



High-level International Conference for the Peaceful Settlement of the Question of Palestine and the Implementation of the Two - State Solution, New York, June 2025

Concept Note

Background

The Conference is being convened at a historically critical time for peace in the Middle East, that has witnessed in recent decades further entrenchment of the occupation, recurring violence and terrorism and the collapse of peace negotiations, and against the backdrop, since the 7th of October 2023 attacks and the war in Gaza, and to this very day, of the latest and worst escalation of violence, with tremendous human loss, the worst humanitarian and protection crisis, as well as widespread devastation and destruction, and immense suffering of civilians on both sides, including the hostages and their families and the civilian population of Gaza.

In parallel, settlement activities are jeopardizing the two-State solution, the only viable path to just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the region, with grave implications for regional and international peace, security and prosperity.

The Conference aims at shifting the momentum by building on initiatives undertaken at the national, regional and international levels, and adopting concrete measures to foster respect for international law, and advance just, lasting and comprehensive peace ensuring security for all in the region and regional integration.

The Conference thus serves not only as a reaffirmation of the unwavering international commitment to the peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine and the two-State solution and the urgency to advance these goals, but more importantly aims at mobilizing all international efforts at the political, economic, financial and security levels required for their fulfillment, as the only way to ensure regional and international peace and security and a better future for all the peoples in the Middle East.

Implementing the Two-State solution to achieve peace and security for all in the region: moving from words to deeds.

The Middle East peace process in the past has not succeeded in bringing about a solution. Furthermore, support for the two-State solution amongst Israelis and Palestinians has decreased over this period of time, while it is the only path for both peoples to live side by side in peace and security, and therefore for stability and peace in the region. The tragic wave of violence, the unprecedented number of civilians killed and maimed, the taking of hostages, the destruction and

devastation, as well as displacement and dispossession, have been by far the most serious of a series of crises that have replaced what was known as the “peace process”.

Since the initial moments of the current wave of violence, the international community reiterated the widely accepted commitment to “revive” (sometimes “reinvigorate” or “relaunch”) a “political process” (alternatively, a “perspective”, a “horizon” or even a “vision”) towards the two-State solution, always subject to the agreement of both parties. It has mobilized for an immediate ceasefire that would end the bloodshed, release all hostages and detainees, ensure the flow of humanitarian aid, lead to the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Gaza, and to the unification of the Gaza Strip with the West Bank under the Palestinian Authority, while underlining that only a political solution ending the conflict could lead to shared peace, security and prosperity and can therefore no longer be delayed.

International consensus on the two-State solution still enjoys near universal support: it is clearly the only way to satisfy the legitimate aspirations, in accordance with international law, of both Israelis and Palestinians and the best way to take non-State actors out of the equation, put an end to terrorism and violence in all its forms, and create the conditions for regional peace and stability and security guarantees for all, in full respect of the sovereignty of all States. Its implementation is also the only – yet unexplored – alternative to guarantee the security of both peoples and for peace prosperity and regional integration to prevail for all the countries in the region.

The call to implement the two-State solution has become even more urgent since it is in grave danger, due to illegal settlements and other illegal unilateral measures, violence, hate speech and the ongoing plans and actions undertaken for the forcible displacement and dispossession of Palestinians.

This sense of urgency led in September 2023 to create the Global Alliance for the Implementation of the Two-State solution and ultimately the UN General Assembly on 3 December adopted the modalities for a High-level International Conference for the Peaceful Settlement of the Question of Palestine and the Implementation of the Two-State Solution to be held in June 2025. This objective of moving towards the actual implementation of the two-State solution is the major evolution of the international efforts for peace and stability in the Middle East in this new phase and needs to be supported and promoted.

Implementing the two-State solution

It is clear that the primary responsibility for solving the conflict still lies with the parties, but the events of the last few years prove that without strong international resolve and involvement in ensuring they move towards the internationally recognized endgame, the conflict will escalate further and peace will become more elusive than ever. The international community has thus decided to assume its responsibility to support a political and a just solution that brings the occupation and waves of violence in the Middle East to an end, and contributes to countering extremism and terrorism, hatred and resentment, through the peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine and the implementation of the two-State solution.

Regional actors, notably Egypt and Qatar –working alongside the United States- have had a major role in negotiating a ceasefire in Gaza, and the members of the Arab League and the OIC have actively introduced a reconstruction plan (the Arab Plan, presented on 4 March 2025) leading to the implementation of the two-State solution.

This time, before the end of the ongoing crisis, it has been clearly established that the only way to prevent another one is to implement the two-State solution through a solid multilateral framework. Based on the relevant United Nations resolutions and international law, as well as on the Madrid terms of reference, including the principle of land for peace, and the Arab Peace Initiative, this implementation must now be:

- 1) **Quick, time-bound and irreversible.** This time, the implementation of the two-State solution must be the guiding principle for all the decisions that will be taken towards ending the crisis and during the stabilization phase, such as support for the Palestinian Authority and for an independent and sovereign Palestinian State, strong and credible security guarantees for Israelis and Palestinians; reconstruction efforts; marginalization of spoilers; international coalition building and multilateral action. Learning from past experience, implementation must not only be time-bound, but it must also include irreversible steps.
- 2) **Substantial.** The objective of implementation must be to materialize the independent and sovereign Palestinian State alongside Israel, and to foster mutual recognition in parallel, as a necessary step towards peace. This also incorporates lessons learned during the Madrid-Oslo years: the parties do not need to embark once again in a process of confidence-building measures that may only generate more friction. In other words, Palestinian statehood should not be a result of peace, but rather its prerequisite. The resulting change of paradigm, already enshrined in the Arab Peace Initiative and reflected in the Arab Vision for Peace, may facilitate the implementation of the historical compromise of the two-State solution that has eluded previous peacemaking attempts.
- 3) **Flexible and inclusive.** Participants in the Peace Conference convened under UN auspices accept explicitly the implementation of the two-State solution as a framework of reference, and nearly all members of the UN have already done so one way or another. Within this framework, recognition and full admission of the Palestinian State to the United Nations are a precursor to the political solution ending the conflict, which enable the full integration of all members in the region.
- 4) **Autonomous.** Implementation must be protected from local and regional developments: it cannot wait for the outcomes of electoral processes in Israel, in Palestine or elsewhere. Potential spoilers must know that they will no longer be able to derail it with illegal unilateral measures and actions, because implementation is irreversible. The best way to credibly ensure that the implementation of the two-State solution remains autonomous is through a UN resolution enjoying wide support, ideally the one marking the end of the crisis, accompanied with concrete measures and collective mechanisms, for the reasons mentioned above.

- 5) **Rooted in respect for peoples' rights and desire for peace and security.** Implementation of the Two-State solution must ensure the rights and desire of the Palestinian and Israeli people to live in peace and security, in accordance to international law, in an integrated and prosperous region, far from hatred and resentment and from endless wars.

Legal basis for the convening of the Conference

The General Assembly, in its resolution ES-10/22 entitled “Advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the legal consequences arising from Israel’s policies and practices in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and from the illegality of Israel’s continued presence in the Occupied Palestinian Territory“ decided to convene during the seventy-ninth session of the General Assembly an international conference under the auspices of the Assembly for the implementation of the United Nations resolutions pertaining to the question of Palestine and the two-State solution for the achievement of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

The General Assembly then in its resolution 79/81 entitled “Peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine” adopted the modalities for the convening of the “High-level International Conference for the Peaceful Settlement of the Question of Palestine and the Implementation of the Two-State Solution” to be held in June 2025, in New York.

Objectives of the High-Level Conference

The High-level International Conference is aimed at urgently advancing the implementation of the United Nations resolutions pertaining to the question of Palestine and the two-State solution for the achievement of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

In this context, its primary goal is to identify the requisite actions to be undertaken by all relevant actors to advance this aim and to urgently mobilize the necessary efforts and resources to achieve this aim, through concrete and timebound commitments.

As such, the Conference offers a platform for the international community, not only to reiterate the support for the peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine and the two-State solution, but also, and more importantly, to plan and coordinate ways and means to implement this solution.

The objective of the Conference is thus to help end the occupation and materialize the independent and sovereign State of Palestine, living side by side in peace and security with Israel, in accordance with international law, the relevant United Nations resolutions, the Madrid terms of reference and the Arab Peace Initiative, and building on the Peace Day Effort initiative launched by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the EU, and the Arab League, in cooperation with Egypt and Jordan, for the achievement of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

Stakeholders

The High-Level Conference will involve diverse stakeholders to ensure a comprehensive and inclusive approach

- States represented at the highest possible level
- The Secretary General
- The President of the General Assembly
- Entities having received a standing invitation to participate as observers in the work of the General Assembly
- Representatives of the United Nations system, including the relevant funds, programmes, specialized agencies and regional commissions, as well as the Bretton Woods institutions

Structure of the conference

The Conference will be comprised of a plenary meeting and of roundtables

PLENARY

- (a) An opening segment on the first day of the plenary meetings, which will include, inter alia, statements from the President of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General and the Co-Chairs of the Conference;
- (b) Statements by Representatives of States and Observers of the General Assembly
- (c) Closing segment on the second day of the plenary meetings.

ROUNDTABLES

The roundtables will be chaired by co-chairs of working groups designated by France and Saudi Arabia, in their capacity as co-chairs of the Conference.

They will aim at identifying substantive, action-oriented and practical contributions to advance a time-bound agenda for the implementation of the UN resolutions pertaining to the peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine and the two-State solution.

They will be open for participation by States, observers of the General Assembly, and representatives of the United Nations system, including the relevant funds, programmes, specialized agencies and regional commissions, the EU relevant institutions as well as of the Bretton Woods institutions. Relevant civil society actors could be consulted by the co-chairs of the roundtables in the framework of the preparatory work.

There will be 8 roundtables as follows:

Roundtable 1: A sovereign and unified Palestinian State living side by side, in peace and security, with Israel.

Co-Chaired by Jordan and Spain

Roundtable 2: Security for Israelis and Palestinians

- Co-Chaired by Indonesia and Italy
- Roundtable 3: Narrative for peace
- Co-Chaired by Canada and Qatar
- Roundtable 4: Economic viability of the Palestinian State.
- Co-Chaired by Japan and Norway
- Roundtable 5: Humanitarian action and reconstruction.
- Co-Chaired by Egypt and UK
- Roundtable 6: Preserving the Two-state solution.
- Co-Chaired by Mexico and Türkiye
- Roundtable 7: Promoting respect for international law in order to implement the Two-State solution.
- Co-Chaired by Brazil and Senegal.
- Roundtable 8: “Peace Day Effort”
- Co-Chaired by the Arab League and the EU.

Expected Outcomes

The Conference will adopt an action-oriented outcome document entitled “Peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine and implementation of the two-State solution”, to urgently chart an irreversible pathway towards the peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine and the implementation of the two-State solution.

Given the objective of the Conference to pursue implementation of the relevant UN resolutions pertaining to the peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine and the two-State solution, it is not aimed at adopting a declaratory outcome or to renegotiate existing resolutions, but rather, building on the clear positions adopted by the Assembly, to focus on the necessary actions to achieve their urgent implementation, and to lead to concrete and timebound commitments by all relevant actors towards that aim.

In this regard, States are expected in their Statements, both in the plenary and in the respective roundtables, **to highlight the actions they are willing to undertake, individually or collectively**, in fulfilment of their obligations and in support of the international consensus on the peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine and the two-State solution, in accordance with international law and the relevant UN resolutions.

The endgame of the Conference will be to materialize the international consensus, marking a point of no return, setting the ground for the way forward by providing the environment needed for a just and lasting solution to the question of Palestine and the conflict that has been sorely lacking in the last few years and hence advance regional integration that paves the way for a new regional security architecture. The aim of this international conference would not be to “revive” or to “relaunch” another endless process, but to implement, once and for all, the two-State solution.

The Conference can also identify and develop the appropriate mechanism(s) to ensure the international community remains engaged, shouldering its responsibilities and accompanying the parties, promoting compliance and deterring non-compliance with their obligations in accordance with international law and the relevant United Nations resolutions.