



**Statement by Ambassador Munir Akram, Permanent
Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations, during the
United Nations Security Council Open Debate on “the Situation
in the Middle East, including the Palestinian Question”
(27 July 2023)**

Madam President,

Pakistan commends the UK Presidency for convening this timely debate on the Middle East, including the Palestinian question.

2. Pakistan condemns, in the strongest possible terms, the recent raids, airstrikes and large-scale military operations carried out by the Israeli occupation forces in Jenin in occupied Palestinian West Bank. These resulted in scores of civilian casualties and destruction of significant civilian infrastructure.

3. Unfortunately, the killing of children, women and men continues in occupied Palestine with complete impunity.

4. On 5th July 2023, three Special Rapporteurs of the UN Human Rights Council stated that the “Israeli air strikes and ground operations in the occupied West Bank targeting the Jenin Refugee camp and killing at least 12 Palestinians may prima facie constitute a war crime”.

5. The UN Special Rapporteurs emphasized that these attacks had “no justification under international law. The impunity that Israel has enjoyed for its acts of violence over decades only fuels and intensify the recurring cycle of violence.” They called for “Israel to be held accountable under international law for its illegal occupation and violent acts to perpetuate it.”

Madam President,

6. International law also unequivocally restricts Israel, the occupying power, from seizing land and building settlements in the occupied territories, including East Jerusalem. Security Council resolutions 476, 478 and 2334 inter alia prohibit Israel from altering the demographic composition of the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967.

7. The continuing expansion of Israeli settlements in the occupied territories and expulsion and evictions of Palestinians from their properties and changes to the demographic structure; historical and legal

status and character of Al-Quds Al-Shareef, are patently illegal and grave violations of Security Council resolutions and international law, including humanitarian law.

Madam President,

8. The rule of law can be upheld only if it applied universally and consistently, without exceptions or double standards.

9. It is time that Israel was held accountable for its grave human rights violations and crimes in occupied Palestine.

10. Given the erga-omnes character of the right of self-determination, it is also incumbent on all States, in accordance with the United Nations Charter and international law, to ensure that any impediment to the exercise of its right to self-determination by the Palestinian people is immediately terminated.

11. It is most regrettable that the Security Council has been unable to exercise its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security in occupied Palestine. We urge the Security Council to fully and forcefully implement its own resolutions on the question of Palestine.

12. The international community cannot accept the fait accompli Israel is seeking to impose with the design perpetuate its forcible occupation and destroy Palestinian nationhood. There will be no durable peace in the Holy land until the creation of an independent, viable and contiguous State of Palestine, established on the basis of pre-1967 borders, with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital.

I thank you.