

Nadav Tamir Statement

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question - UN Security Council, 10108th meeting

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Mr. President, Distinguished Members of the Security Council,

I thank the United Kingdom for convening this session and for the opportunity to address the Council.

I appear before you as an Israeli patriot and a Zionist, and as a member of the Israeli-Palestinian coalition United for a Shared Future, a partnership of Israelis and Palestinians who believe that the only viable way to resolve the conflict, and to ensure security, dignity, and prosperity for both peoples, is through a two-state solution embedded in a broader regional framework.

Despite the profound trauma experienced by both Israelis and Palestinians following the October 7 massacre and the devastating war that followed, this moment presents a historic opportunity; one that must not be missed.

The growing sense of urgency within the international community and across the Middle East must be translated into a clear and irreversible pathway toward a demilitarized Palestinian state alongside Israel, anchored in a regional coalition that integrates both Israel and Palestine into the region while marginalizing jihadist and terrorist forces on all sides. This is not only a two-state solution; it is, in effect, what we at J Street call a “23-state solution” - Israel, Palestine, and the 21 Arab states that endorsed the Arab Peace Initiative normalizing relations and cooperating for mutual security and prosperity.

Importantly, this regional vision is not disconnected from Israeli public opinion. Surveys by the Accord Center for Social Psychology at the Hebrew University, conducted even during the most difficult periods of the fighting, reveal that a majority of the Israeli public would accept a Palestinian state if embedded within a comprehensive normalization agreement between Israel and Arab states. Approximately 61% of the public prefer separation from the Palestinians over annexation. This data indicates that ultimately, even when the winds of war are blowing, the Israeli public is much more realistic than its current leadership. Israelis understand that the path to security passes through normalization, which will include the establishment of a Palestinian state alongside Arab normalization of relations with the State of Israel.

This is why Gaza cannot be treated as an isolated arena. There is now broad recognition that what happens in Gaza does not stay in Gaza; it reverberates throughout the region and beyond. This understanding was reflected in the Council's consideration of President Donald Trump's 20-point plan, and in the recent wave of recognitions of a Palestinian state - recognitions understood not as the end of negotiations, but as their beginning.

Previous diplomatic efforts fell short either because they focused exclusively on bilateral negotiations between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization - as in Oslo Accords, Camp David Summit, and Annapolis Conference - or because they attempted to bypass the Palestinians, as with the Abraham Accords. Today, we have an opportunity to combine the bilateral and regional tracks. This integrated approach is the only one capable of delivering tangible peace dividends - security, stability, and prosperity - for Israelis and Palestinians alike.

To move forward, we need the Security Council's support in advancing the 20-point plan and explicitly including the West Bank within its framework. While global attention is understandably focused on Gaza, the West Bank is at serious risk of implosion. De facto annexation is occurring daily, and recent steps toward de jure annexation further endanger prospects for a negotiated solution. Palestinian communities are being displaced through violence perpetrated by organized extremist settlers, undermining both stability and Israel's own democratic character.

We must demonstrate, to Israelis, Palestinians, and the broader region, that the most effective way to remove Hamas from its brutal control of Gaza, and to prevent it from remaining an armed militia, is through a credible diplomatic process and the creation of a genuine political horizon for the Palestinian people.

Israel is entering an election year, and the Palestinians urgently need elections as well. For pro-peace constituencies on both sides to prevail, the international community must make clear that the two-state solution is not a distant aspiration but an achievable reality. Trauma has bred fear and despair. That can change, if a political process delivers real security and ensures that another October 7, and the devastation that followed in Gaza, will never happen again.

We stand at a crossroads: between annexation and expulsion, which would lead to endless bloodshed, and a negotiated future grounded in mutual recognition and regional integration. The voice and engagement of the international community are critical. They can demonstrate to the Israeli public, most of whom seek security and normalcy, that peace is feasible and that it will enhance, not diminish, Israel's security.

Israel was deeply traumatized after the 1973 war with Egypt and Syria. Yet within a few years, we achieved peace with Egypt. After the First Intifada, despair gave way to diplomacy, and the Oslo process paved the way for peace with Jordan. History shows that trauma can be transformed into opportunity - if leadership is courageous and the international community is resolute.

Some Israelis argue that recognizing a Palestinian state alongside Israel would reward Hamas. They are mistaken. It would, in fact, undermine Hamas by repudiating its vision of perpetual conflict and empowering Palestinians who seek coexistence. Israel cannot remain both Jewish and democratic if Palestinians are denied a homeland of their own. Our futures are interdependent.

Our joint Israeli-Palestinian coalition, led by Hiba Qasas and her organization Principles for Peace, demonstrates that a different path is possible. We have developed concrete, actionable plans and stand ready to work with all who are committed to leading us out of the current tragedy and toward a secure and prosperous future for the entire region; one that will also strengthen global stability.

Thank you.

Nadav Tamir

*Executive Director
of J Street Israel*

