

05 February 2025, New York

Secretary-General's remarks to the opening of the 2025 session of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People [as delivered]

Mr. Chair, Ambassador Coly Seck,

Bureau members,

Let me begin by congratulating you on your election.

I want to salute this Committee for its work.

At its essence, the exercise of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people is about the right of Palestinians to simply live as human beings in their own land.

We have seen the realization of those rights steadily slip farther out of reach.

We have seen a chilling, systematic dehumanization and demonization of an entire people.

Of course, nothing justifies the horrific Hamas attacks of October 7.

And nothing justifies what we have seen unfold in Gaza over the last many months.

We all know too well the catalogue of destruction and unspeakable horrors.

The nearly 50,000 people — 70% of them women and children — who have been reported killed.

The majority of Gaza's civilian infrastructure -- hospitals, schools, and water facilities -- that has been destroyed.

The overwhelming majority of the entire population who have faced displacement after displacement, hunger, and disease.

Children, out of school for over a year.

A generation, left homeless and traumatized.

I welcome the ceasefire and hostage release deal.

I thank the mediators —Egypt, Qatar, and the United States— for the continued efforts to ensure implementation.

Now it is time to be crystal clear about objectives going forward.

First, we must keep pushing for a permanent ceasefire and the release of all hostages without delay.

We cannot go back to more death and destruction.

For our part, the UN is working around the clock to reach Palestinians in need and scale up support.

That requires humanitarian access that is rapid, safe, unimpeded, expanded, and sustained.

I call on Member States, donors, and the international community to fully fund humanitarian operations and meet urgent needs.

And I once again urge Member States to support the essential work of UNRWA.

Second, in the search for solutions, we must not make the problem worse.

It is vital to stay true to the bedrock of international law. It is essential to avoid any form of ethnic cleansing.

Third, we must reaffirm the two-State solution.

Any durable peace will require tangible, irreversible and permanent progress toward the two-State solution, an end to the occupation, and the establishment of an independent Palestinian State, with Gaza as an integral part.

A viable, sovereign Palestinian State living side-by-side in peace and security with Israel is the only sustainable solution for Middle East stability.

Excellencies,

Beyond Gaza, the situation continues to unravel in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem.

I am gravely concerned by rising violence by Israeli settlers and other violations.

The violence must stop.

As affirmed by the International Court of Justice, Israel's occupation of the Palestinian Territory must end.

International law must be respected, and accountability ensured.

We must work toward preserving the unity, contiguity, and integrity of the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the recovery and reconstruction of Gaza.

A strong and unified Palestinian governance is crucial.

The international community must support the Palestinian Authority to this end.

Excellencies,

The UN is fully committed to peace, stability, and the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

I commend this Committee for its steadfast dedication to these goals and call on the international community to fully support these efforts.

And I thank you.

[Secretary-General's remarks to the opening of the 2025 session of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People \[as delivered\] | United Nations Secretary-General](#)