

Statement by

H. E. President Mahmoud Abbas

“Abu Mazen”

Group of 77 and China

Cuba

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Check against Delivery

**Excellency, President Miguel Díaz-Canel,
President of the Republic of Cuba and Chair of the Group of 77 and China,**

Excellency, Mr. Antonio Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like, at the outset, to extend to Your Excellency my sincere thanks for inviting us to participate in this Summit of the Group of 77 and China about the Group's current development challenges, and the role of science, technology and innovation, which is an important strategic issue for the countries and peoples of this group, especially as it will enhance the stockpile of knowledge and capabilities in the scientific and technical development. We stress, in this regard, on the urgent need for more coordination and integration in order to overcome the challenges, and move forward towards achieving the aspirations of our peoples for a prosperous future.

We meet during a time of continuous uncertainty, in which Sustainable Development in developing countries has suffered from a serious blow. While much has been achieved since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, much more needs to be done today. From the global pandemic to the unilateral coercive measures, as it is blatantly evident in the embargo imposed on Cuba, with whom we express our full solidarity. In addition to the rising of inequalities to climate change, the magnitude of today's challenges is widely felt across the Global South, in a worrying trend that has instantly placed developing countries on the frontlines.

Mr. President,

The global agenda for our common future is based on the principles of justice and equity, as well as leaving no one behind, including those deprived from their right to self-determination and freedom, in particular the Palestinian people, who continue to live under Israeli occupation, and face, as a result, growing challenges in the implementation of the sustainable development goals, in terms of frequency and scope.

Therefore, the development situation in Palestine differs from that in the other countries of the world, as it is subject to Israel's institutional apartheid regime, illegal occupation, and the colonial project that denies our right to development. Israel, the

occupying Power, adopts systematic policies aimed at undermining the development of an entire people.

We have recently faced, along with the other countries, the dire consequences of the global economic crisis, the inflation and rising prices of the basic commodities, including food and oil products.

It is known to all that the illegal policies of colonizing our land, plundering our wealth and natural resources, collective punishment, environmental degradation and restrictions on the movement imposed by Israel, the occupying Power, have led to the destruction of our economy. Thus, our economy cannot be sustainable or viable as the occupation continues, when more than 60 percent of the Palestinian land is outside the scope of Palestinian development, and when the illegal Israeli settlements, the apartheid wall and the settler-only roads continue to expand amidst the escalation of the occupying army violence, and the terrorism of the terrorist settlers, how can there be prosperity or sustainable development?

In 2011, the international community, including the United Nations, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and others, acknowledged Palestine's institutional readiness for independence.

It has been 12 years since then. During these years we faced a serious economic crisis, due to Israeli intransigence on the political path and illegal practices on the ground. This crisis poses an important moral and political question to the international community, which has invested politically and economically in the two-State solution, isn't it time to end this complex historical injustice that has affected the Palestinian people?

Mr. President,

The Palestinian people, with the support of the Group of 77 and China, which we had the honor of chairing in 2019, are determined to overcome the historical injustice that has stifled their development and hindered their aspirations for a century. As we speak, Israel's policies and practices seek to entrench its settler colonial occupation, and impose the reality of apartheid, which must not be tolerated.

This status quo must end, and we must act now to end Israel's occupation of the territory of the State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem as its capital since 1967, and resolve all permanent status issues, including the question of Palestine refugees.

In the face of the exceptional circumstances of the Palestinian people, we are confident that our Group will continue to support us and defend the ideals and principles of the Group of 77 and China.

At the same time, we assure our partners in the Group of 77 and China that the Palestinian people will persevere and continue their legitimate struggle to realize their rights, while believing in the inevitability of freedom and prosperity, because of their sacrifices and commitment to peace, as well as the steadfast and principled support of friends like you.

We renew our profound thanks to President Canel, and the friendly people of Cuba for their support for our our people's rights in all the international forums. Thanks is also extended to you all, brothers and sisters, leaders of countries, and heads of delegations. We wish this conference success, and we look forward to being able to hold it in the State of Palestine, as an expression of your moral and ethical support for our rights and aspirations.

Peace be upon you.