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Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People

Summary record of the 383rd meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 8 August 2017, at 11 a.m.

Chair: Mr. Seck (Senegal)

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The meeting was called to order at 11.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

1. *The agenda was adopted.*

Update on developments since the previous meeting of the Committee

2. **The Chair** said that, on 29 and 30 June 2017, in order to mark fifty years of the Israeli occupation, the Committee had convened a two-day forum at United Nations Headquarters in New York. From 3 to 7 July, the Committee had sponsored the Palestinian civil society representative Nur Arafah, a policy fellow at the policy network Al-Shabaka, to deliver a lecture entitled “Fifty Years of Occupation: an economic perspective” as part of the summer course entitled “Palestine, Half a Century of Occupation: a Legal, Political and Human Approach”, which had been organized by Complutense University of Madrid in collaboration with the Diplomatic Mission of the State of Palestine in Spain, the Casa Árabe and EuroMed Rights.

3. On 10 and 11 July, at the invitation of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and the Republic of Côte d’Ivoire, he had attended the forty-fourth session of the Council of Foreign Ministers of OIC in Abidjan, together with the Permanent Observer for the State of Palestine, and delivered a statement on behalf of the Committee. On 20 and 21 July, in cooperation with OIC, the Committee had convened the fourth International Conference on the Question of Jerusalem on the topic “Jerusalem and the International Community: Providing Political and Economic Support” in Baku.

4. On 20 June, in the context of his regular monthly briefing to the Security Council, the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process had, for the second time, reported on behalf of the Secretary-General on implementation of Security Council resolution [2334 \(2016\)](#). On 25 July, he had again briefed the Security Council during its quarterly open debate on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question. The Permanent Representative of Nicaragua, as Vice-Chair of the Committee, had delivered a statement on behalf of the Committee.

The situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and developments in the political process

5. **Mr. Mansour** (Permanent Observer for the State of Palestine) said that while the fourth International Conference on the Question of Jerusalem had been

taking place in Baku, the Israeli occupation authorities had denied worshippers access to the Aqsa Mosque and the Haram al-Sharif. The Palestinian people, including those who were citizens of Israel, had reacted decisively, forcing the Israeli occupying authority to remove the obstacles after 12 days. The Palestinian people had prayed outside the Mosque and resisted the violence used against them. The Israeli occupying authorities and settlers had, however, continued to raid the Aqsa Mosque. The King of Jordan had visited Ramallah to meet the Palestinian leadership and discuss the events.

6. Settlement activities had continued in and around Jerusalem and in other parts of the West Bank, and the Israeli authorities were illegally evicting residents of East Jerusalem from their homes.

7. From 28 to 30 August 2017, the Secretary-General would visit the State of Palestine and Israel. He would spend an entire day in Ramallah to meet the Palestinian leadership and visit the mausoleum of the late President Yassir Arafat, and would then travel to the Gaza Strip. He would thus be able witness the brutality of the occupation at first hand.

8. The Secretary-General had rightly said that there was no plan B to the two-State solution. The main obstacle to that solution was the ongoing illegal settlement activities. The quarterly reports delivered before the Security Council concerning implementation of Security Council resolution [2334 \(2016\)](#) therefore fulfilled an important function, and it was essential that they should be issued as publicly available documents of the Security Council.

United Nations Forum to Mark Fifty Years of Occupation

9. **Mr. Inganez** (Malta), Rapporteur, said that a panel discussion entitled “Ending the Occupation: The Path to Independence, Justice and Peace for Palestine” had been held in New York on 29 June, followed by a civil society forum entitled “Ending the Occupation: Creating the Space for Human Rights, Development and a Just Peace” on 30 June. The former had focused on diplomatic and political aspects, and the latter on advocacy strategies and policy recommendations. The two events had brought together international experts, representatives of the diplomatic community and civil society, and academics and students of diverse backgrounds and views, including Palestinians and Israelis.

10. During the panel discussion, participants had noted that Israel had little incentive to end the occupation and implement a two-State solution because

of its current prosperity and international relationships, including with members of the Group of 77 and China. Experts had stressed that the international community should continue to press for accountability and the application of international law and United Nations resolutions; that Israel must immediately cease all settlement activities in accordance with Security Council resolution 2334 (2016); and that it was important to undertake multilateral negotiations and constructive engagement with civil society partners.

11. The civil society forum had emphasized the need to focus on accountability in order to reverse negative trends on the ground. With regard to the Gaza Strip, they had recommended ensuring sustained international engagement, shifting from a humanitarian to a human-rights-based analytical framework, and addressing the situation as a political rather than a security issue.

12. Participants had noted the lack of progress with regard to implementation of resolution 2334 (2016). In particular, they had recommended putting into practice paragraph 5 of the resolution, which called upon all States to distinguish, in their relevant dealings, between the territory of the State of Israel and the territories occupied since 1967. They had also recommended examining ways to achieve a just and lasting peace beyond the end of the occupation while taking into account the perspectives of women and the diaspora. The Nakba should be addressed in future peace-making efforts, and future Committee events should focus more on the concerns of Palestine refugees.

International Conference on the Question of Jerusalem

13. **Mr. Inguanez** (Malta), Rapporteur, said that the International Conference on the Question of Jerusalem held in Baku on 20 and 21 July 2017 had focused on providing up-to-date information regarding the situation in the city, especially in view of the incidents around the Aqsa Mosque, and presenting proposals for how the international community, and States members of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation in particular, could support the Palestinian population in East Jerusalem. Expert speakers from Palestine, Israel and the international community had warned that tensions in Jerusalem had reached breaking point. The only true solution to the conflict was an end to the occupation and a period of separation between the two communities during which both sides respected the attachment of the other to the land and their respective holy sites. Participants had called for a strong show of

solidarity with Palestinians in East Jerusalem, particularly in the context of OIC.

14. There had also been calls for an international meeting to mobilize foreign investment for East Jerusalem in order to shore up Palestinian infrastructure and prevent Israeli encroachment and the transformation of the city from a multicultural site, where religions were treated equally, to a homogenized city where one narrative was dominant. Outside religious authorities should refrain from dissuading Christian and Muslim pilgrims from visiting Jerusalem while it was under occupation; any such initiative would primarily hurt Palestinian businesses.

15. Palestinians and their supporters were growing weary of international community's perceived inability to enforce United Nations resolutions and international law. A communiqué issued at the end of the Conference strongly condemned the recent closure of the Aqsa Mosque. It urged the international community to reaffirm its respect for the historic status quo and compel Israel to rescind all measures that violated it.

Committee's capacity-building activities

16. **The Chair** said that numerous General Assembly resolutions called for efforts to assist the Government of the State of Palestine in building more resilient and efficient institutions and implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Accordingly, the Committee and the Division for Palestinian Rights had organized a capacity-building workshop on the Sustainable Development Goals and South-South cooperation, which had taken place in Beirut on 27 and 28 April 2017. Palestinian civil servants had also participated in an online training course on climate change diplomacy. The Division was currently preparing the Geneva and New York segments of the forthcoming annual capacity-building training course organized for Palestinian civil servants. The Geneva segment was scheduled for September 2017, but the New York segment had been postponed until November because of visa issues.

17. Three Palestinian civil servants would take part in a training course on United Nations catalytic support for South-South and triangular cooperation in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which would take place at the United Nations System Staff College in Bonn, Germany, from 17 to 19 October 2017. The Division for Palestinian Rights was also preparing a second training course on water conflict management in Ramallah; the first such course, in November 2016, had been very successful.

18. Lastly, the Committee would secure funding for three Palestinian civil servants to attend the sixty-eighth session of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women in Geneva in October 2017. The civil servants would have the opportunity to meet diplomats and United Nations officials to discuss the implementation of the human rights treaties to which the State of Palestine had acceded.

19. The Committee hoped to organize more online and classroom courses in the future. Twenty Palestinian civil servants had already been trained in 2017 and a similar number would be trained before the end of the year. The Committee and the Division for Palestinian Rights continued to emphasize a competitive trainee selection process and gender parity. Member States and Observers were encouraged to enhance relevant programmes and inform the Committee of any such initiatives.

20. **Mr. Mansour** (Permanent Observer for the State of Palestine) said that his Government was grateful for the training courses, which were gaining pace every year. Many of the courses had been organized because the State of Palestine had acceded to numerous human rights instruments that entailed reporting requirements. In future, it would be useful to invite Palestinian civil servants to participate in conferences of States parties in New York, so that they could keep abreast of discussions. By building staff capacities, the State of Palestine could thus show that it was a State like any other and that it complied with its human rights obligations.

21. **The Chair** said that the capacity-building programme would also help the State of Palestine to prepare for the universal periodic review before the Human Rights Council and to draft presentations regarding implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Other matters

22. **The Chair** said that, as decided at the previous meeting of the Committee on 17 May, a letter had been sent to the Secretary-General transmitting the Committee's position that the quarterly report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution [2334 \(2016\)](#) should be substantive, should be delivered in writing, and should clearly state whether parties were in compliance with the resolution.

The meeting rose at 12 p.m.