

Making 2014 the year of solidarity with the Palestinian people

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Introduction:

On November 26, 2013, the UN General Assembly ratified a resolution which included, among other things, the General Assembly's declaration of 2014 as the "Year of solidarity with the Palestinian people."

On January 16, 2014, the UN launched this endeavor with the participation of Palestinian ambassador to the UN Riyad Mansour in addition to senior UN officials including Deputy UN Secretary General Jan Eliasson, President of the General Assembly, Ambassador John Ash and then-Security Council President Jordanian Ambassador Zeid Bin Ra'ad.

Discussion:

Overall, the importance of investing in this resolution was discussed, including benefiting from it politically and also investing in global developments in order to target decision-makers. This also applies to strengthening the Palestinian position and creating political, economic and social changes which promote this position and impact on decision-making across the globe. This is especially in light of the imbalance of powers, which necessitates the use of other methods to expose Israel's colonialist, settlement approach in addition to adding a legal dimension to the Palestinian cause and the right to self-determination for the Palestinian people.

National factional committee

The participants concluded that the speedy formation of a national factional committee was important in which all parties and forces participate and which represents all official and national bodies. The committee's purpose is to keep pace with this positive development in terms of international stances towards Palestine along with implementing the UN resolution at the international, official and popular levels. The national committee would take on an official nature whereby it would carry out tasks in the same manner as an official committee and address the relevant parties within the UN to urge them to embody the resolution. The committee would also formulate a plan of action in this regard with the involvement of all political forces, civil society organizations and various social sectors. The committee would be focused on addressing the following issues: settlements, the boycott, ending the occupation, holding Israel responsible for the dead end of the peace process, and also recruiting Palestinian communities around the

world to become involved in this campaign, at least in the countries where it could contribute to promoting the Palestinian cause and strengthen the Palestinians' rights on the ground.

Unifying official and popular efforts

In order to achieve the aforementioned goals, the importance of popular and official efforts was also reaffirmed as part of this solidarity campaign. Joint efforts should be made through carrying out a series of activities, which will keep the cause front and center at all times. It should also be through including programs and strategies not regarding 2014 alone but for future activities as well.

Moreover, participants stressed again on the importance of ending the internal Palestinian split because its continuation is extremely detrimental for Palestinian communities abroad in terms of their united message to the peoples of the world in mobilizing support for the UN resolution for solidarity with the Palestinian people.

National consensus

It became clear from the participants' different presentations of the importance of adopting a politically clear Palestinian slogan linked to ending the occupation. They said 2014 must be a year of solidarity that reflects the specific political message regarding settlements, ending the occupation and promoting the boycott campaign, which could be used as leverage in the current political battle. They said action would have to be taken as quickly as possible since the bureaucratic requirements of Palestinian institutional work do not coincide with the event itself, in addition to briefly indicating to the tasks of this committee.

Recommendations:

One: The formation of a national committee by presidential decree with the task of embodying the UN Resolution of November 26, 2013 which considers 2014 as the year of solidarity with the Palestinian people.

Two: Formation of a committee from members of PLO departments and ministries of relevance along with political and social bodies, including movements, unions, civil society organizations and the private sector in order to reflect the diversity in Palestinian society inside the homeland and the diaspora.

Three: Allocating a budget for the committee and the activities it is to implement according to the committee's needs.

Four: Reaffirming the role of Palestinian communities all over the world in the campaign to promote the UN decision, which also requires immediate action to end the internal split, which is harmful to the unity of the national discourse along with the messages of Palestinian communities to the world.

Fifth: Confirming the importance of having a clear and unified national vision of goals and slogans and also complete congruence between the different political forces, social sectors and civil society organizations.

Sixth: A call to continue awareness campaigns to remind the world of the resolution issued by the International Court of Justice in The Hague on the separation wall, the dangers of the settlement enterprise and reviving and expanding the international boycott of this enterprise, thus holding Israel responsible for the faltering peace process.

Seventh: Quick action to beat the clock, given that the bureaucratic requirements of Palestinian institutional work do not coincide with the event itself; along with specifying the talks of the committee.