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**Aboul Gheit's address before the Arab
Peace Group**

29 April 2024



Mr. Ali Nasser Mohamed, Chairman of the Arab Peace Group,

Mr. Samir Habashneh, Secretary-General of the Arab Safety Group,

Ladies and Gentlemen, members of the Arab Peace Group,

I would like to begin by expressing my deep appreciation for your participation in this meeting. I extend warm greetings on behalf of His Excellency the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, who graciously represented me to deliver his message.

First and foremost, I extend a heartfelt welcome to each of you gathered here in the House of Arabs. We convene amidst significant circumstances, as the plight of Palestine remains at the forefront of our collective Arab conscience. We are confronted with the destructive Israeli war on Gaza and Palestine, and we are here to stand against the crime of genocide our Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip have been enduring for seven months.

For over 200 days, Gaza has endured a relentless crime of genocide, destruction, famine, suffering, and displacement. Israeli aggression and brutality has spared no aspect of life, resulting in a staggering loss of human lives, with over 120,000 individuals killed, wounded, or missing. Tragically, many victims remain trapped beneath the rubble, a grim reality corroborated by UN reports.

The scale of devastation is profound, with an estimated 37 million tons of rubble, equivalent to around 300 kilogrammes per square metre. The daunting task of rubble removal looms ahead, projected to take 14 years to complete. Residential buildings comprise the majority of the destruction – 65 percent – with unexploded ordnance posing an additional threat, accounting for 10 percent of the total munitions dropped on Gaza—a quantity surpassing that of four atomic bombs.



The relentless Israeli aggression against the Palestinian people in the West Bank, including Jerusalem, persists unabated, marked by escalating violence and systematic oppression. This aggression encompasses a spectrum of atrocities, including killings, arrests, demolitions, displacements, illegal settlements, and efforts to Judaize the region. These actions are perpetrated through a declared war conducted by the occupying army and armed settler groups, which engage in organised terrorism and enforce various forms of persecution, apartheid, and ethnic cleansing.

These egregious acts unequivocally constitute war crimes, genocide, and crimes against humanity, perpetuated over decades of conflict. While the intensity of these crimes has reached unprecedented levels today, their roots lie deep within a longstanding campaign to undermine Palestinian existence and rights, and to obliterate the Palestinian cause altogether. Presently, the Palestinian cause stands at its most perilous and critical juncture, with the international community struggling to effectively intervene.

It is imperative that this aggression be halted immediately, and that measures are taken to end the war of genocide, displacement, and liquidation. The international community must fulfil its duty to provide protection for the Palestinian people and uphold their legitimate national rights to freedom and independence.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Advocating for the Palestinian cause today transcends mere national obligation; it is a moral imperative and humanitarian necessity upheld by universal standards, laws, and principles. Your esteemed group is called upon to intensify its efforts in defending this noble cause, countering the campaign of annihilation, exposing Israeli atrocities, holding perpetrators accountable under international law, and challenging the disinformation propagated by the Israeli media bolstered by its allies.

Indeed, the media wields significant influence in shaping public opinion, particularly in countering the systematic falsehoods and propaganda advanced by Israel. It serves as a crucial tool in exposing the true extent of Israeli crimes, illuminating the grim



reality of the aggression, and elucidating its explicit and implicit objectives aimed at eradicating the Palestinian cause.

Moreover, it is essential to underscore the pivotal role and responsibility of all facets of international justice, including specialised organisations and bodies dedicated to human rights, whether at the international, regional, public, or national level. At this pivotal juncture in history, the struggle for narrative and awareness, as well as for the recognition of rights and existence, has reached unprecedented levels of intensity.

It is imperative that concerted efforts are made, in collaboration and coordination with various stakeholders, to achieve justice and equity for the Palestinian people. This entails steadfast advocacy for the establishment of an independent State of Palestine with East Jerusalem as its capital, thereby securing the fundamental rights and aspirations of the Palestinian population.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Global positions have undergone a significant shift, gradually aligning with the longstanding Arab stance on the Palestinian cause. This shift was epitomised in the recent Security Council Resolution 2728, which, for the first time, called for an immediate ceasefire. While this awakening may be belated, it does not absolve those who remained silent for months of their responsibility to take action. The occupation persists, fuelled by Palestinian bloodshed.

Furthermore, the final report of the independent review committee tasked by the United Nations to investigate Israeli allegations regarding the neutrality of UNRWA and the involvement of some of its members in the events of 7 October, unequivocally refutes the unsubstantiated claims made by Israel. The report provides irrefutable evidence of the baselessness of these allegations, which were evidently part of a systematic campaign to undermine the agency and dismantle its critical role in supporting the livelihoods and employment of approximately six million Palestinian refugees. Moreover, it underscores the vital importance of UNRWA's humanitarian work, particularly in addressing the dire consequences of the occupation's crimes and atrocities in the Gaza Strip in recent months.



It is with profound regret that we acknowledge the Security Council's failure to pass a resolution enabling the State of Palestine to attain full membership in the United Nations. This outcome was a direct result of the United States' utilisation of its veto power to obstruct the clear international consensus supporting Palestine's accession as a full member. However, we express our heartfelt gratitude to the 12 countries that stood in solidarity with Palestine in its pursuit of membership.

We recognise that every diplomatic endeavour and political action, whether in our meetings or in various diplomatic arenas and international forums, aimed at halting the brutal war in the Gaza Strip, cannot fully measure up to the magnitude of the crimes committed or the sacrifices made daily by Palestinians, including the shedding of their blood and the loss of their children. Nonetheless, such efforts remain imperative and must persist and intensify until the ongoing violence and bloodshed cease.

The imperative lesson at this juncture is the urgent implementation of international resolutions on the ground. This entails an immediate and complete cessation of military operations and Israeli aggression. Furthermore, it is crucial to facilitate the unhindered entry of humanitarian aid through established land routes. Doing so is essential to alleviate the catastrophic humanitarian crisis unfolding in Gaza and to avert the looming threat of famine faced by its inhabitants. It is incumbent upon all parties involved to prioritise the well-being and dignity of the Palestinian people and to act swiftly and decisively to address their urgent needs.

Addressing the tragic situation in Gaza and preventing its recurrence necessitates a comprehensive solution to the underlying causes of conflict. The plight of Gaza is intricately linked to the broader Palestinian cause, and its resolution hinges upon ending the occupation and establishing an independent Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital, based on the pre-1967 borders.

Opening up a viable political pathway towards a two-state solution requires a resolute international commitment to translate this vision into reality at the earliest opportunity. This entails recognising the State of Palestine through an international conference that lays out



a clear roadmap with specific timelines, ultimately leading to the end of the occupation and enabling Palestine to exercise its right to sovereignty and independence.

The overwhelming consensus among nations and peoples across the globe, whether voiced within the halls of the United Nations and its agencies or echoed in the streets of major capitals and universities worldwide, underscores the urgent need for action. The calls for an end to the genocidal war, the attainment of Palestinian freedom, and the rejection of double standards resonate deeply and deserve sincere appreciation and respect.

In conclusion, I extend my heartfelt salute to the unwavering resilience of the Palestinian people and honour the invaluable sacrifices they have made in pursuit of their just cause. I also extend a warm welcome to each of you once again, expressing deep gratitude for your dedicated efforts in supporting the aspirations of the Palestinian nation and its quest for victory.

As you convene in this meeting, I offer my sincere wishes for its success and prosperity.

Thank you.

May peace, mercy, and blessings be upon you.