

**Statement by Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry,
Acting Permanent Representative in the UN Security Council on Situation in the Middle East
including Palestinian Question.**

Mr. President,

We are grateful for the opportunity to share our deep concern over the prevailing chaos and gloom that afflicts Lebanon and Palestinian territories. The Government of Pakistan strongly condemns the Israeli aggression against Lebanon which continues to cause bloodshed, loss of innocent lives and damage to infrastructure and property.

The President and Prime Minister of Pakistan and many other world leaders have called for an immediate ceasefire and cessation of hostilities by all parties to the conflict. The loss of innocent lives must stop. We believe it is fundamental responsibility of the Security Council as well as major powers and regional actors to ensure that violence is halted, hostilities are ceased and peace is established.

We thank the Secretary General for dispatching his team to the region to bring the current mayhem to an immediate end. We appreciate the briefing by the Secretary General's special envoy this morning, which brought out the magnitude of the problem clearly before us.

Mr. President,

The current situation is alarming as the number of deaths and injured and displaced is rising by the hour. The government of Lebanon with which we reiterate our solidarity is facing a critical situation.

The present situation is a direct result of actions against the widely recognized principle in the Middle East, that there is no military solution to the conflict. The warring parties must therefore cease hostilities and allow diplomacy and peace a chance.

Mr. President,

We call upon the government of Israel and Hezbollah to cease forth with all military action.

We urge the Council to take an objective view of the situation and abide by its Charter responsibility to maintain international peace and security, to establish a ceasefire, and ensure its scrupulous monitoring and respect by all parties concerned.

The international community including the UN should mobilize resources to provide humanitarian relief to the hundreds of thousands displaced and traumatized people. Pakistan has already sent medical and food assistance to Lebanon.

We must also assiduously work towards long term peace and stability in the region, by ensuring that the relevant UN SC resolutions, the bilateral and plurilateral agreements are implemented in letter and spirit. The UN Security Council, major powers and the Quartet must act immediately and resolutely to stop the attacks and violence and ensure the peace process is back on track.

Mr. President,

We should not allow the violence to push the region back to spiral of violence. The Security Council's urgent intercession in this context is imperative. It must live up to its charter obligations. The escalation of the situation must be prevented through immediate and concrete action.