



*(As delivered)*

Thank you, Madam President.

Last month the Security Council was able to finally adopt a resolution which demands an immediate ceasefire in Gaza, in the hopes of bringing about a real change on the ground.

However, a ceasefire has not been realized and the humanitarian catastrophe is deepening. The people of Gaza are facing unprecedented tragedy and hardship. Much of Gaza's population lives in despair with little food and water, deprived of human dignity.

In the meantime, serious diplomatic efforts are being made to bring about a cessation of hostilities and the release of the hostages. We reiterate our strong support for the crucial role of the United States, Egypt, and Qatar to this end, and appreciate their tireless efforts.

Once a sustainable ceasefire is in place, a reconstruction mechanism for Gaza with the support of the international community and the establishment of effective governance by a reformed Palestinian Authority will be essential.

Madam President,

Japan has strongly upheld the Palestinian right to self-determination, and consistently supported a two-state solution in which Israel and a future independent Palestinian state live side by side in peace and security. We have provided maximum support for Palestinian state-building efforts from political, economic, and social aspects for decades.

Our principled position was reflected in our vote in favor of the 2012 General Assembly resolution granting Palestine the status of non-member observer State at the United Nations and expressing the hope that the Security Council would consider favorably the application of Palestine for admission to full UN membership.

Madam President,

This is the first time since 2011 that the Security Council has deliberated on Palestinian membership in the United Nations. The intervening years have been marked by little progress in direct negotiations between the parties, whereas most recently we have witnessed escalating regional conflict that has caused untold suffering.

At this critical moment, Japan voted in favor of today's draft resolution as a comprehensive decision, recognizing that Palestine meets the criteria for admission to the United Nations membership, while also taking into account the perspective of promoting the establishment of a Palestinian state through peaceful negotiations between the parties concerned.

I thank you very much.

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