

A Statement by the Head of the Palestinian Delegation, by Mr. Zuhayr Sanduqah

In the occasion of the 9th Plenary Session of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly

Siem Reap, Kingdom of Cambodia

28/11 - 2/12/2016

Before I give the speech on behalf of the Palestinian delegation, allow me to remind you that today, 29th of November is the International Day of Solidarity with Palestinian People. So, if you believe that the endurance of Palestinians against occupation, its adherence to its national steady rights and its resistance against fascism and racism; if you believe that all of that deserve your appreciation by giving applause as you stand up, so I do extend my deep thanks to all of you.

Dear Mr. Chair, Dear Fellows,

First of all, allow me in the name of the Palestinian delegation to extend my thanks to our friends in Kingdom of Cambodia, the King, the government, the parliament and the people of Cambodia for their warm reception and generous hospitality and well organized meeting.

The selection of 'promoting peace and sustainable development in Asia' as a main discussion topic in the plenary session today is a very well suited selection, because it is not only suite for the Asian peoples in this moment of history, but to the peoples of all humanity.

The topic consists of two concepts, which are synergized together; sustainable development is the basis for building social peace. From the other hand, social peace is a basis for sustainable development.

Human being is the vital base for any effort seeks to attain peace and realize sustainable development. Human resources are considered to be the most invaluable resources. Being aware of such fact, we should reevaluate our education systems and curricula and give more attention to values of justice, equality, tolerance and balanced civil rights.

We should dismiss from our education curricula any ethnic or sectarian biased values and attitudes. To adopt ethnic, skin color, religious, or sectarian biased policies is the most effective prescription to spread antipathy, destruction and massacres. What we have been witnessing in our world today is the clearest evident that proves such statement. For sorrow, there are many indicators that confirm the proliferation of extremist rightest parties and movements in public spheres today, especially in the

Western world. Such proliferation alerts us that we may witness in the near future more wars, massacres, hunger, national disintegration, and isolation; all those phenomena are the result of powers and states that have very narrow interests and ideologies, I am sure you can recognize them easily.

From another hand, in order to accomplish a qualitative movement in our education systems, as bases for any human resources development, we should concentrate in providing our schools with modern technologies and electronic education mechanisms, integrating vocation education into all our educational programs, and upholding capabilities needed to face the future challenges.

Mr. Chair, Dear Fellows,

Asia, which has about 60% of world population, is not that Asia of near history. There are much significant advancement that has been achieved in many Asian countries in almost all fields, economic, technology, and knowledge. We can mention here some significant experiences like China, India and Japan, where the progress standards exceed those of many developed countries. Such facts lead us to ask for more cooperation and coordination among Asian countries in all fields, especially economy, science, investment, and communication technologies. In addition, we do urge all Asian countries to do their best in order to end all disputes and conflicts between our Member States based on peaceful mechanisms and international legitimacy.

Mr. Chair, Dear Fellows,

I do believe that I need not to explain in detail that my people are still under foreign occupation; an occupation which is colonial and substitution occupation (dismissing Palestinians and substitute them with Jews). The Israeli occupation started about seven decades ago, which has been making peace and sustainable development out of reach to my people. How can we attain peace with an occupation power that has international impunity backed by the strongest state in the world? Israel today acts as if its unlawful regulations are stronger than international law regulations and ratified conventions. Israel, the foreign occupation in Palestine, continues to commit serious violations against Palestinian people before and after the establishment of Israel. Israel continues to commit awful massacres, destructing hundreds of villages, root out more than half of the Palestinian people from their homeland, launches aggression against people of Gaza, destroying houses over their owners' heads, turning infrastructure, schools, hospitals, and farms into wreckages. Today, our children, women, teenagers, and adults face prisoning, torture, insulting and assassinations, and even burned alive by unlawful settlers' gangs and insane religious extremists.

All those Israeli aggressions are classified as war crimes anti humanity. After explaining that, let me raise a fundamental question: how can we achieve a sustainable

development as we live under such tough conditions of siege and frequent closing of cross points? We cannot move freely between our villages and cities. We do miss the geographical integrity of our land due to Jews settlements that stand as military bases there. Not only settlements, but Israel has been fragmenting that integrity by hundreds of bypassing roads and apartheid separating wall. Such conditions have been pushing our societies to live in cantons like those of South Africa in the time of Apartheid Regime, which was a warm friend of Israel.

Mr. Chair, Dear Fellows,

We are in urgent need for your help and support by making pressures on the Israeli occupation, and those who support it, in order to lift injustice and tyranny. We do need your support to attain justice, peace and sustainable development in our region. We do assert to all of you that we will not give up our struggle, we will not go down, we will not allow anybody to insult us or detracting our dignity, no matter how long the conflict, and no matter how great our sacrifices.

Honorable Chair, Honorable Delegates,

At the end of my speech, I would like to give my sincere appreciation to the speech of His Excellency the Cambodian Prime Minister yesterday in the opening session of this conference. Due to the importance and significance of that speech, I do recommend adopting it as one of the formal document of our conference.

Thank you very much for your attention, peace to be upon all of you.