



BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA
PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

STATEMENT DELIVERED BY AMBASSADOR JORGE VALERO
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE UNITED NATIONS

CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTION A/67/L.28 ON
THE STATUS OF PALESTINE IN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

AGENDA ITEM 37: "THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE"

67° SESSION OF THE GENERAL
ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Please check upon delivery

NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 29TH, 2012

H.E. Mr. Vuk Jeremic, President of the General Assembly,
H.E. Mr. Mahmud Abbas, President of the Palestinian National Authority,
Distinguished Permanent and Deputy Permanent Representatives,

Venezuela endorses the statement delivered by the delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).

Mr. President,

Allow me to evoke poignant verses of the great Palestinian poet Darwish Madmud on the dramatic history of his people.

*"For our homeland
far from the qualities of the name
a map of absence*

*For our captive homeland
gemstone in its bloody north
the freedom to die consumed of love"*

Venezuela was called by the chronicles of the Indies "Land of Grace". Sephardis who were escaping from the inquisition found refuge in our land. They came looking for freedom, peace and happiness.

Since the beginning of the 20th Century, hundreds of Lebanese, Syrians and Palestinians from other corners of the world arrived to Venezuela; seeking in our country incentives for a new life. Dense are their contributions to the Venezuelan science, arts and letters. Believers of Judaism have also arrived to our lands, who have likewise contributed to the progress and greatness of our homeland.

We look back on these records of our history to illustrate how Venezuela generously hosts the most diverse cultures and beliefs that nourish the human conscience. The three great monotheist religions coexist in holy peace, confirming the solid democratic tradition of our people.

Around a million and a half of descendants from that Arab immigration currently live in Venezuela; as well as thousands of Hebrews, who contribute - as said by Lope de Vega "all for one" - to forge the homeland of Bolívar.

Venezuela is a country profoundly committed to the principles and values of liberty, sovereignty, independence, peace, solidarity, common good, territorial integrity,

peaceful coexistence and respect for international law. That is why the Venezuelan community is supportive of the Palestinian cause.

Mr. President,

The Bolivarian Government and the people of Venezuela have condemned the aggressions of the State of Israel against the Palestinian people.

Venezuela hopes that there are no further victims in the land where great religions that preach peace and love emerged; and we hope for a new era in which swords become plows, as written in the prophecy of Isaiah.

The National Assembly of Venezuela, the highest body of the Legislative Branch, issued, on Tuesday, November 20th, 2012, a statement condemning the recent attacks to the Palestinians in Gaza, and decided to join the celebrations of the "Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People".

The Gaza Strip is, as said by the great North American Jewish intellectual Noam Chomsky, the largest open-air prison in the world.

Mr. President,

It has been sixty five (65) years since hundreds of thousands of Palestinians were expelled from their homes and lands. Since then, they have become refugees or members of colonized and oppressed people.

Mr. President,

On November 29th, 1947, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted Resolution 181, which proposed the creation of two States in the Palestinian territory, one Arab and one Jewish.

Days after the adoption of this Resolution, a military offensive of territorial and demographic expansion starts, with the purpose of expelling the Palestinians from their lands and prevent their return. The State of Israel was unilaterally proclaimed.

In 1948, "Al Nakba" began for the Palestinians. Not only a process of expulsion – of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians from their lands – was set in motion, but also of aggression against their heritage and cultural identity. A planned strategy for

changing the ethnic and cultural composition of the Palestinian territory was implemented.

A thick framework of inhuman policies has been used to consummate the segregation and control of the Palestinians within the colonized territory.

Laws have been enacted and institutions have been established to undermine the rights of the Palestinians to land and property.

With the proliferation of settlements in the Occupied Territories of Gaza and the West Bank; by building walls and checkpoint, the Occupying Power has sought to prevent or restrict – permanently – the free movement of the Palestinian people.

Thousands of Palestinians have been killed and imprisoned. At least four thousand and five hundred (4,500) of them, including children and women, are in Israeli prisons. We ask for their release.

The Occupying Power practice State terrorism, it is a factory of mourning and pain in Palestine. It violates international human rights law and international humanitarian law. It violates hundreds of Resolutions of the United Nations, which places the State of Israel outside of international law.

Mr. President,

The Israeli political-military elite have committed in Palestine numerous international crimes. It has implemented an apartheid. It has carried out an ethnic cleansing. It has applied collective punishments to the civil population, and has violated the IV Convention of Geneva. Similarly, it has used weapons banned by international law, against the civilian population.

The warmongering Israeli elite, therefore, must be held accountable for the war crimes and those against humanity committed against the Palestinian people.

It should be reminded, however, to those who intend to subject *ad infinitum* that heroic people the sentence from the Book of Ecclesiastes that says: "That all is a vain illusion and wind cannot be mastered".

Mr. President,

The General Assembly cannot remain indifferent to the suffering of the Palestinian people, by the Occupying Power.

We endorse the Solidarity Declaration on Palestine, adopted during the XVI Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), according to which the Palestinian people has the legitimate right to quest for dignity, justice and their inalienable right to self-determination in their independent State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem as its capital, based on the pre-1967 borders.

Mr. President,

Let us pay tribute to the heroic Palestinian people and its historic leader Yasser Arafat.

Today we have approved, by a large majority, to give the State of Palestine the status of Permanent Observer State; an important step on the road to its recognition as a full Member State of the United Nations.

The Government of President Hugo Chávez Frías has supported the request of Palestine to attain the status of Observer State in the United Nations System. Venezuela has co-sponsored the transcendental Resolution A/67/L.28, entitled "The Status of Palestine in the United Nations".

Let's proclaim: Long live to the Palestinian people, free and sovereign!

I thank you, Mr. President.