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Statement by

H.E. President Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen)

delivered by

Co-Presidents of the Summit,
Excellencies, Chairmen and Members of Delegations,

Mr. Secretary General,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I stand before you today, as a representative of my people, conveying their message and carrying their pain, their hopes and their trust in your commitment to solving their cause, which has been before the General Assembly for 58 years now. It is for this noble cause that the late leader, President Yasser Arafat, stood before you for the first time in 1974 and delivered his historic speech for the sake of his people and for the sake of peace and security in the region.

We in Palestine face today two historic tasks and we are determined to fulfill them: the task of achieving independence and peace and the task of development and the building of our state institutions.

The first priority, therefore, is to end the occupation and achieve freedom. The way to end the occupation is clear. It has been defined by the numerous resolutions of international legitimacy and the steps towards its achievement were laid down in the Road Map, which has received international consensus and was endorsed by the Security Council in resolution 1515 (2003). The goal, as elaborated in the Arab Peace Initiative and the vision of President Bush, is the achievement of peace on the basis of the two-state solution: Palestine and Israel, based on the Armistice Line of 1949.

As we strive to achieve independence and statehood, we are working to promote a culture of
peace and to reject violence and eliminate its causes, for we want to build a society that transforms the suffering of the Palestinian people throughout the decades into a creative energy for building, whereby the Palestinian cause will become an example of democracy and progress, and not a tool abused by those who want to exploit the feelings of the oppressed in the world and encourage terrorism or create a conflict between civilizations.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today, we have before us an opportunity to re-launch the peace process, an opportunity provided in the aftermath of the disengagement in the Gaza Strip and parts of the northern West Bank, which we dealt with positively, despite the fact that it was unilateral, and indeed we succeeded in ensuring that it was completed in a quiet and secure manner.

2

We have made important accomplishments in the reform and development of our governmental institutions and our financial system to prepare for the economic development project that we aspire to establish and that we will work with the international community to achieve. In this context, I must express my gratitude to all brotherly and friendly States for their continuous support as well as for that which transpired at the London Conference and the G-8 Summit. Our people hope that this support will be increased, because peace cannot be achieved under poverty and development cannot be achieved under occupation.

Co-Presidents of the Summit,

Allow me to take this opportunity to aff ^^ our conviction in Palestine in the necessity for a strong and reformed United Nations, including its Security Council, in order to confront the challenges of the 2l century. We affirm as well the necessity for compliance with the purposes and principles of the Charter and international law, particularly with regard to the protection of human rights, freedom and dignity, so that the international community may be able to cope with the challenges, which face all of us, such as foreign occupation, international terrorism, the spread of weapons of mass destruction, poverty, hunger and epidemic diseases.
Finally, we affirm that we, particularly in the Middle East, now stand at a crossroads: either we achieve real and effective progress towards peace, stability, security, construction and co-existence or return to the vicious cycle, under the constant threat of vstom 9ptsuy rse peaq 85 tleBastsxistence or