



15th Ministerial Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement

Tehran, 27-30 July 2008

Declaration on Palestine

1. The Ministers of the Non-Aligned Movement reviewed the continuing critical situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. They considered further approaches and strategies to be undertaken by the Movement to continue strongly supporting the Palestinian people and their leadership and for advancing the revived peace process towards the achievement of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace settlement and the exercise by the Palestinian people of their inalienable right to self-determination in their independent and sovereign State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem as its capital. The Ministers reaffirmed their adherence to the principled positions adopted in this regard, including in the Declarations on Palestine adopted by the Committee on Palestine on 25 September 2007 in New York as well as on 16 September 2006 in Havana during the XIV Summit Conference of Heads of State or Government, and the clear positions concerning Palestine adopted by all other previous Summits and Ministerial Conferences of the Movement.
2. The Ministers expressed their deep regret that sixty years have passed since the 1948 Al-Nakba that befell the Palestinian people, by which they became a stateless and dispossessed people, dispersed and displaced from their homeland of Palestine, and that more than half of the Palestinian people continue to live in exile in refugee camps throughout the region and in the Diaspora. In this regard, the Ministers called upon all Members of the Movement to solemnly commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Palestinian Al-Nakba this year and to reaffirm their solidarity with the Palestinian people on this occasion and redouble their collective efforts for the just and peaceful resolution of the question of Palestine in all its aspects.
3. The Ministers also expressed their deep regret that since 1967, for more than forty-one years now, the Palestinian people have continuously suffered under Israel's brutal military occupation of their land and that they continue to be denied their fundamental human

rights, including the right to self-determination and the right of the Palestine refugees to return. The Ministers expressed their grave concern about the many hardships being endured by the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as a result of the unlawful policies and practices being carried out by Israel, the occupying Power, including grave human rights violations and grave breaches of international humanitarian law.

4. The Ministers expressed their grave concern about the continued deterioration of the ground in the Occupied Palestinian Territory at the political, economic, social, security, and humanitarian levels. The Ministers strongly condemned the continuing Israeli military aggressions against the Palestinian people, particularly in the Gaza Strip, which have resulted, inter alia, in the killing and injury of more Palestinian civilians, including children, by use of excessive and indiscriminate force and extrajudicial executions and the vast destruction of homes, properties, infrastructure and agricultural lands. They called for an immediate cessation of such acts of military aggression by the occupying Power, which constitute grave violations of international law and for which the perpetrators must be held accountable and brought to justice. The Ministers also condemned the continuing illegal detention and imprisonment of thousands of Palestinians, including hundreds of women and children and numerous elected officials, and called for their immediate release.
5. The Ministers condemned Israel's continued unlawful imposition of measures of collective punishment on the Palestinian people, including reprisals against the civilian population and restrictions on freedom of movement. They expressed grave concern and strong condemnation in particular of Israel's inhumane closure and siege of the Gaza Strip, which has resulted in the virtual imprisonment of the entire Palestinian civilian population there and the deepening of the economic, social and humanitarian deprivation and crisis due to the occupying Power's obstruction of access to food, medicines, fuel and electricity, building materials and other basic human necessities as well as the obstruction of movement of humanitarian personnel and sick persons requiring medical treatment outside of Gaza. The Ministers stressed that, in addition to violating countless provisions of human rights law, such measures of collective punishment by Israel are tantamount to grave breaches of international humanitarian law, by which it is bound as the occupying Power and with which it must scrupulously comply.
6. The Ministers called for an immediate end to Israel's illegal closure of the Gaza Strip and for the opening of all of the Gaza Strip's border crossings to allow for the movement of persons and goods into and out of the Territory. In this regard, the Ministers reiterated their support for the Palestinian Authority's proposal to assume responsibility for operation of the Palestinian side of the Gaza Strip's border crossings, and called upon the parties to resume the application of internationally-

agreed arrangements to ensure their speedy reopening and to ease the isolation and suffering of the civilian population.

7. The Ministers also condemned Israel's imposition of severe restrictions on the movement of persons and goods throughout and into and out of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, via closures and a vast, discriminatory network of hundreds of checkpoints and the Wall and its associated permit regime, which are physically separating Palestinian communities, isolating East Jerusalem, destroying the economy and social fabric, severing the northern, central and southern parts of the Palestinian Territory, and undermining its territorial contiguity, integrity and unity. They expressed alarm that continuation of such illegal measures is jeopardizing the establishment of a sovereign, viable and independent State of Palestine with East Jerusalem as its capital, and demanded that Israel, the occupying Power, immediately cease all such measures, which are in grave violation of international law.
8. The Ministers stressed that among such grave breaches by the occupying Power, the primary danger to the realization of the inalienable and national rights of the Palestinian people and the achievement of the two-State solution continued to be the unlawful campaigns of settler colonialism and construction of the Wall being carried out by Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. They reiterated their strong condemnation of Israel's intensive colonization measures, including vast land confiscations, construction and expansion of settlements, particularly in and around Occupied East Jerusalem, construction of Israeli-only bypass roads, and ongoing attempts to annex the Jordan Valley. The Ministers reaffirmed the many United Nations Security Council resolutions condemning and demanding the cessation of such illegal practices, including measures to change the status, character and demographic composition of East Jerusalem, which are null and void, and they called for the respect and implementation of those resolutions.
9. In this regard, the Ministers also reiterated their condemnation of Israel's continuing construction of the Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, in flagrant defiance of international law, the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice of 9 July 2004 on the "*Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory*" and General Assembly resolution ES-10/15 of 20 July 2004. They expressed deep concern about the grave breaches of international law, including of the Fourth Geneva Convention and of human rights law, that continue to be committed by Israel, including, *inter alia*, the destruction and requisition of land and properties and the violations of the Palestinian people's freedom of movement as well as their rights to work, to health, to education, to livelihood and to an adequate standard of living. They also expressed grave concern over the extreme physical, economic and social devastation being caused by the Wall, which is dissecting the Palestinian Territory into walled and isolated cantons, destroying

entire communities, displacing thousands of Palestinians from their homes and lands, and severing East Jerusalem from the rest of the Territory. They stressed that such illegal, unilateral measures gravely threaten the prospects for achieving the two-State solution on the basis of the pre-1967 borders, and reaffirmed their complete rejection of these Israeli measures and policies.

10. The Ministers reiterated their demand that Israel, the occupying Power, scrupulously respect its obligations as mentioned in the Advisory Opinion and comply with resolution ES-10/15. They recalled in specific the Court's determination: that Israel is under an obligation to terminate its breaches of international law, to cease the construction of the Wall being built in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, to dismantle the structure therein situated, to repeal and render ineffective all legislative and regulatory acts relating thereto, and to make reparation for all damage caused by the construction of the Wall.
11. The Ministers also reiterated their call upon Member States and the UN to uphold their obligations in accordance with the Advisory Opinion and the demands made in resolution ES-10/15, including the obligation not to recognize the illegal situation resulting from the construction of the Wall and not to render aid or assistance in maintaining the situation created by such construction. Moreover, in light of Israel's continued intransigence and defiance of international law, the Ministers reiterated their call for further specific actions to bring end to the violations being committed by the occupying Power in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. They called for measures to be undertaken by Member States, including by means of legislation, collectively, regionally and individually, to prevent any products of the illegal Israeli settlements from entering their markets, consistent with obligations under international treaties, to decline entry to Israeli settlers and to impose sanctions on companies and entities involved in the construction of the Wall and other illegal colonization activities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. They also called upon the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention to adhere to Article 1 common to the four Geneva Conventions and to undertake measures to ensure Israel's compliance with the Convention and reaffirmed the obligations of the High Contracting Parties regarding penal sanctions, grave breaches and responsibilities.
12. In this context, the Ministers called for the application of legal remedies to end the human rights violations and grave breaches of international humanitarian law being committed by Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and to hold it accountable. Furthermore, they reiterated their firm conviction that respect and compliance with international law and UN resolutions and decisions will positively influence the efforts for achieving a just, peaceful, political settlement of

the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on the basis of the rules and principles of international law.

13. The Ministers also recalled in this regard the obligation of the UN, especially the General Assembly and the Security Council, to consider further action to bring an end to the illegal situation resulting from the construction of the Wall. In this regard, they recalled operative paragraph 5 of resolution ES-10/15 and reiterated their call upon the Security Council to adopt a clear resolution and the necessary measures to address the matter. They also welcomed the General Assembly's adoption of resolution ES-10/17 on 15 December 2006, by which it established the United Nations Register of Damage Caused by the Construction of the Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and called for the expeditious operation and speedy fulfillment of its mandate.
14. The Ministers reaffirmed their support for the Palestine Liberation Organization, the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, and the Palestinian Authority under the leadership of President Mahmoud Abbas and emphasized the importance of maintaining and protecting the national and democratic institutions of the Palestinian Authority, including the Palestinian Legislative Council, which shall constitute a vital foundation for the future independent Palestinian State. They called for urgent efforts to rehabilitate and develop Palestinian institutions and, in this connection, stressed the need for mobilization of Palestinian capabilities to preserve the territorial unity and integrity of the Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, to end the occupation and to achieve the Palestinian national goal. The Ministers also called for speedy restoration of the situation in the Gaza Strip to that which existed prior to the unlawful events of June 2007 to pave the way for Palestinian dialogue to achieve national reconciliation and unity. In this regard, they expressed support for the Yemeni Initiative and called for its implementation.
15. The Ministers reiterated their hope that the international community and the Quartet will continue to exert serious efforts during the current critical period to advance the peace process and to salvage the Road Map and promote its implementation towards ending the occupation of the Palestinian Territory that began in 1967, including East Jerusalem, and thus realizing the two-State solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the right of all States and peoples in the region to live in peace and security. The Ministers reaffirmed the continued relevance of the Arab Peace Initiative, adopted by the XIV Arab Summit in Beirut in March 2002 and reaffirmed by XIX Arab Summit in Riyadh in March 2007, and welcomed the XX Arab Summit in Damascus in March 2008, which reaffirmed the commitment by all Arab States to the Arab Peace Initiative and stressed that such commitment is subject to adherence by Israel to its obligations under the terms of reference for achieving peace in the region, and called for intensification of efforts in this regard. They called on all concerned parties to remain actively

engaged with the Palestinian and Israeli sides to promote substantial negotiations and encourage immediate positive steps on the ground to promote genuine progress in the peace process on all final status issues towards the achievement of its stated aims and goals.

16. In this connection, the Ministers took note of the timely international conferences convened at Annapolis in November 2007 and at Paris in December 2007, aimed at ending the occupation that began in 1967 and actualizing the two-State solution and at providing urgently-needed assistance to the Palestinian people and the Palestinian Authority, and called for serious and continuous follow-up efforts. In this regard, the Ministers reiterated their support to convening the follow-up Conference before the end of 2008 to take stock of progress achieved in the peace process. The Ministers further reiterated their support to convening this Conference in Moscow.
17. The Ministers also reiterated their call upon the Security Council to assume its responsibilities and to act on the basis of its own resolutions to compel Israel to respect international law and to bring an end to all of its illegal practices and its occupation. The Ministers expressed appreciation to the members of the NAM Caucus of the Security Council for their efforts concerning Palestine and called upon them to continue coordination on the issue and to remain actively involved. Moreover, they urged the Security Council to engage the Quartet, considering the Council's Charter responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. In this context, they reaffirmed the permanent responsibility of the UN towards the question of Palestine until it is resolved in all aspects on the basis of international law, including a just resolution of the plight of the Palestine refugees in accordance with General Assembly resolution 194 (III) of 11 December 1948.
18. The Ministers reaffirmed their conviction that a vital role should continue to be played by the Movement vis-à-vis the question of Palestine and entrusted the Chair, assisted by the Committee on Palestine, to lead the efforts of the Movement with regard to the pursuit of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the region. They stressed the importance of active contacts and dialogue by the Movement at the Ministerial level with the members of the Quartet, the members of the Security Council and other relevant parties in the peace process in order to convey the Movement's principled positions and advance efforts aimed at promoting the peace process and at ensuring respect for international law, the keys to a peaceful settlement of the conflict.
19. The Ministers welcomed the holding of the Asian-African Ministerial Conference on Capacity Building for Palestine, in Jakarta 14 July 2008, with the main objective of assisting the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem as well as in clusters of refugee camps in the surrounding host countries, in practical

field of capacity building, in order to prepare them for the eventual creation of a Palestinian State. The Ministers highly commended the commitments made in the areas of economic development, including governance, women empowerment and public works, which may entail the training of as many as 10,000 Palestinian people. In this regard, the Ministers also welcomed the follow-up mechanism established to ensure the success of the effective implementation of the commitments as agreed by the Conference.

20. The Ministers also underscored the importance of the work of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), civil society and peace groups, particularly on the Palestinian and Israeli sides, and encouraged them to continue their positive work.
21. In conclusion, in light of the continuing severe economic, social and humanitarian hardships being endured by the Palestinian people as a result of the unlawful policies and measures being carried out by Israel, the occupying Power, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, the Ministers reiterated the call upon the Non-Aligned countries to continue extending urgent assistance to the Palestinian people to ease their financial and humanitarian crisis. Moreover, the Ministers reaffirmed their long-standing, principled political support, reaffirming their strong commitment to continue supporting the Palestinian people and their leadership to bring an end to the Israeli occupation that began in 1967, in accordance with the rules and principles of international law and relevant UN resolutions, and their commitment to a just, peaceful and permanent solution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and to the right of the Palestinian people to exercise self-determination and sovereignty in their independent State of Palestine, on the basis of the pre-1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital.