



**Statement of the
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Before the Security Council**

On Item
***The Situation in the Middle East
Including the Palestinian question***

Delivered by
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Madam President,

I would like to thank the Heads of Delegations for conveying their condolences regarding the departure of His Royal Highness the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia; and I convey my condolences to the Government and people of Turkey regarding the victims of the earthquake that recently hit the country. Moreover, I express my gratitude and my appreciation to you for convening this open debate on “*The situation in the Middle East including the Palestinian Question*”; and we support the statement made by the President of the Egyptian Delegation delivered on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Madam President,

This meeting is held at a time in which the Palestinian people are paying for the reluctance of the international community and the Security Council to deter Israel from its actions against the Palestinian people such as killing, displacement, imprisonment, blockades, confiscation of land and property and impoverishment of Palestine. All those actions expose the Palestinian people to additional and intense oppression and torture in order to force this noble people to surrender.

Madam President,

The Israeli government persists in its intransigence refusing to give the Palestinians their basic rights. It proceeds with its illegal settlement activities in the occupied Palestinian territories, including East Jerusalem, in defiance of international will, countries’ condemnations and UN resolutions issued in this regard. The Israeli settlements surround the cities of the West Bank and take hold of nearly half of its water hindering any Palestinian government from working effectively. Furthermore, it is unethical that the occupation forces impose a blockade on an entire people and continue their settlement activities secured from any accountability. Most of the countries gathered here, including the permanent members of the Security Council, issued individual statements against the continuation of Israeli settlement activities; and what they need to do now is to show a collective action that clearly reflects this existing consensus. This is the time in which Israel should realize that it cannot continue to exempt itself from the full compliance with the rules of international law-based behavior.

Madam President,

The “Apartheid Wall” embodies an evidence of the extent of the Israeli occupying power’s persistence in violating UN resolutions, particularly resolution 181, on the pretext of achieving protection. In fact, the true purposes of building the wall are to change the facts on ground, displacing the Palestinian people, preventing East Jerusalem from escaping Israeli sovereignty and securing control on water resources; in addition to establishing a huge amount of settlements for the settlers. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia reiterates that security cannot be achieved neither by building symbols of oppression and occupation nor through the unjustified use of military force. Rather, it could be achieved by respecting human rights and the rule of law.

Madam President,

The situation in the besieged Gaza Strip constitutes another factor that exacerbates the suffering of the Palestinian people. In fact, Gaza Strip became a big prison due to that unjust blockade imposed by Israel which prevents the Palestinians from exercising their natural rights and accessing their necessities and needs. Meanwhile, a generation of Palestinian children in that sector is born and raised with nothing in their minds but devastation, destruction and the world negligence to support them in exercising their natural rights equal to any other children in the world. Therefore, from this rostrum, we urge the Security Council to shoulder its responsibilities by lifting the siege on Gaza and opening the crossings that lead to it.

Madam President,

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia calls upon the international community to compel Israel to take the necessary procedures to protect the holy sites and places of worship in Palestine, particularly in Jerusalem. In addition, the Kingdom urges the international community to force Israel to release the rest of the Palestinian prisoners, some of whom had not seen their families for decades.

Madam President,

The Kingdom would not make such demands without extending a hand of peace and proving its commitment to a just and comprehensive peace. In this context, the Kingdom has introduced a peace initiative that was adopted by all Arab states in 2002 to be known as: "The Arab Peace Initiative". This Initiative reiterated the commitment to achieving just and comprehensive peace based on the rules of international law; nevertheless, we did not find any mutual commitment from Israel. Rather, Israel evaded its responsibilities and continued its series of violations against the Palestinian people and their rights. Thus, now more than ever, we call upon member states of the Security Council to support the Palestinian people and recognize their state (within the borders of the 4th of June 1967 and Jerusalem as its capital). This in order to make Israel understand, and the children and people of Palestine recognize, that the international community agreed, albeit belatedly, to support their cause by granting Palestine full membership in the United Nations.

Madam President,

Peace in the Middle East requires the commitment of all countries of the region to achieve its security. Meanwhile, we cannot talk about peace in the Middle East without referring to the plot to assassinate the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the United States of America. According to the evidence provided by the competent authorities of the United States, it was evident that the perpetrators who planned or supported the implementation of this heinous crime either work for the Iranian government or are affiliated with it. The Kingdom reiterates its denunciation and condemnation to anyone who may threaten its security or assault any of its citizens or officials; and that the Kingdom will not stand idle towards any conspiracies against its safety and welfare. Furthermore, the Kingdom reaffirms its full cooperation with the international community and your honorable Council, which is entrusted with maintaining international peace and security, to ensure that anyone involved in that plot, whether state or individual, be held accountable.

Thank you Madam President.