



# **INTERNATIONAL PROGRESS ORGANIZATION**

Annual observance of the

## **International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People**

Convened by the

Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People  
in accordance with United Nations General Assembly resolution 32/40

Statement by

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A few weeks ago, the world celebrated the 75th anniversary of the foundation of the United Nations. It is sobering to acknowledge, on today's occasion, that one of the early milestones in the history of the world organization, namely resolution 181(II) of the General Assembly regarding the establishment of two states in Palestine, is still not implemented. While – as every year since 1977 – the Organization solemnly commemorates the adoption of that resolution on 29 November 1947, the situation of the Palestinian people continues to deteriorate. It is indeed sobering to acknowledge that, in the case of Palestine, the international community, during all those decades, has been unable to live up to the UN Charter's commitment “to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained.” (Preamble)

Again, in this year as in the years before, new *faits accomplis* have been created by the occupying power in Palestine that may further prejudice a just and peaceful solution. The situation is considerably more serious than it was a year ago.

This is particularly obvious in the continuation of Israel's illegal settlement policy. I would like to draw your attention to the recent statement issued in Jerusalem by the UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, *Nickolay Mladenov*, who bluntly and concisely stated, “settlement construction is illegal under international law,” and called upon the authorities to reverse such steps. (16 November 2020)

Equally worrying are unilateral steps, made in the course of this year, to steer the peace process away from the path set out by the United Nations. A peace plan, announced on 28 January 2020, that is referred to by its drafters as “Peace to Prosperity,” totally neglects the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and would, if implemented, legitimize large-scale annexation of Palestinian territory. In the words of Secretary-General *António Guterres*: It would be a “most serious violation of international law” and would “grievously harm the prospect of a two-state solution.” As a matter of principle, a conflict or dispute between two parties can never be resolved if one of the parties is excluded from negotiations. A solution based on *diktat* will not only be unjust, but will be unsustainable as well.

Furthermore, the “peace treaties,” referred to as the “Abraham Accords,” between the occupying power and other countries in the region will not serve the cause of peace if they do not include a clear and unequivocal commitment of all signatories to

a just solution of the issue of Palestine and Jerusalem. In the absence of such a solution, the treaties are also at variance with the Arab Peace Initiative of 2002.

The International Progress Organization, in unison with many civil society organizations all around the globe, supports the call of President *Mahmoud Abbas* for the convening of an International Conference on Palestine and welcomes the recent resolution of the General Assembly of the United Nations in that regard. (“Peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine,” 2 December 2020)

In conclusion: Under international law, any acquisition of territory by use of force is strictly prohibited. Peace can only be restored in Palestine on the basis of equal rights and justice for all communities, which includes respect of the inalienable right of self-determination. Palestine can indeed be a free, independent and prosperous country if all parties involved appreciate that perpetuation of the *status quo* is no alternative, but the greatest risk, to sustainable peace.

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