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QUESTION OF PALESTINE

Letter dated 30 November 1978 from the Permanent
Representative of Qatar to the United Nations
addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you the text of a message addressed by His Highness the Emir of the State of Qatar, Sheikh Khalifa Bin Hamad Al-Thani, to the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, on the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.

Upon instructions of my Government, I would kindly request that this message be circulated as an official document of the General Assembly under agenda item 31.

(Signed) Jasim JAMAL
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

ANNEX

Message from the Emir of the State of Qatar to the Committee on
the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People
on the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the
Palestinian People

The question of Palestine is a comprehensive issue comprising interrelated elements and interconnected components. In the United Nations the question has retained this, its true character, from the time when it arose more than 30 years ago up to the present. Whenever a matter relating to it is brought before the Security Council or the General Assembly, it is included in the respective agendas of these two major organs of the supreme international Organization as coming under the item relating to the over-all issue, the "Question of Palestine".

The "Question of Palestine" has become a problem of extreme gravity with multiple interrelated aspects, because it is at once a political, legal, economic, humanitarian, ethical and religious problem. This problem lies at the heart of the international crisis known as the "Middle East crisis", which resulted from the implementation of acts constituting successive links in the chain of Israel's policy of aggression and its expansionist ambitions, whereby its aggression extended to Palestine and to other Arab lands in Egypt, the Syrian Arab Republic and Jordan. It is a problem which is distinguished from all other international problems by the fact that it is unprecedented in history, because never before has an aggressor driven an entire people from their homeland in order to usurp it for itself and take that people's place in its homeland on purely religious grounds.

The whole world has reached a consensus regarding the necessity of arriving at a comprehensive, just and peaceful settlement of the Middle East crisis. A consensus has likewise been established concerning the fact that failure to achieve such a settlement presents an imminent threat to peace in the region, which may result in the flare-up of a new war there and which could, sooner or later, lead to the outbreak of a third world war.

Since the question of Palestine unquestionably constitutes the root, essence and core of the Middle East crisis, it was natural that a consensus of opinion should be reached on the fact that the settlement of the Middle East crisis makes it imperative to find a just and comprehensive solution to that question.

In performance of its primary duty, namely, the maintenance of international peace and security, the United Nations has convened, with a view to arriving at such a solution, more than 1,000 meetings of its various competent organs. As a result of the meetings, these organs have adopted some 200 resolutions. But all these meetings and resolutions have come to nought, and one half of the Palestinian Arab people have continued living the tragic life of displaced persons, far from the soil of their homeland, while the other half have remained subjected to the yoke of Israeli occupation of that land, suffering the bitterness of humiliation and the various forms of degradation and oppression.

In the face of this horrendous situation and the enormity of the dangers involved, the General Assembly, on 10 November 1975, adopted resolution 3376 (XXX) establishing the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. That historic resolution reaffirmed those rights and, in particular, the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination without external interference, their right to national independence and sovereignty and their right to return to their homes and to restoration of their property there.

The aforementioned resolution gave the Committee a basic mandate comprising two major parts: first, to prepare a programme of implementation, designed to enable the Palestinian people to exercise the inalienable rights referred to, taking into consideration the action taken by the Security Council in that regard, and, secondly, to assume responsibility for focusing international concern on the achievement of progress towards a just solution to the question of Palestine and for keeping the attention of the international community directed towards the ordeal of that people, in order to strengthen international solidarity with them in their tragedy.

In implementation of the second part of the Committee's mandate, the General Assembly, on 2 December 1977, adopted resolution 32/40 B establishing within the United Nations Secretariat a Special Unit on Palestinian Rights entrusted, inter alia, with the organization, in consultation with the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, commencing in 1978, the annual observance of 29 November as the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.

I am greatly pleased to be given this opportunity to send greetings, on my behalf and on behalf of the people and Government of the State of Qatar, to the meeting held today in the forum of the United Nations for the purpose of focusing the attention of the whole world on the gravity of the overwhelming danger which threatens international peace and security as a result of the perpetuation of Israel's aggression against Palestine, that precious part of the great Arab homeland, and to the unprecedented criminal consequences of that aggression, namely, the dispersion of the Palestinian Arab people from their homes, the occupation of their land, the desecration of the holy places of Islam in this land, extreme coercion and oppression of those of this people who remain there in a way which exceeds in its savagery every conceivable limit with regard to the violation of legal and ethical norms and of religious and humane values, not to mention the flouting of the purposes and principles of the United Nations and the resolutions which the Organization has adopted for the implementation of these purposes and principles.

Unquestionably, the convening of this meeting in the forum of the supreme international Organization on the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People is an event of profound significance, affirming the conviction of the international community, which is represented in this Organization and whose conscience and will are expressed through the Organization's resolutions, of the justness of the Palestinian cause and the necessity of finding

for the Palestinian question, on the basis of those resolutions, a solution which is comprehensive and just with regard to all aspects of that question.

The purpose of the observance of 29 November of each year as the annual day for the expression of international solidarity with the Palestinian people is to remind the international community that aggression unprecedented in history with regard to the unparalleled injustice which it inflicts on a whole people is still, contrary to the will of the international community, oppressing members of this people, in spite of all the efforts which have been and are being made within the United Nations and outside, to put an end to it peacefully. Our greatest hope, therefore, is that this reminder will convince the leaders of the world that the time has really come for their duty of solidarity with the Palestinian people to take the form of the adoption of the positive and effective positions which they should assume in order to achieve the legitimate rights of this people, which they have been supporting within our supreme international Organization, through the adoption of its resolutions on the question, and outside it through the numerous statements which they have made in support of those rights.

A consensus has been reached in the international community that there will be no peace in the Middle East without recognition of the aforementioned legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and that the genuine threat to this peace presented by the perpetuation of Israel's aggression against the Arab territories exposes international peace and security to the greatest of dangers. Accordingly the Arab nation, in calling today upon the leaders of the world and, in particular, the leaders of the big Powers, which bear the greatest share of responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, to extend assistance to the Palestinian Arab people for the restoration of their full rights, is only calling upon them to perform the duty imposed upon them by the Charter of the United Nations, which they are committed to respect, namely, the duty laid down in Article 1 thereof to take effective collective measures for the removal of threats to international peace and security and for the suppression of acts of aggression which constitute breaches of the peace.

It has become a duty incumbent on the peoples and Governments of the world to organize their efforts to strengthen United Nations endeavours to put an end to Israel's defiance of their collective will and to erase the great stigma of Israel's total disregard of this will.

The Arab State of Qatar, hoping that the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People will help to bring about this solidarity in a positive and effective form that will ensure this fraternal Arab people the full restoration of their rights, expresses the wish that this Day may be fully successful in the achievement of its lofty goals and that the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People will have the utmost success in the discharge of its meritorious functions.

Khalifa Bin Hamad AL-THANI
Emir of the State of Qatar
