



Remarks by UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Nickolay Mladenov at an event in Jericho.

Jericho, 22 June 2020

[As Prepared]

Thank for inviting the United Nations here today.

I would like to begin by asking all to join me for a moment of silence to commemorate Eyad Hallaq, who recently was killed in East Jerusalem.

May his memory will live forever and may his soul rest in peace!

Eyad Hallaq is the most recent victim in a senseless number of killings of both Israelis and Palestinians.

His death reminds us how precious peace is and how difficult it is to keep it.

The United Nations believes, and I believe I can speak on behalf of the international community represented here, that annexation is against international law. It may kill the very idea that peace and statehood for the Palestinian people can be achieved through negotiations.

I have been asked to speak to the Palestinian people today, but first I would like to address the representatives of member states of the United Nations who are here today with a clear message: we have no time to lose!

In the coming days and weeks, we must do everything possible to uphold the idea that through negotiations the Palestinian and the Israeli people can live in peace.

We must stand against unilateral action and we support peace.

I call on all in the international community to join the Secretary-General of the United Nations in his appeal to our colleagues and friends in the Middle East Quartet: the Russian Federation, the European Union and the United States, to join us in restarting meaningful negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians based on International law and in line with relevant UN resolutions.

The Palestinian people have worked for 26 years to build the foundation to a peaceful state. Abu Ammar brought together Palestinians from refugee camps, scattered around the region. He had brought them together to build a nation. He had the strength to renounce violence.

Do not stray away from the path of nonviolence!

Do not lose sight of the goal of free Palestinian state living side-by-side in peace and security with Israel, with borders that are agreed based on the 1967 lines.

The UN will never ever give up on this goal because it is a just goal. We will work with you everywhere and every day for peace and for security for all.

The Palestinian people are not renting a house here, this is your home! You cannot throw away the keys to something you've been building for 25 years. You must protect your achievements. You must invest in a future that is built on shared values of democracy, of accountability and of prosperity for everyone.

We will work together with you for unity.

The Palestinian people here in the West Bank, in East Jerusalem and in Gaza deserve it.

A cancer has been eating away the body of Palestine for more than a decade -- the cancer of division.

I call on all Palestinian leaders to put away their differences and to build real national unity, for the sake of the youth. So that they may live free from checkpoints, so may they may be free to travel and work, so they may fly their national flag over their home.

People of Palestine do not despair! Do not give up! Never give up!

Peace, peace, peace!

[END].