



**Statement by Ambassador Munir Akram
Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the UN
at the UN General Assembly Debate on the Use of Veto on the
Admission of New Members**

(1 May 2024)

Mr. President,

I would like to thank President Dennis Francis for convening this General Assembly meeting in accordance with its resolution 76/262, which mandates the General Assembly President to call a meeting when a veto is cast in the Security Council.

2. Mr. President, the vetoed resolution, presented by Algeria on behalf of the Arab Group (document S/2024/312), sought the approval of Palestine's longstanding application for full UN membership.

3. It should be recalled that the General Assembly, through its resolution 181 of 29 November 1947, unjustly decided to partition Palestine into two states: one Arab and one Jewish. While one of them, Israel, is now a member of the United Nations, the Palestinian State has been denied admission although it meets all the criteria for membership.

4. Over the past 7 decades, the Palestinian people have not only been denied the right to self-determination, where millions of them have been expelled from their homeland, but they have also been subjected to a prolonged and brutal foreign occupation for the past 57 years. It is this denial of self-determination and foreign occupation, this historic injustice, which is at the heart of the conflict and violence in the entire region.

5. In Israel's latest and most brutal war against the Palestinian people in Gaza over thirty-five thousand Palestinian civilians, mostly women and children, have been killed; thousands more injured; and two million displaced by Israel's indiscriminate bombing at homes, schools, hospitals, civilian infrastructure, and religious sites across Gaza. Humanitarian aid has been blocked; humanitarian workers deliberately targeted; and the UN Relief Agency demonized to intensify the suffering of the Palestinian people. Famine and pestilence stalk the people of Gaza. The International Court of Justice (ICJ) has called this "plausible genocide".

6. Israel has disregarded the demands of the Security Council and the General Assembly for an immediate ceasefire. It has failed to implement the provisional measures prescribed by the International Court of Justice. Now, the extremist Israeli leadership is threatening an assault on Rafah which, as the UN Secretary-General has stated, “would be an unbearable escalation, have a devastating impact on the Palestinians in Gaza, with serious repressions on the occupied West Bank, and across the wider region”.

Mr. President,

7. Let me tell the Israeli representative that the outlawed Israeli regime cannot divert attention from its crimes by leveling calumny against the Islamic countries. Pakistan, unlike Israel, acts in accordance with international law.

8. This Assembly and the entire UN membership must: (i) enforce an immediate halt to hostilities and an end to Israel's genocidal actions in Gaza; (ii) guarantee unrestricted access to humanitarian aid for the besieged population of Gaza; what has been done so far is much less than what is needed; (iii) prevent further escalation of conflict; Israel has tried to provoke such an escalation and we appreciate the restraint which has been shown in the response; (iv) provide international protection for the Palestinian population; they have been killed with brutality and impunity and the united nations must come to their rescue in the form of international protection; (v) revive the peace process to secure a two-State solution; and (vi) hold Israel responsible for its crimes.

9. In the wake of the Gaza devastation, the only glimmer of hope has been the universal recognition of the imperative for a two-State solution. The admission of the State of Palestine as a full member of the United Nations would constitute a concrete political step towards the two-State solution and towards rectifying the historic injustice against the Palestinian people. The veto cast against Palestine's admission erodes the credibility of the assurances that have been held out of support for the two-State solution. The diplomacy now underway for peace in Palestine, in Israel and the region would gain considerable momentum if the veto was lifted and Palestine's admission to the United Nations recommended by the Security Council.

Mr. President,

10. This Assembly, reflecting the wishes of the international community, must urge the Security Council to reconsider and recommend Palestine's application for membership of the United Nations.

I thank you.