

General Assembly Adopts Texts Demanding Israeli Withdrawal from Occupied Territories - Question of Palestine

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The General Assembly today adopted two resolutions, one concerning the occupied Syrian Golan and the other the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

“For 78 years, the Palestinian people have been denied their inalienable rights — in particular, their right to self-determination,” said Annalena Baerbock (Germany), President of the General Assembly at its eightieth session. All that has happened over the last two years has “underlined what we have known since decades”, she said — that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict cannot be resolved through occupation or annexation, and that the two will only live in lasting peace when they live side-by-side in two sovereign and independent States. “So we know what we have to do,” she urged, underscoring that self-determination is “not a privilege to be earned, but a right to be upheld”.

Following a day-long debate, the Assembly adopted the resolution on this issue — titled “Peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine” (document A/80/L.16) — by a recorded vote of 151 in favour to 11 against, with 11 abstentions. Through it, the Assembly stressed the need for urgent, collective efforts to launch credible negotiations on all final status issues in the Middle East peace process and called for the timely convening of an international conference in Moscow — as envisioned by Security Council resolution 1850 (2008) — to

advance a just, lasting and comprehensive peace settlement.

Further, the resolution saw the Assembly demand that Israel comply strictly with its obligations under international law, including by ending its unlawful presence in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and ceasing all new settlement activities. It also rejected any attempt at demographic or territorial change in Gaza and stressed the importance of unifying the Strip with the West Bank under the Palestinian Authority. Additionally, the Assembly called for Israel's withdrawal from the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967 and for the realization of the Palestinian people's inalienable rights — primarily the right to self-determination.

Senegal's representative, who introduced the draft, said that this "updated" text welcomes recent developments and reaffirms the "legal, diplomatic and operational bases" that are "essential" for a just, lasting, comprehensive and peaceful settlement of the Palestinian question. Further, it reaffirms the need to protect civilians and guarantee humanitarian access, also calling on Member States to fully respect their international obligations. It underscores that this conflict remains "tragically unresolved", and he said that the draft, therefore, "provides a clear framework to transform our solidarity into a strategy".

Peace Requires Ending Historic Injustice, Upholding International Norms

"This is our call to you to act to uphold your obligations towards the question of Palestine and towards ending this historic injustice," said the observer for the State of Palestine, as he drew attention to this "landmark resolution". Its adoption, he added, comes at a "critical juncture" at which the international community must reaffirm the fundamental norms governing the international-law-based order. These norms must serve as a compass with which to achieve a just and lasting peace. "Palestine shall be free — free from occupation, free from oppression, free from fear and want," he said, concluding: "Peace shall prevail; not at the expense of our rights or of our existence, but through respect for them."

Many felt similarly. Egypt's representative, observing that successive experiences prove that continued occupation leads to more conflict, underscored that peace in the region "starts with enabling the Palestinian people to realize their inalienable rights". This includes the right to self-

determination, and she said that her country will continue cooperating with the United States and regional partners to guarantee the full implementation of the Comprehensive Plan to End the Gaza Conflict. That continued cooperation, noted Qatar's representative, led to the Gaza ceasefire endorsed on 13 October 2025 in Sharm el-Sheikh.

"Both the Israeli and Palestinian people deserve peace now," underscored Norway's representative. "In line with international law, Palestine's future should rest in Palestinian hands," she added, which means meaningful involvement of the Palestinian Government and visible, on-the-ground presence of legitimate Palestinian institutions. Also underscoring that only a two-State solution can deliver lasting security and freedom for both Palestinians and Israelis, she urged that "steps must be taken now to ensure that Gaza and the West Bank can be reunited under the governance of Palestinian authorities".

"The Middle East will not know peace, stability or security until the illegal Israeli occupation ends fully and unconditionally," stressed Venezuela's representative, who spoke for the Group of Friends in Defense of the Charter of the United Nations. The representative of Mexico, recalling the New York Declaration concerning the two-State solution, said that it marked a "turning point" in how Member States envisage the consolidation of a Palestinian State living in coexistence and security with Israel. "It is time now to implement the commitments agreed to in that Declaration," he urged.

Failure to Implement Resolutions Fuels Crisis, Human Suffering

"It is not the absence of international resolutions that has brought us here, but the absence of their implementation," said the representative of Brunei Darussalam, underscoring the nearly 300 Security Council resolutions that remain without meaningful action. Nevertheless, the representative of Sri Lanka stressed that "we must not allow the frequency of our debates to numb us to the human devastation behind the numbers". The situation remains fragile even with the current ceasefire, and he underscored that "there is no room for ambiguity" — transitional arrangements must be guided by clear timelines for the withdrawal of occupying forces, for the return of Palestinian governance structures and for humanitarian access.

On that, the representative of Kuwait — speaking for the Arab Group — underscored that "current Israeli impediments and limits on aid are a flagrant

violation of the obligations of the occupying State and merely exacerbate the terrible humanitarian conditions in the Strip". Ahmad Faisal Muhamed (Malaysia), Rapporteur of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People — who introduced that body's annual report (document A/80/35) — spotlighted its demand for actions to address, among other things, the "weaponization of starvation as a method of warfare".

South Africa's representative said that Israel's allowance of limited amounts of aid into Gaza "effectively means that the use of starvation and the blocking of aid as a weapon of war continues to persist". This, he emphasized, lends credence to assertions by Amnesty International that "the ceasefire risks creating a dangerous illusion that life in Gaza is returning to normal — which it is clearly not". He therefore underlined the need for the international community to take "firm action" to compel Israel to comply with International Court of Justice decisions.

Resolution Overlooks Hamas, Undermines Serious Diplomacy

For his part, Israel's representative, who urged all delegations to reject this resolution, said that the text omits the central requirement for peace — the disarmament of Hamas. "The disconnect speaks for itself," he said, stressing that the omissions are "striking": no condemnation of Hamas, no acknowledgment of the 7 October 2023 massacre, no reference to ending violence or dismantling Gaza's terror infrastructure. Further, he said that the resolution contradicts Security Council resolution 2803 (2025) by calling for the unification of Gaza and the West Bank under the Palestinian Authority without acknowledging any of the reforms the Authority must undertake before it can govern.

"Year after year, the General Assembly wastes time, energy and resources considering one-sided resolutions that obsess over Israel," added the representative of the United States. These texts, he said, are "untethered from reality, accomplish nothing and serve only to distract from serious diplomacy that advances peace in the region". Spotlighting his President's peace efforts, he stressed that — if the Assembly is serious about delivering change — "it must start by engaging with reality". He concluded: "Symbolic gestures — like the resolutions before us today — distract from taking advantage of this historic moment where peace is possible."

Today's other resolution, titled "The Syrian Golan" (document A/80/L.12), was

adopted by a recorded vote of 123 in favour to 7 against (Federated States of Micronesia, Israel, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Tonga, United States), with 41 abstentions. By its terms, the Assembly declared that Israel's 14 December 1981 decision to impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration on the occupied Syrian Golan is null and void and called for its rescission. Further, the Assembly demanded that Israel withdraw from the occupied Syrian Golan to the line of 4 June 1967.

Calls to Restore Syrian Golan to 1967 Lines

Egypt's representative, who introduced that text, said that it "reaffirms the fundamental principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force". Syria's representative, underscoring that "the occupied Syrian Golan is Syrian Arab land", said that his country has every right to fully restore this territory up to the 4 June 1967 line. "This is a firm principle that cannot be subject to compromise or pressure and carries no statute of limitations," he declared, adding: "It is guaranteed by international law and relevant United Nations resolutions."

Türkiye's representative said that the international community, for more than 50 years, has consistently affirmed that the occupation of the Syrian Golan violates international law and must end. "This resolution confirms that this principled and longstanding position remains unchanged," he stated, adding that Israeli authorities must "recognize that the path to lasting security cannot be built on the continued occupation of another country's territory".