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QUESTION OF PALESTINE

THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE ISRAELI
PRACTICES AFFECTING THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE POPULATION
OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

Letter dated 14 September 1988 from the Permanent Representative of
Zimbabwe to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to forward the enclosed communiqué issued by the Foreign Ministers of the Committee of Nine Non-Aligned Countries on Palestine at their meeting held at Nicosia, Cyprus, on 7 September 1988 (see annex), with the request that it be circulated as an official document of the General Assembly under items 37, 40 and 77 of the provisional agenda.

(Signed) I. S. G. MUDENGE
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

* A/43/150.

ANNEX

Communiqué issued at Nicosia on 7 September 1988 by the
Foreign Ministers of the Committee of Nine Non-Aligned
Countries on Palestine

The Foreign Ministers of the Committee of Nine Non-Aligned Countries on Palestine met at Nicosia, Cyprus, on 7 September 1988, to review the situation in the Middle East and to consider action that the Committee could take within the context of its mandate to contribute to the peace efforts in the region aimed at achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting solution to the Middle East crisis and, in particular, the Palestinian problem and the question of Palestine which is the core of the Middle East crisis.

The Ministers reaffirmed the firm commitment of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries to the search for a comprehensive, just and lasting solution to the situation in the Middle East and reiterated that the *sine qua non* conditions for the achievement of peace in the region are:

(1) The unconditional withdrawal of Israel from all Palestinian and other Arab territories it occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem;

(2) The attainment and exercise of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people (right of return to their homes, self-determination without external interference, right to national independence and the right to establish a sovereign independent State in Palestine) in conformity with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and relevant resolutions.

The Committee heard a briefing given by His Excellency Mr. Farouk Qaddoumi (PLO) on the march of the heroic Palestinian Intifadah against Israeli occupation, the situation in the camps of Palestine refugees in Lebanon, and the recent decisions of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan relative to the West Bank, and the pertinent action and decision adopted by the Central Council.

The Committee also heard a briefing given by His Excellency Dr. Ahmed Taleb Ibrahim (Algeria) on the Extraordinary Arab Summit Conference, held at Algiers, from 7 to 9 June 1988.

The Ministers recalled the relevant decisions taken by the Heads of State or Government of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries at their Eighth Summit Conference with regard to the question of Palestine and the situation in the Middle East. They noted with grave concern that the situation has worsened, particularly as a result of the "iron fist" policies and practices of Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people. They applauded the Intifadah of the Palestinian people, particularly in the unity and co-ordination of the resistance of the people and the discipline and self-control demonstrated.

The Ministers expressed grave concern over the situation that prevailed in the Palestine refugee camps of Shatila and Burj el-Barajneh at Beirut. They requested

that the United Nations should assume full responsibility for the safety and the provision of safeguards for the security of the Palestinians inside refugee camps and in the Palestinian territory under Israeli occupation. In this context, the Ministers expressed appreciation for the initiative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the recommendations in his report of 21 January 1988 (S/19443), and are of the opinion that the Security Council should take into consideration those recommendations with the aim of authorizing their implementation, and in particular, the provision of protection of different types, namely, physical, legal, general assistance and publicity by the international media.

The Committee was further apprised of the action taken by the Central Council of the PLO in the light of the decision of Jordan relative to the West Bank, and expressed its appreciation of the response of the Executive Committee of the PLO to assume full responsibility to maintain as well the functioning of the administrative structure in the occupied Palestinian territories of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

The Ministers welcomed the co-operation between Jordan and the PLO regarding the rights acquired by the Palestinians during the period of the "unity of both banks" and expressed, in this regard, their confidence that such co-operation will continue until such time as a just solution of the Palestine problem is achieved.

The Ministers reaffirmed the commitment of the Movement to support action by the PLO, the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, in pursuance and exercise of the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to independence and sovereignty in Palestine.

The Ministers furthermore recalled the decisions of the Movement in which it, *inter alia*, affirmed the right of the Palestinian people to establish their sovereign independent State in Palestine, in conformity with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and relevant resolutions. In this context, they reaffirmed the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to proclaim the independent sovereign State of Palestine on Palestinian territory.

The Ministers urged the Secretary-General to intensify his endeavours to achieve a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East through a just solution of the question of Palestine, and called upon the Security Council, in particular the five permanent members, to support such endeavours, with a view to achieving peace in the region through the convening of the International Peace Conference in conformity with United Nations General Assembly resolution 38/58 C of 13 December 1983.

The heroic struggle of the Palestinian people, particularly as exemplified by the Intifadah in the occupied territories, has proved to the world that 20 years of Israeli occupation, terror and repression has failed to destroy their will and the right to live in freedom in their homeland, their identification with the PLO and their determination to establish an independent Palestinian State. The Ministers called upon all States, institutions and all the peoples of the world to reinforce and increase their solidarity with that struggle and to condemn the brutal Israeli acts of repression which, in recent months alone, have caused, among other tragedies, the deaths of hundreds of Palestinians.

The Ministers called upon the members of the Non-Aligned Movement, and all other States to contribute generously to the Intifadah, morally, politically and in concrete terms (food supplies, subsistence and finance), directly as well as through the United Nations organs and agencies, with facilities to provide the necessary assistance and services.

The Ministers decided that the Committee should continue to review current international developments in relation to the Middle East, particularly in the light of General Assembly resolutions 38/58 C and 41/43 D of 2 December 1986, and welcomed the growing sentiment and momentum in favour of the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East under the auspices of the United Nations, with the participation, on equal footing and with equal rights, of all the parties concerned, including the PLO as the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. In this regard, the Ministers reiterated their call for the early convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East under United Nations auspices and in conformity with the provisions of General Assembly resolutions 38/58 C and 41/43 D. They further stressed the primary responsibility of the Security Council, particularly that of its permanent members, to bring this about.

The Ministers called upon the Security Council to take adequate measures to ensure the termination of Israeli occupation and withdrawal of the occupation forces and to establish a United Nations force to administer and protect the Palestinian territories for a specified transitional period, pending the exercise of the Palestinian people of its sovereignty and independence in a Palestinian State.

The Ministers affirmed the indisputable right of the PLO to participate in the sessions and the work of the General Assembly of the United Nations, as well as the organs and agencies of the United Nations, in the capacity of observer. The right of the PLO to maintain a mission at United Nations Headquarters in New York, the right to maintain premises and other functional facilities and the right of entry to and stay in the United States of America of its personnel to carry out their functions have been reaffirmed by the relevant resolutions of the forty-second regular and resumed sessions of the General Assembly. The Ministers recognized the significance of the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice in this matter. They expressed satisfaction that the attempts to impede the functioning of the PLO Observer Mission to the United Nations had failed.

The Ministers decided that the Committee should continue to work actively and closely with regional and international organizations in order to promote the idea of the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East and to ask the Chairman of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries to conduct consultations and contacts, in particular with the Secretary-General of the United Nations and permanent members of the Security Council, in order to develop further action to promote our goals.