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The Permanent Mission of Israel to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Office of the Secretary General of the United Nations, and wishes to express Israel's principled and formal objection to the recent Palestinian declaration on its purported maritime boundaries, submitted on September 24, 2019.

It is a well-established and basic principle, both under customary international law of the law of the sea and relevant treaty law, that only sovereign states have the right to maritime zones, including territorial seas and exclusive economic zones, as well as the right to declare maritime boundaries.

The Palestinian entity does not satisfy the established criteria for statehood under general international law and therefore lacks the legal entitlement to such maritime zones. The Palestinian declaration further manifestly violates the terms of existing Israeli-Palestinian agreements which clearly define the scope of rights and obligations in the relevant maritime area.

Without prejudice to the lack of any Palestinian legal entitlement to declare maritime zones, it should be noted that the alleged delimitation lines submitted in the Palestinian declaration constitute an unacceptable and invalid divergence from widespread practice and implementation of customary international law regulating delimitation of maritime boundaries between eligible States.

In light of the above, the Palestinian submission is legally invalid and devoid of any legal or practical effect.

The State of Israel wishes to assert that it will not allow any non-consensual or unauthorized activities, including by third actors, in its maritime areas, while at the same time reiterating its readiness to engage in good faith with relevant third parties.



The Permanent Mission of Israel would be grateful if this Note Verbale would be circulated amongst States and published on the Ocean & Law of the Sea UN website under the countries section of the database on Maritime Space: Maritime Zones and Maritime Delimitation. In addition, the Permanent Mission of Israel requests to include this information in the next Law of the Sea Bulletin.

The Permanent Mission of Israel to the United Nations avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Office of the Secretary General the assurances of its highest consideration.

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