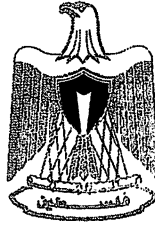


*Permanent Observer Mission
of the State of Palestine
to the United Nations*



البعثة المراقبة الدائمة
لدولة فلسطين
لدى الأمم المتحدة

Statement by Mr. Majed Bamya, First Counsellor, Permanent Observer Mission of the State of Palestine to the UN, before the Sixth Committee of the UN General Assembly in its 74th session, on "The rule of law at the national and international levels" [item 83], 11 October 2019

Mr. Chairperson,

The State of Palestine aligns itself with the statement delivered by Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement. It joins other delegations in thanking the Secretary General for his report on strengthening and coordinating United Nations rule of law activities, and share its emphasis on a number of challenges, including climate change, forced displacement, hate speech and the impact of new technologies on modern societies.

When we speak of the rule of law, both nationally and internationally, we mean the rule of a just law.

Internationally, this means upholding the UN Charter, international law, UN resolutions, and advancing accountability and enforcement, notably through international jurisdictions, including the ICJ and the ICC, as well as through third party responsibility, without double standards.

Nationally, this requires implementation of international obligations.

Palestine has been for decades a strong advocate of international law and as soon as it was granted observer State status in the UN, it matched its positions with actions, joining international instruments, recognizing the jurisdiction of international courts and actively contributing to furthering international law. It played an important role in the activation of the ICC's jurisdiction over the crime of aggression. It contributed to the elaboration of a treaty to ban nuclear weapons. It took the lead in establishing mechanisms of investigation and accountability through the Human Rights Council. It joined the bureau of the ICC and was at the forefront of efforts to protect and preserve the Court.

The State of Palestine also submitted its initial reports under most of the human rights instruments, through an inclusive process that brought together governmental institutions, the human rights national institution, civil society, with the support and participation of relevant UN agencies and entities. This process, which has been characterized by the OHCHR as a best practice at regional and international level, aims at ensuring an honest and thorough assessment of the State of Palestine's compliance with the instruments, highlighting its efforts and achievements, while acknowledging its shortcomings. This stems from Palestine's understanding

that reporting is not a public relations exercise, but rather a tool to further implementation with the help and guidance of the treaty bodies.

The State of Palestine has also continued its efforts to disseminate and raise awareness regarding the rights enshrined in these instruments, with a particular focus on schools.

The State of Palestine has undertaken many steps at the national level to harmonize its policies and legislation with its international commitments and obligations and is fully conscious of the long way ahead to ensure such compliance, but wishes to seize this opportunity to thank all States, as well as regional and international organizations, notably the UN and the EU, that provide support to its efforts in this regard.

In recent months, the State of Palestine has also decided to join a number of optional protocols to human rights instruments with the aim to further their implementation, including the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty, and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, among others.

Mr. Chairperson,

As we approach the 75th anniversary of the United Nations, and mark seven decades since the adoption of fundamental texts, notably the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Geneva Conventions, we have to recognize that such progress of the rule of international law only came after horrific tragedies. Our world today offers many examples of the heavy price in lives of the undermining of the rule of international law. We must revive the spirit that led to such tremendous advancement of multilateralism and the rule of international law over 70 years ago, to protect, preserve and promote multilateralism and the rule of international law, and ensure respect for human dignity, the inalienable rights of peoples, and equal rights of States.

The State of Palestine, that continues to suffer in its flesh the consequences of injustice, double standards, and denial of rights, will remain inhabited by this spirit and will spare no effort to help ensure its triumph.

Thank you Mr. Chairperson.