



**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”**

**(18 January 2023)**

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**Mr. President,**

Pakistan welcomes the convening by the Japanese Presidency of this open debate on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian Question.

2. We express our grave concern on the constantly deteriorating situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem.

3. The year 2022 was among the deadliest for the Palestinian people.

4. According to reports, 230 Palestinian civilians were killed by Israeli occupying forces, including 61 children, in addition to the injury and detention of thousands of others, while hundreds of homes, civilian properties and structures and agricultural crops have been destroyed.

**Mr. President,**

5. Pakistan is also deeply alarmed by Israel's ongoing acts of aggression, incitement and provocation against Islamic and Christian holy places, including Al-Aqsa Mosque/Al-Haram Al-Sharif.

6. Pakistan strongly condemns the provocative visit of Israeli Minister of National Security to the Holy Al-Aqsa Mosque compound. Al-Aqsa is a holy site revered by Muslims around the world. For fourteen centuries Muslims have been loving guardians of the Holy Al-Aqsa. Violation of its sanctity offends the religious sensitivities of Muslims all over the world and inflames an already tense situation in the occupied Palestinian territories and could have grave impact on regional and international peace and security.

7. Pakistan rejects all Israeli measures and attempts to alter the historical and legal status quo of the Holy Al-Aqsa Mosque/Al-Haram Al-Sharif and demand full respect of the status quo and of international law at Al-Aqsa and at all other holy sites in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

8. The Security Council must act swiftly and resolutely to bring a halt to all such Israeli violations, ensure its full compliance with International Law, and implement its own resolutions.

**Mr. President,**

9. There is no question in anybody's mind that Israel's actions in the occupied Palestinian lands - the seizure of land and properties for Israeli settlements; the violence against unarmed Palestinian children, women and men; the blockade of Gaza; and the desecration of Holy Al-Aqsa - are of all grave violations of Security Council resolutions and international law, including humanitarian law.

10. We look forward to the advisory opinion of the international court of justice on the legal implications of Israeli occupations. We expect that court's opinion will lead to Israeli accountability for its crimes in the occupied Palestinian territory. It is a measure of Israel's sense of impunity that it has taken punitive measures against the Palestinian authorities and people for merely seeking the Court's opinion.

11. The perpetuation of Israeli occupation will not bring peace to the Holy Land. Even if they are dispossessed and disempowered by Israel, every succeeding generation of Palestinians will persist in seeking their freedom and fundamental rights, including their right to self-determination.

12. The two-State formula offers the only solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. The rising extremism in Israeli leadership must not be allowed to foreclose this solution.

**Thank You.**