



IBSA FORUM
India – Brazil – South Africa

Human Rights Council
21st Regular Session
Item 7 –General Debate
Geneva, 24 September 2012

Madam President,

1. I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the IBSA Forum, comprising India, Brazil and South Africa.

2. We thank the Secretary-General for the report presented on the follow-up to the report of the fact-finding mission . We regret the late publication of the report. India, Brazil and South Africa express concern at the lack of implementation of the relevant Human Rights Council resolutions in that regard.

Madam President,

3. The humanitarian and human rights situation in Gaza remains dire. A recent report of the OCHA, entitled “Gaza in 2020: a liveable place?” portrays a desperate situation for the Strip in the next few years, in areas such as access to drinking water and employment. According to the OCHA, the Israeli military presence in Gaza impedes access to 35% of all arable land and to 85% of the maritime fishing areas.

4. India, Brazil and South Africa call upon Israel to lift the blockade on Gaza and, pending such measure, further facilitate the movement of persons and goods to and from Gaza, including material for reconstruction. The UNCTAD Trade and Development Board report which is currently in front of the TDB attests to the fact that ‘the long term prospects for Palestinian economic development became even more unattainable in 2011 than in the previous years.

5. With regard to the West Bank and East Jerusalem, the IBSA countries are particularly concerned at the violence of Israeli settlers against Palestinians and their property. We urge all sides to refrain from measures which may pose additional difficulties to achieving peace.

6. Occupation remains the main cause of human rights violations in Palestine. Existing conflicts remain political in nature and cannot be resolved by force by any side.

7. In their meeting last October, the IBSA Heads of State welcomed the Palestinian request for full membership at the UN, which is a key step towards the full realization of the two-state solution, and expressed their expectation of a positive response by the Security Council. The Leaders called for the urgent resumption of effective and result-oriented negotiations aimed at giving birth to a sovereign, democratic, independent, united and viable Palestinian State, with East Jerusalem as its capital, coexisting peacefully alongside Israel, within secure borders. They called for the monitoring of the Quartet’s activities by the Security Council. The Leaders

called for an immediate freeze in all settlement activity in the occupied Palestinian Territories and East Jerusalem, as well as for lifting of the siege against Gaza.

Madam President,

8. Development strategies play a key role in the achievement of sustainable peace. The IBSA countries are sponsoring projects in Palestine, such as the construction of a Sports Center in Ramallah, inaugurated last November; the rehabilitation of the Culture and Hospital Center for the Palestinian Red Crescent; and the construction and equipping of a Center for People with Intellectual Disabilities in Nablus.

9. Finally, Madam President, allow me to reiterate the commitment, shared by India, Brazil and South Africa, to increased dialogue and understanding, both here and in other fora, with a view to the enjoyment of human rights in Palestine.

Thank you very much.