

12/03/2002



Press Release SC/7326

Security Council
4489th Meeting (Night)

SECURITY COUNCIL DEMANDS IMMEDIATE CESSATION OF ALL VIOLENCE IN MIDDLE

EAST;

AFFIRMS VISION OF TWO STATES, ISRAEL AND PALESTINE

**Resolution 1397 (2002) Adopted by Vote
Of 14 in Favour to None against, with 1 Abstention**

Meeting for the second time in 24 hours on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question, the Security Council late tonight expressed its grave concern at the continuation of the tragic and violent events that had taken place in the region since September 2000 and demanded immediate cessation of all acts of violence, including all acts of terror, provocation, incitement and destruction.

Adopting resolution 1397 (2002) by a vote of 14 in favour to none against with 1 abstention (Syria), the Council affirmed a vision of a region where two States, Israel and Palestine, lived side by side within secure and recognized borders. It also called upon the Israeli and Palestinian sides and their leaders to cooperate in the implementation of the Tenet work plan and Mitchell Report recommendations with the aim of resuming negotiations on a political settlement.

By other terms of the resolution, the Council stressed the need for all concerned to ensure the safety of civilians and the need to respect the universally accepted norms of international humanitarian law. Further, it welcomed and encouraged the diplomatic efforts of special envoys from the United States, the Russian Federation, the European Union and the United Nations Special Coordinator and others, to bring about a comprehensive, just and lasting peace.

It also expressed its support for the efforts of the Secretary-General and others to assist the parties to halt the violence and resume the peace process and welcomed the contribution of Crown Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia.

A statement was made by the representative of Syria in explanation of his delegation's decision to abstain from voting on the resolution.

Ole Peter Kolby (Norway), Council President, made an oral amendment to the text.

The meeting was called to order at 11:45 p.m. and adjourned at 11:59 p.m.

^ Resolution

The full text of resolution 1397 (2002) reads as follows:

“The Security Council,

“Recalling all its previous relevant resolutions, in particular resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973),

“Affirming a vision of a region where two States, Israel and Palestine, live side by side within secure and recognized borders,

“Expressing its grave concern at the continuation of the tragic and violent events that have taken place since September 2000, especially the recent attacks and the increased number of casualties,

“Stressing the need for all concerned to ensure the safety of civilians,

“Stressing also the need to respect the universally accepted norms of international humanitarian law,

“Welcoming and encouraging the diplomatic efforts of special envoys from the United States of America, the Russian Federation, the European Union and the United Nations Special Coordinator and others to bring about a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East,

“Welcoming the contribution of Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah,

“1. Demands immediate cessation of all acts of violence, including all acts of terror, provocation, incitement and destruction;

“2. Calls upon the Israeli and Palestinian sides and their leaders to cooperate in the implementation of the Tenet work plan and Mitchell Report recommendations with the aim of resuming negotiations on a political settlement;

“3. Expresses support for the efforts of the Secretary-General and others to assist the parties to halt the violence and to resume the peace process;

“4. Decides to remain seized of the matter.”

Background

The Security Council convened late this evening to take up the situation in the Middle East, including the question of Palestine.

Statements

OLE PETER KOLBY ([Norway](#)), Council President, drew the Council’s attention to a revision to the text of the draft. In preambular paragraph six, the words “and others” would be added after “the United Nations Special Coordinator”.

MIKHAIL WEHBE ([Syria](#)), speaking on behalf of the Arab Group, said his delegation had submitted a draft resolution that it believed had been simple and which could effectively achieve the objectives of the international community. That draft avoided complications and dealt with the situation on the ground in the occupied territories, as well as the tragic events in the Middle East region. It frankly

addressed the killing and destruction of the Palestinian people by Israel. Despite flexibility shown by the Arab side, that spirit had not been met by those that had submitted the resolution before the Council tonight.

The draft under consideration, he continued, did not take into account any Arab concerns. His delegation believed the document was weak and that it did not deal with the root question at the heart of this issue -- the Israeli occupation. Indeed, the resolution treated the killer and the victim equally.

He said the destruction committed by the Israeli occupation forces, the killing in mass concentration camps -- holding some 2000 Palestinians -- must be condemned. To talk about security arrangements in the crisis situation, especially in view of the daily massacres committed by Israel in the occupied territories and in the densely populated camps, amounted to a failure. The Council must instead call for a peace that was comprehensive and just, based on resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), the Madrid Conference and the principle of land for peace. It must also make Israel responsible for carrying out the tenets of those resolutions, or they would remain ineffective.

He reiterated that the draft had not made any reference to the Madrid Conference nor to the need to ensure a just and comprehensive peace in the region. His delegation considered those two concerns among the minimum requirements to make a strong statement. It was also unfortunate that the draft had not demanded that the occupying Power should respect the Fourth Geneva Convention on the protection of civilians in armed conflict -- another minimum his delegation had requested and which had not been included. In view of those facts, his delegation would abstain from the vote.

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