GA Fourth Committee

Explanation of Vote

November 15, 2010

PALESTINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, on behalf of Palestine, I would like to express our gratitude to all of the member states that voted in favor of the resolutions adopted today under Agenda Item 51 on UNRA and Agenda Item 52 on the Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices.

We deeply appreciate their support of these resolutions and the principles and just positions enshrined therein. We express further appreciation to the cosponsors of the resolutions for their valuable support, and also to the delegations of Indonesia and Cuba for their introductions on behalf of the cosponsors. We also express appreciation for the constructive manner in which the negotiations process was conducted by the EU and its member states.

Mr. Chairman, we are at a most critical juncture on this long road in the search for justice and freedom for the Palestinian people and for peace in the Middle East. The two-state solution for peace, which enjoys strong international support, is being battered and seriously undermined by Israel’s illegal practices and continued intransigence on all core issues, which we all know must be justly resolved for a peace settlement to be achieved and to be viable. At this critical time, upholding the rules and principles of international law and adherence to UN resolutions are thus of paramount importance, and it is even more befitting today, on this 22nd anniversary of the Palestinian Declaration of Independence.

We are heartened by the overwhelming support and commitment expressed today for the longstanding position and applicability of relevant provisions of international law, including humanitarian and human rights law. This includes the commitment to a just solution for the plight of the Palestine refugees in accordance with Resolution 194, as well as strong support for the mandate of UNRA and the Agency’s tireless efforts to provide assistance to the refugees pending achievement of a just solution.

Today there has also been clear reaffirmation of the commitment to ensuring respect for the human rights of the Palestinian people, rights which must be respected even as they exist as a people under foreign occupation. The international community has been unequivocal in its calls for a complete cessation of all Israeli settlement activities and human rights violations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the Occupied Syrian Golan, and for respect by Israel, the occupying power, of its legal obligations, including under the Fourth Geneva Convention.

The international community must not waver in these demands. On the contrary, it is Israel’s positions and actions that must be changed. The occupying power should heed these demands and cease forthwith its defiance and breaches of the law and allow the efforts for a peace settlement to move forward towards its realization. In this regard, we stress that the calls for compliance with international law made in these resolutions are in no way contradictory to the ongoing efforts to resume the peace process. They are imperative and complementary to those efforts and are fully intended to promote peace.

Those who truly support the cause of peace must remain persistent in the demand for complete cessation by Israel, the occupying power, of its human rights violations and all other violations of international law. Only this will bring about a real change in the situation on the ground and create the right environment for negotiating a final, just and lasting settlement that will bring peace, stability and coexistence for the Palestinian and Israeli peoples and the Middle East region as a whole.

Mr. Chairman, in conclusion, I reaffirm the gratitude of the Palestinian people and their leadership for the overwhelming support by member states of the resolutions adopted by the committee today. I would also take this opportunity to reiterate Palestine’s appreciation to you, Mr. Chairman, as well as to the Vice Chairs, the Secretary and entire bureau of the Committee for all of your efforts and for your patience and wisdom in guiding the Committee to the successful conclusion of its work. I thank you, Mr. Chairman.