

Dear comrades and friends

On behalf of the Palestinian Committee for Peace and Solidarity (PCPS), I would like to thank the CEDESPAZ for the kind invitation and for making it possible to attend this important solidarity conference with the people of Western Sahara and the people of Palestine, which proves the interest and commitment of the People of Spain and its peace-loving forces with these two just causes.

We would like to express our solidarity with the struggle of the Saharawi people for the right for self-determination based on the relevant UN resolutions, for the holding of a free and democratic referendum, so that the people of Western Sahara can decide upon their future.

The conference coincides today(tomorrow) with the international day in solidarity with the Palestinian people, as the day(29th November 1947) when the UN decided to divide the historical land of Palestine into two states. And you know since then the State of Israel was established but till today the Palestinian State has still not become reality.

However, as you know the circumstances are very critical and it is deteriorating more and more, especially after the formation of the ultra-rightist government in Israel by Benjamin Netanyahu and Lieberman.

The last Israeli slap on the face of the peace process was taken recently, by this government, through the declaration of constructing of 900 more units in the settlement of Gilo, which is located on the Palestinian occupied land in East Jerusalem.

Israel continues to undermine the very credibility to the Middle East peace process, making a mockery of existing agreements and sabotaging all prospects for a return to genuine negotiations. Throughout the years of the peace process, Israel has taken unilateral steps to consolidate its settlement enterprise at the expense of peace and an independent, sovereign and viable Palestinian state.

Israel's insistence to go on in its settlement activities, despite its recent announcement to freeze the settlements in the West Bank, except in Jerusalem and some other big Israeli settlements, is unacceptable.

The construction of the apartheid wall, the judization of Jerusalem, enforcing more than 600 military check posts around the Palestinian inhabited areas, the expropriation of lands, and the inhuman besiege around the Gaza strip, are a direct challenge to the Middle East Quartet and the international community, which has a duty to uphold international law. Failing to act only creates a culture of impunity when it comes to Israel's daily violations of international law.

The difference between the Palestinian approach to peace and the Israeli "approach" to peace boils down to this: Palestinians have accepted international law and UN resolutions as the ultimate arbiter of a just and lasting peace. Israel has not.

Besides building more illegal settlement units, Israel is tearing down more Palestinian homes in occupied East Jerusalem and targeting more Palestinian families. Israel says that it is uniting Jerusalem. In reality, it is dividing Jerusalem through a series of discriminatory policies and laws that are creating a de facto apartheid situation on the ground.

Currently more than 10.000 political prisoners are kept in Israeli prisons, amongst them dozens of members of the Palestinian Legislative Council, democratically elected by our people. This alone constitutes a flagrant violation of any sense of International law and conventions

The Israeli occupation and policies toward the Palestinian Occupied territories and other occupied Arab lands in Syria and Lebanon are the main reason behind the stale mate in the peace process and the growing tension in the Middle East region. As we all know this ongoing aggression and occupation of our land would not be possible without the full support of the imperialist forces in the USA and the EU.

Now what we ask for is a real international solidarity and support with the Palestinian people and leadership to shift the political movement into the UN and the International institutions. Our call now is to recognize the right of the Palestinian people in self-determination and in a sovereign independent state on the borders

of June 4, 1967. It is time now that the Security Council of the UN and the states of the world recognize these borders.

We think that this is a real and solid answer on Israel's plan of a Palestinian state with temporary borders on part of the Palestinian occupied territories. We do not accept this plan. In addition, we do not agree to that the main components of the Palestinian problem as Jerusalem, the refugees, the final permanent borders, the settlements, and water, should be excluded and postponed again into far future. Israel has used the Oslo temporary agreements of 1993 to impose new realities on the ground.

This is the real goal behind the so-called Palestinian state with temporary borders. Israel seeks to preserve the status –quo that it inflicts in the occupied territories. It is quite obvious for everybody that this status-quo is illegal and it will not be sustainable.

We strongly believe that the just and viable solution for the Palestinian cause, with the establishment of an independent Palestinian State with East Jerusalem as its capital, in the borders of 1967, is the only acceptable solution and at the same time the biggest contribution and service to peace in the Middle East

The PCPS unites its forces with the World Peace Council and all peace loving forces in the world, like the CEDESPAZ in our desire and struggle for a just world order without wars, occupation and imperialist domination and threats.

We reaffirm our commitment and solidarity with the just causes of the peoples in the entire world and express our firm will to continue our struggle till the final victory.

Dr. Akel Taqz
Secretary of PCPS