

Please check upon delivery



BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA
PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR JULIO ESCALONA
DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE UNITED NATIONS

"QUESTION OF PALESTINE"

AGENDA ITEM 37

66^o SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 29TH, 2011

Mr. President,

I begin by thanking the Bureau of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People for the tireless work carried out, both inside and outside the United Nations, to give visibility to the cause of the Palestinian people. My delegation aligns itself with the statement of Egypt, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The General Debate that concerns us today is an appropriate occasion to remember the systematic violation of the rights of a people, and the outstanding debt of the international community with what Edward Said called "the last great cause of the 20th Century". The huge number of civilians killed or maimed, the ongoing house demolitions, the consistent and studied dismantling of basic infrastructure, and the imprisonment of a people in an inhuman and shameful blockade, are today the painful reference to a conflict of over 60 years.

Therefore, Venezuela joins the voices that demand, unequivocally and without further delays, the end of the Israeli presence in the occupied territories, as a basic prerequisite for a broad, just, and lasting peace in the Middle East, and we reaffirm our full support to the recognition of the Palestinian State as a full member of the United Nations.

Since the establishment of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, the human drama that accompanies the Israeli-Arab political conflict has become more acute, and the access of the population from the occupied territories to their most basic rights turns more precarious every day.

My delegation notes with great concern the lack of progress in the peace process that will realize the inalienable, permanent, and unconditional right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, including the right to live in freedom, justice and dignity, and the right to establish a contiguous, sovereign, independent, democratic and viable State, with East Jerusalem as its capital, in accordance with Resolution 10/20 of the Human Rights Council.

During this ending year, new initiatives have boosted the campaign of the Israeli government to blow up the peace process in the Middle East, while part of the United Nations community observes, with frustration, the double standards in the application of the International Law.

Mr. President,

These initiatives could be summarized as follow:

1. Deliberate territorial and economic fragmentation of the life of the population, and attempts to modify its demographic composition.
2. From our point of view, the violations – as well as the policies and practices of occupation – not only persist but they have become more evil and refined, violating all norms of peaceful coexistence.
3. We lament the continuing blockade of Gaza, which violates the right of freedom of movement, the right to housing, food, water, employment, health, and education. The blockade is untenable from every point of view and its “flexibilization” is false.
4. In the West Bank, and particularly in East Jerusalem, the demolition of houses, the construction of settlements, the annexation of land, and the separation wall, which violates the Advisory Opinion of the International Criminal Court, all continue.
5. Through repressive measures, the access to agricultural land, schools, medical facilities and places of worship, is prevented; forcing thousands of families to live apart.
6. There has been a significant increase of the settlers’ violence against Palestinians. This translates into arson attacks to mosques, destruction of olive orchards, the burning of agricultural land, slaughter of cattle, and direct

attacks on the villagers; without Israeli authorities' intervention to stop, arrest and prosecute those responsible.

Mr. President,

All these policies and practices of the Israeli government threaten the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, threaten the international legality, and threaten also a peace deserved by both the Palestinian and the Israeli people. The United Nations must move from declarations to actions, in order to stop the impunity of the State of Israel, for it is the main obstacle to the pursuit of a just, lasting, and comprehensive peace to the conflict of the Middle East. This fractures the legitimacy of the United Nations, and seriously calls into question the impartiality of an Organization that acts sternly against only some of its members, condoning –in some cases- even the overthrow of Governments.

The Security Council cannot remain blind and deaf to what happens in Palestine while, in other places, it proceeds expeditiously. The State of Israel violates, with impunity, the Resolutions of the United Nations; it commits serious crimes, it tramples international law, and the Security Council feigns ignorance. This double standard can only continue at the risk of endangering international stability and the achievements in the fields of human rights, democracy, law and international justice, brought about by centuries of struggle.

Mr. President,

To stop the impunity and the crimes should be our promise to the present and future generations, to humanity and to the planet.

On behalf of these principles, we proclaim our most solid support for the declaration of Palestine as a State Member of the United Nations, with full sovereignty and independence.

Thank you.

