

Mr. Khoshroo (Islamic Republic of Iran): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). I will present a summary of my statement; the full version will be circulated. I convey the Movement's appreciation to the Japanese presidency for convening this open debate at this critical juncture for the Palestinian people and the Middle East. I also thank the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Mr. Nikolay Mladenov, for his briefing.

Each and every time this Council holds an open debate on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestine question, NAM appeals for urgent international attention and action to address the illegal and brutal Israeli occupation that is causing so much anguish to the Palestinian people and dangerously inflaming tensions in an already volatile situation. How can the Council remain silent as Israel deliberately and systematically continues its repression of the Palestinian people, its denial of their rights and its colonization and de facto annexation of Palestinian land?

During the last open debate we — along with the whole international community — condemned Israel's declarations that it was designating 370 acres in the West Bank as so-called State land as part of its ongoing illegal settlement campaign. This has now been followed by yet another decision by Israel to advance plans for the construction of at least 800 more settlement units in and around occupied East Jerusalem, in grave breach of international law and in total contempt for Security Council resolutions and the calls of the international community to cease those violations. It should be noted that this announcement was made in the days immediately following the release of the Quartet report, further highlighting the inadequacy of such efforts to compel Israel to halt that illegal practice.

Emboldened by that impunity and by Security Council inaction, Israel, the occupying Power, has intensified its illegal, oppressive measures against the defenceless Palestinian civilian population, including, inter alia, the use of excessive force against Palestinian civilians, including children and women, causing more death and injury and depriving them of their right to protection. The destructive impact of such Israeli violations is immense, as reflected in rising tensions and deteriorating socioeconomic conditions, and that impact is deepening among the Palestinian civilian population living under this nearly half-century of Israeli occupation. Any justification for such criminality must be rejected and action on the matter — in line with United Nations resolutions, international law and our moral responsibilities towards the question of Palestine — is long overdue.

NAM once again takes the opportunity to urge the international community, particularly the Security Council, to take a decisive, historic and long-overdue step towards ending the occupation of the Palestinian and other Arab lands and paving the way for fulfilment of the rights and independence of the Palestinian people and for a just and peaceful

settlement to the conflict, including a just solution to the plight of the Palestine refugees, in line with the relevant United Nations resolutions. Here, we must once again caution that the status quo cannot be sustained forever.

In that regard, we recognize the ongoing regional and international efforts to generate the political will and momentum needed to resolve the conflict, including the 3 June 2016 ministerial meeting convened in Paris in support of Palestinian-Israeli peace and the pledge to convene an international peace conference toward that objective in the coming months. We call on the Security Council to perform its rightful role.

The Non-Aligned Movement seizes this opportunity to reaffirm its longstanding solidarity with the Palestinian people, recognizing their decades of resilience despite so much suffering and injustice. NAM reiterates its support for the realization of their legitimate national aspirations and inalienable rights, including self-determination and freedom in an independent and viable State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem as its capital, as well as for finding a just solution to the plight of the Palestine refugees, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 194 (III).

Lebanon continues to suffer from successive Israeli violations of its borders and incursions into its territory, followed by year after year of occupation and aggression. Unfortunately, Israel continues to violate Lebanese airspace, intensifying its incursions over Lebanon. Such activities are a blatant violation of Lebanese sovereignty and the relevant international resolutions, in particular resolution 1701 (2006). The provisions of that resolution should be implemented in a manner that guarantees the consolidation of the foundations of stability and security in Lebanon and that prevents Israel from violating Lebanese sovereignty on a daily basis.

With regard to the occupied Syrian Golan, the Movement condemns all the measures taken by Israel, the occupying Power, to alter the legal, physical and demographic status of the occupied Syrian Golan, which have intensified since the outbreak of the Syrian crisis. The Non-Aligned Movement demands once again that Israel abide by resolution 497 (1981) and withdraw fully from the occupied Syrian Golan to the borders of 4 June 1967, in implementation of resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973).