

DECLARATION ON PALESTINE

We, the Heads of State and Government of the African Union, meeting at our 20th Ordinary Session, held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 27 to 28 January 2013:

Deeply concerned about the plight of the Palestinian people in particular the continuous illegal Israeli practices of collective punishment and settlements building in occupied Palestinian territories.

Hereby,

1. **WELCOME** the United Nations' General Assembly's decision granting the State of Palestine "observer non-member" status in the United Nations;
2. **COMMEND** Member States for their solidarity with the struggle of the Palestinian people as manifested by their overwhelming support to the aforementioned General Assembly's decision;
3. **REITERATE** our support for this landmark achievement that constitutes a political and diplomatic victory for the Palestinian people, and a step towards the full realization of Palestine's legitimate right to be admitted as a full member of the United Nations;
4. **URGE** the International community to pressure Israel to comply with United Nations' resolutions and previous agreements signed with Palestine as well as to halt the illegal policy of settlements building in the Palestinian and Arab territories occupied since the 5th of June 1967;
5. **ACKNOWLEDGE** that peace, security and stability in the Middle East are necessities for all peoples of the region and stress that that peace can never be attained except by the creation of an independent sovereign viable Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip with East Jerusalem as its capital on the borders of June 4, 1967, existing side by side in peace with the state of Israel.

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