



**Statement by
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Chair of the Coordinating Bureau
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Mr. President,

I have the honor to address the General Assembly on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement. I would like to start by expressing our appreciation for your rapid response to convene this important plenary meeting upon request from the Non-Aligned Movement and the Arab Group to consider the Report of the United Nations Fact Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict as recommended by the Human Rights Council in the resolution adopted at its twelfth special session on 16 October 2009.

The Non-Aligned Movement is gravely concerned about the findings of the investigation carried out by the United Nations Fact Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict, as contained in the "Goldstone Report" as well as by conclusions reached by the UN Secretary-General's Board of Inquiry and the conclusions of the Arab League Fact Finding Mission. The findings of those respective investigations confirm that serious human rights violations and grave breach of international law were committed during the Israeli military operations that were launched on 27 December 2008 on the Gaza Strip, which caused high civilian casualties, especially among children and women, grave humanitarian suffering among the civilian population and widespread destruction of homes, vital civilian infrastructure, public infrastructure, economic and agricultural properties, and United Nations facilities.

The Movement condemns all targeting of civilians and civilian infrastructure and institutions, including United Nations facilities, and recalls in this regard the prohibition of reprisals against civilians and civilian objects under the Fourth Geneva Convention. Moreover, the Movement affirms the responsibility of the international community to promote human rights and calls for serious follow-up action on the recommendations set forth in those reports towards bringing an end to the flagrant violation of international law, including international humanitarian law and international human rights law, ending impunity and ensuring justice. All concerned parties, including the relevant United Nations organs and bodies, must exert the necessary efforts in this direction in order to ensure accountability for all breaches of international humanitarian law and human rights law, prevent and deter further violations, and promote justice and peace.

The Non-Aligned Movement stresses the utmost priority that should continue to be given to promoting respect for and observance by all Member States of their obligations assumed under international humanitarian law, including in particular under the Fourth Geneva Convention. In this regard, the Movement takes into account the magnitude and persistence of the violations and breaches of international law, including international humanitarian law, being committed by Israel, the occupying power, against the defenseless Palestinian civilian population in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. In this regard, all available legal remedies should be applied to end impunity and end human rights violations and grave breaches by Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

The Non-Aligned Movement urges the General Assembly and other United Nations principal and subsidiary organs to seriously consider and act upon the report and findings of the United Nations Fact Finding Mission on the Gaza military action in accordance with the Human Rights Council resolution S-12/1. Immediate measures are required to secure the adoption of a resolution calling on the Government of Israel to launch independent investigations, in conformity with international standards, into the serious violations reported by the Mission. At the same time and in line with the recommendation made, the Palestinian side should launch independent investigations, in conformity with international standards, into the serious violations reported by the Mission. Moreover, it is necessary to ensure the appropriate monitoring and reporting on the undertaking of such investigations to determine the course of further action, if necessary, including by the Security Council.

We believe that it is imperative that the General Assembly demonstrate its unequivocal support for human rights and the protection of civilians on both Palestinian and Israeli sides. Credible, independent investigations of the serious human rights law violations and grave breaches of international humanitarian law, as contained in the Goldstone Report, will make a significant contribution towards the promotion of accountability for the perpetration of such violations and crimes and towards bringing an ultimate end to the culture of impunity that has for too long prevailed.

The international community must demonstrate resolve on the issue of accountability and ensure that international law is upheld in all circumstances, with a view to strengthening the chances of peace in the region. This must include respect for the Fourth Geneva Convention, which is applicable to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as reaffirmed repeatedly in more than two dozen Security Council resolutions and countless General Assembly resolutions. In this regard, we recall the obligation of the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention to respect and to ensure respect of the Convention in accordance with common article 1 and call for the appropriate and necessary measures to be taken to this effect. The Non-Aligned Movement reiterates its firm conviction that respect for and compliance with international law, including international humanitarian law and human rights law, and United Nations resolutions will positively influence and advance efforts for achieving a just, lasting, peaceful and political settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Mr. President,

The Non-Aligned Movement reiterates once again its call on Israel, the Occupying Power, to end its collective punitive measures imposed on the civilian population in Gaza, which have caused immense suffering among the Palestinian people, amounting to a dire humanitarian crisis, and the continued deterioration of the situation on the ground, including, *inter alia*, by obstructing the desperately needed reconstruction of the Gaza Strip. In this regard, the UN Fact Finding Mission found that Israel has been imposing a blockade amounting to collective punishment and carried out a systematic policy of progressive isolation and deprivation of the Gaza Strip. Further, the Mission states that, as determined in the course of its investigation, the Israeli military operation was directed at the people of Gaza as a whole, in furtherance of an overall and continuing policy aimed at punishing the Gaza population and in a deliberate policy of disproportionate force aimed at the civilian population. Such alarming findings clearly require the attention of the international community. Serious measures must be taken to ensure the protection of the civilian population in the entire Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and to break the vicious cycle of impunity that has permitted such gross and flagrant breaches of international law to persist unpunished.

Immediate measures are also required to address the pressing humanitarian and economic needs of the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip, including by the sustained and permanent opening by Israel of Gaza's border crossings in full compliance with the terms and provisions of Security Council resolution 1860 (2009), in order to ensure the free access of humanitarian aid and other essential supplies and goods, including commercial supplies and necessary reconstruction materials, and to facilitate the crossing of persons to and from Gaza.

The Non-Aligned Movement regrets the continued obstruction of the import of essential construction materials into Gaza as a result of the ongoing Israeli blockade. The Non-Aligned Movement stresses the urgent need for reconstruction to begin in the Gaza Strip, including through the implementation of the Secretary General's proposal for the commencement of United Nations-led civilian reconstruction activities and the completion of numerous suspended projects managed by the United Nations Agencies working on the ground. Immediate and urgent efforts are necessary to address the needs of the Palestinian civilian population in this regard, especially as winter and the passage of nearly one year since this devastating military operation is rapidly approaching.

Mr. President,

The Non-Aligned Movement calls on the Parties to take all appropriate steps, within their national legal systems in the period of three months, according to the complementarity between national and international jurisdiction, to undertake investigations that are independent, credible and in conformity with international standards into the serious violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law reported by the "United