23), has the support of the vast majority of the membership.

Echoing what was stated by the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations (see A/ES-10/PV.49), Colombia reiterates that admitting Palestine as a full member of the United Nations is an investment in peace. As a country that defends life and peace, we have co-sponsored and supported the resolution presented by the United Arab Emirates in the framework of this session. Colombia urges the Security Council to reconsider its decision regarding Palestine's application to be admitted as a full member of the United Nations.

**Mr. Hmoud** (Jordan) (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank the President of the General Assembly for responding to the request for resuming the tenth emergency special

session of the General Assembly. Jordan fully supports the statements made by the representatives of the United Arab Emirates, on behalf of the Group of Arab States (see A/ES-10/PV.49), Mauritania, on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and Uganda, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

Our meeting today is being held because the Security Council failed to adopt a draft resolution (S/2024/312), introduced last month by our sister nation of Algeria on behalf of the Group of Arab States, on admitting our sister State of Palestine to the status of a full-fledged Member of the United Nations, and also in consideration of the fact that Israel has continued to disregard international conventions and norms along with legal, ethical and humanitarian values and principles. Israel's occupation army has been committing terrible massacres in the Gaza Strip, claiming the lives of more than 35,000 martyrs, most of them women and children, not to mention tens of thousands of people injured, missing, displaced or orphaned.

My country voted in favour of resolution ES-10/23, introduce today by our sister nation of the United Arab Emirates, in its capacity as this month's Chair of the Arab Group. We did so based on Jordan's firm historical belief in the State of Palestine's right to full membership in the United Nations. We also believe in the imperative of establishing an independent Palestinian State, with East Jerusalem as its capital, along the borders of 4 June 1967, according to resolutions of international legitimacy, the Arab Peace Initiative and the concept of a two-State solution.

The vast majority of the States Members of the United Nations voted in favour of the resolution, in a clear reflection of the international community's overwhelming support for Palestinians' right to full membership in the United Nations, as well as for the right of the Palestinian people to freedom, to an independent State and to self-determination. It also sends a clear message to Israel that no matter how hard it tries, how much it destroys, how many it kills and oppresses and how long it persists in its arrogance, injustice and aggression against the Palestinian people, it cannot suppress the voice of truth or defeat the will of the Palestinian people. Palestine lives on despite the naysayers. Israel is not going to be able to challenge this unprecedented and overwhelming international support, despite all its attempts to mislead, falsify history, disseminate false narratives and erase the

identity, culture and civilization of Palestine and its people.

We must all work to stop the ongoing crimes being committed against the Palestinian people in Gaza. The Security Council and the international community must act immediately to stop Israel from launching a ground attack on the city of Rafah. More than 1.4 million Palestinians have sought refuge in Rafah as a result of Israel's war on Gaza, which has now been going on for nearly seven months. We warn that the attack on Rafah will inevitably lead to other massacres against innocent Palestinians and threaten to expand the scope of the conflict.

The widespread international protests against Israel's crimes and its destruction of large areas of Gaza clearly show that the plight of the Palestinian people is a moral issue facing the entire world. The international community cannot continue to turn a blind eye to Israel's violations of the most basic human values, international humanitarian law and the resolutions of our Organization without exerting effective pressure on the occupying Power to ensure its accountability. A no-impunity policy is not a slogan to be forgotten when it comes to holding Israel and its officials accountable. Earlier this week, Israel occupied the Palestinian side of the Rafah crossing and completely shut it off, preventing the entry of humanitarian aid to the people of Gaza. That is a condemnable violation of international law and international humanitarian law. It is an attempt by Israel to thwart the efforts of reaching a ceasefire and to obstruct humanitarian assistance from being delivered in sufficient quantities and in a sustainable manner, as there is a dire need for it throughout the Gaza Strip.

We reiterate our condemnation of the recent attack by extremist Israeli settlers on the Jordanian aid convoys heading to the north and south of the Gaza Strip, as well as the attack by a group of settlers on the headquarters of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) in occupied Jerusalem. In that regard, we strongly call on the Security Council and the international community to take a firm and clear stance in rejecting and condemning those attacks and enforce the application of the rules of international law, including international humanitarian law, without selectivity or favouritism. We also demand that Israel, the occupying Power, be compelled to comply with its legal obligation to provide protection for the humanitarian assistance convoys and the United Nations organizations working to receive and distribute

that assistance, as well as with its obligation to provide protection for United Nations facilities and prevent any attack on relief organizations and UNRWA and its staff, who undertake an indispensable humanitarian role in providing assistance and basic services to Palestinians in the occupied Palestinian territories.

In conclusion, Jordan reiterates its categorical rejection of Israel's continued barbaric war against the Palestinian people and its attempts to forcibly displace or separate the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza. It is important to stop the Israeli war immediately and prevent it from continuing using all the means enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, when international peace and security are threatened. Jordan will always support Palestine and its proud people, and we will do everything we can until the yoke of occupation ends and the sun of freedom rises on the Palestinian national soil.

**Mr. Vichankaiyakij** (Thailand): Thailand welcomes the reconvening of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly in view of the urgent need to address the various dimensions of the Palestinian question.

Thailand reaffirms its unwavering adherence to the Charter of the United Nations and international law in its totality. Thailand recognizes the State of Palestine and supports the State of Palestine's aspiration to become a member of the United Nations. My country therefore voted in favour of and co-sponsored resolution ES-10/23, entitled "Admission of new Members to the United Nations", to demonstrate its commitment to the people of Palestine and join other Member States in sharing sympathy and empathy with the Palestinian cause. We hope the resolution can translate into strong political will for the entire United Nations to secure justice for the Palestinian people.

Thailand continues to condemn in the strongest terms all forms of violence and attacks on civilians in conflict situations, including by capturing and taking them hostage. The military operations in Rafah worsen the already dire humanitarian situation for Palestinians in Gaza. We once again call for an immediate ceasefire. Thailand urges all sides to respect and fulfil their obligations under international humanitarian law and the relevant United Nations resolutions. We reiterate the Secretary-General's appeal for all sides to "show the political courage and spare no effort to secure an

agreement now". This is a crucial opportunity that the region and the world cannot afford to miss.

Thailand is also deeply concerned about the worsening humanitarian situation in Gaza, the plight of my country's affected civilians and the ongoing escalation of regional conflicts in the Middle East. We continue our plea for the continued provision of humanitarian assistance to those in need in Gaza. Thai nationals have been killed, injured, captured and held hostage. We remain deeply concerned for the remaining hostages, regardless of their nationalities, and we strongly appeal for their immediate release and return, as well as their proper treatment and care, pending their release. We therefore support the ongoing coordinated efforts of the parties concerned to secure a truce and the release of the hostages held in Gaza. We appeal to all sides to seek all avenues possible to resolve the situation and work towards long-term peace through genuine dialogue and diplomacy with a view to finding a mutually agreed peaceful solution to the issue, in accordance with the two-State solution, by which the States of Israel and Palestine shall live side by side in peace and security within secure and recognized borders, consistent with the relevant resolutions of the Security Council.

**Mr. Kim Song** (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): I thank the President for reconvening this emergency special session of the General Assembly to debate the question of the admission of the State of Palestine as a full Member State of the United Nations. The General Assembly just adopted the important resolution ES-10/23, which determined that Palestine should be admitted as a full Member State of the United Nations and recommended that the Security Council reconsider the matter favourably. The delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea voted in favour of resolution ES-10/23.

The question of Palestine has been on the agenda of the United Nations for more than 60 years, but no progress has been made owing to the double standards and hypocrisy of the United States on the Palestine issue. For more than 60 years, the United States has consistently maintained a one-sided support policy for Israel at the expense of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and their aspirations for independence with statehood. That one-sided approach has been evident in various aspects of United States foreign policy, including its military aid and its exercise of the veto power in the Security Council. Consequently, it has

become the main obstacle to resolving the Palestinian issue. That double standard and the biased approach of the United States not only undermines the credibility of the Security Council but also perpetuates a cycle of violence, injustice and illegal behaviour of Israel in the occupied Palestine territory.

One of the most typical examples of those double standards is clearly demonstrated in the situation in Gaza, where genocide against innocent Palestinian people is still being committed. It is imperative for the international community to take concerted action and speak with one voice in order to ensure that all countries respect and follow the same rules and norms. If double standards and special rules do not apply in international relations, it will be possible to resolve the Palestinian issue without complications, as the international community desires.

The only way to realize a two-State solution is to recognize and respect the sovereignty of Palestine and its right to self-determination. The adoption of the resolution admitting Palestine as a full State Member of the United Nations will be a critical step towards realizing the vision of a two-State solution, which remains the most feasible pathway to lasting peace and stability in the Middle East. Furthermore, granting Palestine full membership in the United Nations would reaffirm the international community's commitment to upholding the principles of equality and sovereignty and the right of all peoples to self-determination. The delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea strongly supports Palestine's full membership of the United Nations and calls on the Security Council to reconsider the matter favourably in the light of the resolution adopted today at this meeting of the special session of the General Assembly.

**Mr. Kridelka** (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): Today it is more important than ever to send a strong message of our determination to do whatever it takes to move forward on the road to peace by restoring a credible political horizon. That is why my country, Belgium, co-sponsored resolution ES-10/23, making a resolute choice in favour of action. We have a responsibility to strive collectively to rekindle a peace process. There is no alternative to the emergence of two democratic States, living side by side in peace within secure and recognized borders. There is no other way to reconcile security for Israel with the Palestinian people's aspirations for self-determination. We all know that, and we cannot put off that outcome indefinitely. All endeavours to that end and all agents of goodwill must be supported.



By requesting the Security Council to reconsider its position on Palestine's admission to full membership in the United Nations, the Assembly has conveyed a strong message of support for a negotiated solution between two parties that should treat each other as equals. Our Assembly has underscored its determination to work with the Palestinian Authority, which must be our sole legitimate interlocutor. It has sent a message of hope to all the victims of the conflict, the hope of an alternative to the path of violence and war.

Belgium's co-sponsorship reflects our consistent commitment to a just, lasting and peaceful resolution of the Palestinian question and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in accordance with international law and based on the relevant Security Council resolutions. Today's resolution is not an end in itself but rather represents a symbolic milestone that makes the only possible path — that of peace — inevitable. Further steps will of course be necessary to compel a dialogue of peace and steer its course. The international community must continue to bring its full weight to bear in supporting those efforts. Palestine belongs in the community of nations, here among us. History and the most fundamental right of the Palestinian people demand it. It is a prerequisite for a credible peace process. The belief that we have expressed today goes hand in hand with the necessary reform efforts to bolster the legitimacy of the Palestinian Authority and its capacity for governance. It is by embarking on that path that we will be able make Palestine's full membership of the United Nations a reality. And when that time comes, Belgium, together with its partners, will be in a position to recognize the State of Palestine.

An offensive in Rafah would dash all our hopes of achieving a ceasefire and the release of the hostages, forcing us to watch another humanitarian disaster unfold. As the conflict pushes the boundaries of what is unacceptable with each passing day, inaction is no longer an option. It plays into the hands of the enemies of peace and is perpetuating an intolerable humanitarian situation that will only serve terrorist groups such as Hamas and extremists of all stripes.

Belgium underscores its determination to continue contributing proactively and positively to a return to peace. It is in that context that we reiterate our appeal for an immediate ceasefire, the unconditional release of the hostages and full and unimpeded humanitarian access.

**Ms. Joyini** (South Africa): I thank the President of the General Assembly for convening this meeting of the tenth emergency special session to discuss Palestine's membership of the United Nations, following the failure of the Security Council to adopt a resolution on the matter (see S/PV.9609).

South Africa aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Uganda on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

At the outset, South Africa reiterates its support for Palestine's full membership in the United Nations. We believe that Palestine has met the criteria set out in Article 4 of the Charter of the United Nations and should therefore be admitted as a full member of the Organization. Next week, on 15 May, Palestinians will observe Nakba Day, a reminder of events 76 years ago, when the world stood by and watched as hundreds of thousands of Palestinians were forced to flee or were expelled from their homes, villages and towns. Very few have been able to return and reclaim their heritage and rights. It is regrettable that today the historical events leading to the establishment of our Organization, which is meant to bring about global peace and security, coincide almost exactly with the period of occupation, which began with the Nakba.

As we reconvene in this Hall, a war continues to be waged against Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, and a full-scale military operation announced by Israel is imminent in Rafah, despite the international community's warnings of the catastrophic consequences of such an action. We are unfortunately once again witnessing the displacement of Palestinians from their very last refuge, in Rafah. They have nowhere else to go. That wretched truth implies that we have again failed the people of Palestine. No meaningful action has been taken so far to stop the genocidal actions in Gaza. Nor have sustained efforts been made to improve the flow of humanitarian relief and protect civilians.

On 26 January and 28 March, the International Court of Justice issued orders in relation to the right of the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip to be protected from all acts within the scope of the Genocide Convention. The Court ruled that South Africa's claim that the State of Israel, a State party to the Genocide Convention, met the standard of plausibility, and among other things ordered Israel to take action to prevent and punish genocide and incitement to genocide and enable the immediate and effective provision of basic services and humanitarian

assistance to besieged Gaza. Those provisional measures were issued by the Court to prevent irreparable and irreversible harm to the rights of Palestinians, pending the Court's final decision on the case. Regrettably, Israel has not complied with the Court's binding order but has instead escalated its genocidal acts against the Palestinian people. The time for a permanent ceasefire and a complete halt to offensives is long overdue.

It is important to recognize that the application for membership of Palestine to the United Nations is occurring in a context of illegal occupation that goes against the tenets of international law and the Charter of the United Nations. We should recall that despite the adoption of Security Council resolution 2334 (2016), the expansion of settlement activities on illegally occupied land in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, has continued with impunity, which has a direct effect on the prospects for achievement of the two-State solution.

The Secretary-General noted earlier this year that a lasting end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict can only come through a two-State solution; that any refusal to accept the two-State solution by any party must be firmly rejected; that the denial of the right to statehood would indefinitely prolong the conflict; that a one-State solution with a huge Palestinian population inside that State, without any real sense of freedom, rights and dignity, would be inconceivable; and that the only way to address the legitimate aspirations of both Israelis and Palestinians is through the two-State formula (see S/PV/9534).

We must remain steadfast in our commitment to supporting the just cause for justice and liberation of the people of Palestine. As Member States that pledge their commitment to upholding the United Nations Charter, we have the ultimate responsibility to ensure and protect the inalienable rights of Palestinians. For how long must Palestinians wait for their turn to enjoy the rights that all of our people enjoy? For how long must Palestinians be subjected to discrimination and unjust policies that perpetuate a cycle of structural violence and violations of the human rights?

At the very least, the international community needs to make incremental steps towards finding a peaceful political settlement for both Israel and Palestinians. Conferring full recognition on Palestine within the international legal order and conferring the international legitimacy, leverage and bargaining power inherent in

recognized statehood would be the first step towards offering both sides a secure and better future. It is necessary to restore a balance that has in recent years tipped overwhelmingly in favour of Israel. No peace negotiation has much prospect of succeeding if the parties at the table are not engaging as equals. It is time for Palestinians to have the freedom to determine their own leadership without external interference and carve out a path for their future. The situation in Palestine and Israel has caused untold human suffering and created serious difficulties for the stalled Middle East peace process. In order to move forward, we should acknowledge what the overwhelming number of us in the Assembly already recognize — that Palestine is indeed a State and should take its rightful place in the Assembly.

In conclusion, South Africa voted in favour of and co-sponsored resolution ES-10/23, on the admission of new Members to the United Nations. We believe that will provide Palestine with an opportunity to play a meaningful role at the United Nations. We therefore join other Member States in calling on the Security Council to reconsider its decision and consider the matter comprehensively.

**Mr. Ndoye** (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): Senegal aligns itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Mauritania and Uganda on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, respectively.

My delegation is grateful to the President, for having reconvened the tenth emergency special session at the joint request of the Group of Arab States, the OIC and the Non-Aligned Movement. Following the failure of the Security Council to adopt draft resolution S/2024/312 recommending the admission of the State of Palestine as a full Member of the United Nations (see S/PV. 9609), Senegal deplores once again that a veto prevented the admission of the State of Palestine, when 12 out of the 15 members of the Council supported the draft resolution and 144 of the 193 States Members of the Organization already recognized that State.

The situation is even more regrettable given that the State of Palestine meets the criteria for a State and that its successive Governments have never ceased to defend the rights enshrined in international law and relevant United Nations resolutions. The State of Palestine is party to numerous instruments under the aegis of the United Nations, a full member of a number of United Nations bodies and a full member of several

international organizations. The peace-loving State of Palestine is unwavering in its pursuit of acceptance in the concert of nations, as so eloquently demonstrated in its determination, many times expressed, to become a full Member of the United Nations. The number of States Members of the United Nations that unreservedly recognize that the State of Palestine has all the attributes of a sovereign State continues to grow. In that regard, my delegation welcomes the recent decision of Barbados, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, and the Bahamas to recognize the State of Palestine, and we invite Member States who have yet to do so to do the same.

The recognition of the State of Palestine should not be an obstacle to peace, quite the contrary. Far from being an end in itself, it represents today — 77 years after the plan to partition Palestine — a crucial step towards allowing all parties concerned to work with equal responsibility and representation for a just and sustainable solution to the conflict. In that vein, the State of Palestine cannot be left to one side. We would be wrong to continue to unjustly refuse it that which for so long and so justly has been given to the State of Israel, namely, the status of a full Member of the United Nations. Senegal, unwavering in its commitment, continues to support tirelessly the admission of the State of Palestine as a full Member of our Organization. We are absolutely sure that the required majority would be easily obtained in the General Assembly.

In the absence of a vote on the admission of the State of Palestine, which was unjustly denied by the Security Council, Senegal welcomes the adoption of resolution ES-10/23, of which it was a proud co-sponsor. That result, with its broad majority, sends a strong signal from the international community. Through that resolution, the General Assembly has contributed to the reaffirmation of a dignity that has been owed to that State for far too long, thereby allowing our Organization to better benefit from the expertise of its representatives in our discussions. It is also an appeal to the Security Council to reconsider the admission of that State as soon as possible. In anticipation of that long-awaited day, my country will continue to support all initiatives aimed at ensuring the State of Palestine's full and effective participation in the work of the General Assembly and all other United Nations organs.

The Palestinian people have a right to a viable, contiguous State, with East Jerusalem as its capital and

within secure and internationally recognized borders alongside the State of Israel. The fact that the State of Palestine is still struggling to be admitted as a full Member of the United Nations is a reminder of how important it is to preserve and protect the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people — an inalienable right to their land that is being continually flouted, including in the West Bank, thanks to the effect of aggressive policies of occupation, colonization and annexation, and an inalienable right to life, threatened daily by the humanitarian tragedy that continues to unfold in Gaza. My delegation therefore deplores the Israeli offensive on Rafah, which has reportedly already displaced more than 100,000 people. It is certain that the human toll of the crisis, already rendered intolerable with its 35,000 deaths and 78,000 wounded, will worsen for the 2.3 million Gazans in permanent mourning, deprived of any safe shelter in both north and south and plunged into constant distress. That is why Senegal continues to urge Israel, as the occupying Power, to show restraint and spare the civilian population, all humanitarian, medical and media staff and all hospitals, places of worship and United Nations facilities.

In that regard, my country once again welcomes the Secretary-General's steadfast commitment to resolving the crisis. We reiterate our support for the teams of Mr. Philippe Lazzarini, Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, as well as all the United Nations and non-governmental entities involved, for their dedication. My delegation sincerely hopes that a ceasefire will be reached and the hostages released quickly, with the support and goodwill of all concerned. Only a ceasefire can ensure safe, sustainable and unhindered humanitarian access. Only a ceasefire can enable real de-escalation, as a first step in the resumption of peace talks aimed at achieving a two-State solution, which is the only worthwhile solution. There lies the path to peace. That path requires the recognition, without further delay, of the State of Palestine, which has all the rights and legitimacy to take its place among us on an equal footing.

**The Acting President:** We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item for this meeting. We shall hear the remaining speakers on Monday, 13 May, at 10 a.m. in this Hall.

*The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.*