

Statement by H.E. Ambassador Majid Takht Ravanchi
Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations
On “The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question”
Before the United Nations Security Council
New York, 22 January 2020

In the Name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful

Mr. President,

Once again, we are here to discuss the world’s longest crisis - the question of Palestine.

In the early days of the year marking the United Nations seventy-fifth anniversary, it is very timely to ask why the Council is unable to end the decades-long occupation of Palestine, to protect the very basic rights of millions of oppressed Palestinians at home and abroad and to confront an occupying regime that has committed all four core international crimes, not once but several times.

The answer is clear. The United States, by violating the preemptory norms and basic principles of international law, disregarding all standards of international conduct and breaking all principles of humanity and morality, as well as by abusing its status as a permanent member of the Council, continues to completely, systematically and unreservedly shield the Israeli regime.

One example is its use of the veto to protect Israel 44 times, thus further emboldening that regime to commit more brutal crimes with more brutality and in total impunity.

Moreover, the United States has been engaged in other destabilizing activities in our region. In pursuit of its intrinsic animosity towards Muslim nations, particularly in the Middle East, the United States continues military adventurism in our region, the latest example of which is the recent horrific assassination of the martyr Qasem Soleimani and his companions at Baghdad International Airport.

The assassination was a clear manifestation of State terrorism, which constitutes a gross violation of the fundamental principles of international law and entails the international responsibility of the United States.

We categorically reject all United States fabrications to justify that heinous crime, including by resorting to sham claims that Mr. Soleimani was planning to target American interests in the region.

The United States is well aware that, in addition to his decisive role in fighting the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham (ISIS) in Iraq and Syria, Mr. Soleimani was also a highly influential and respected politician, working hard for stability in the region.

Without a doubt, that extremely provocative move was a pre-planned plot aimed at escalating tensions in our region.

The assassination clearly invalidated the United States claim that it is fighting terrorism. It is, in fact, fighting those who combat terrorists.

The martyr Soleimani's demise was a big gift from America to ISIS and other regional terrorist groups.

Rallies and crowds in the region commemorating the martyr Soleimani's role in fighting terrorism and denouncing his assassination, as well as the fact that millions in our capital alone participated in his funeral procession - the second largest in the history of our nation and the entire region - demonstrate how beloved he was nationally and regionally.

If anything, United States adventurism testified to one fact - that after the cowardly assassination, the region is less secure and less stable.

Consequently, the most effective way to ensure regional peace and security is the withdrawal of United States forces from the region, as they have always been the source of instability in our neighborhood.

The Council needs to address its deepening trust deficit and diminishing legitimacy and credibility emanating from its inaction in cases of clear violations of international law, such as its silence on the assassination of Martyr Soleimani.

In order to correct its past mistakes in the Middle East, the Council must uphold its responsibility by preventing the imposition of all the unlawful policies of the United States and the Israeli regime against the entire region.

The Council must remain vigilant about the deceitful nature of the Israeli regime and must not allow it to abuse the Council's open debates to play victim in an effort to distract attention from its oppressive policies in our region.

That is exactly what the representative of the Israeli regime did yesterday when, instead of explaining why it continues to flout international law and maintain its inhumane practices in the occupied territories, he attempted to level accusations at my country through a series of lies and fabrications, which I reject completely and do not want to dignify with an answer.

It is no accident that, in a coordinated move, the United States representative also did likewise, keeping completely silent on the topic of the meeting - the question of Palestine - and instead ventured to give a rosy picture of Israel, justifying its illegal practices while orchestrating a disinformation campaign, which we totally repudiate, against my country.

I thank you, Mr. President.