

[Extract]

United Nations

S/PV.6045

Security Council

Sixty-third year

6045th meeting

Tuesday, 16 December 2008, 11:00 a.m.

New York

*The situation in the Middle East,
including the Palestinian Question*

Mr. Ambassador Ricardo Alberto Arias

Permanent Representative of Panama to the United Nations

Mr. Arias (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mr. President, first and foremost, I would like to thank you for your presence today in the Security Council and, in turn, would like to thank the Deputy Secretary-General and the Secretary of State of the United States, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom, and the Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs of China.

Panama welcomes the convening of this meeting to consider the joint United States-Russian Federation initiative of submitting for the consideration of this Council a draft resolution on the situation in the Middle East. Two days from now, the Security Council will hold an open debate on this same subject. Therefore, on this occasion, we shall limit ourselves to commenting on the draft resolution before the Council.

At first glance, the text under consideration appears lacking in substance. However, a closer reading of the text shows that it sets forth with sufficient accuracy the various issues that are part of this conflict. The references to previous Security Council resolutions on the subject, to the obligation of the parties to comply with the provisions of the Road Map, to the importance of the Arab Peace Initiative and

to the ongoing bilateral negotiations process between Israelis and Palestinians that began in Annapolis are a reflection of this Council's support for the peace process in the Middle East, as well as for the objectives of the Council that must be met, namely an end to Israeli occupation of all Arab territories held since 1967, including the Syrian Golan, and the establishment of a sovereign, independent and viable Palestinian State, living in peace and security with its neighbours, and in particular with Israel.

For Panama, the principal objective of this draft resolution is to provide an impetus for the peace process in the Middle East. Our delegation is of the view that the text under consideration meets that objective. Therefore, we shall be voting in favour of this text.