



**Aboul Gheit's address before the  
UN Security Council at the High-  
Level General Debate on  
"Maintaining International Peace  
and Security"**

**26 September 2024**

New York, 25 September 2024



Your Excellency Dr. Robert Golob, Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia.

Your Excellency Secretary-General António Guterres.

Allow me to begin by expressing my sincere gratitude for the timely selection of the theme for this high-level meeting, and for the insightful concept paper, which aptly captures the profound crisis of confidence afflicting the international multilateral system, particularly within the framework of the United Nations.

The challenges facing the international system, alongside the intensifying rivalries between major powers in recent years, have unmistakably resonated within our Arab region. We have witnessed a state of near paralysis, marked by an alarming incapacity to address serious conflicts—conflicts that have inflicted immense humanitarian suffering and whose repercussions extend far beyond the borders of the Arab world.

I must candidly state, Mr. President, that our region now finds itself at a perilous crossroads. Either the brutal escalation by Israel—seen in Gaza, the West Bank, and more recently in Lebanon—ceases immediately, or the fires of destruction will spread, spiralling beyond control.

No one in the Arab region desires a regional war. We are all too familiar with the horrors of war and its devastating impact on innocent lives. Moreover, we understand that excessive violence, indiscriminate killings, and the forced displacement of people, as we are now witnessing in Lebanon, and as Gaza endured for an entire year—where the majority of its population was displaced once, twice, even five



times—will never bring about peace. Such reckless, criminal violence will neither resolve the crisis nor secure lasting safety for Israel or the peoples of the region.

The only path to resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict lies in addressing its root cause: the Palestinian people's long-denied right to an independent state, one that fulfils their legitimate aspirations for self-determination and national sovereignty. Only by rectifying this fundamental injustice can peace be achieved for all parties involved.

The conflict did not begin on 7 October, despite Israel's narrative attempting to convince the world otherwise. As the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in whose presence we stand today, rightly noted, the events of 7 October did not occur in isolation. The root cause is the occupation, as affirmed by the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice issued on 19 July. It is the occupation that lies at the heart of the problem, and dismantling it is the first step towards a solution.

Mr. President.

This Council faces a historic responsibility. The Arab region stands on the brink of prolonged ignition if the leaders of the Israeli occupation are not held accountable, and if no real pressure is applied to curb their reckless actions, driven by internal political interests at the expense of entire peoples. The credibility of this Council—and indeed that of the United Nations as a whole—is at stake. There is no event in our world today that poses a greater threat to international peace and security than the situation unfolding in Palestine and Lebanon. Moreover, no violation of international law or humanitarian law is more egregious than the atrocities being committed in these regions.

The voice of this Council must be raised, not only in defence of the Palestinian and Lebanese civilians—children, women, and families—who are losing their lives daily, but also in defence of the very principles this international organisation was founded to uphold. It is imperative to



protect the integrity of the collective security system that underpins the United Nations' existence, work, and mission.

Mr. President.

The League of Arab States has consistently worked in close cooperation with the United Nations. Yet today, we are witnessing a state of "desperate resignation" to the persistence of conflicts in our region. In Sudan and Yemen, we face two of the most severe humanitarian crises in the world, both driven by ongoing wars and protracted conflicts. The role of the United Nations has been largely confined to humanitarian efforts, with a marked decline in the will to play a decisive role in mediation or in fostering political solutions.

These devastating humanitarian consequences are merely symptoms of a deeper issue: the absence of political resolution and the stubborn adherence of the conflicting parties to extreme positions. In the end, it is the people—the innocent civilians—who bear the heaviest burden, paying the price of prolonged conflicts with the blood of their children and the erosion of their future.

We must reinvigorate the work of the UN envoys assigned to these conflicts and urgently devise effective and innovative joint initiatives for mediation and diplomatic resolution. This effort should be carried out in close collaboration with the regional organisation, the League of Arab States, which has always demonstrated its unwavering readiness to cooperate, coordinate, and work alongside the United Nations and its envoys.

In conclusion, I underscore the critical nature of this moment for our region. We must give it the attention it demands, for today, without perhaps realising it, we may be losing a rare, final opportunity to halt this perilous descent into catastrophe—a disaster that, as you are all well aware, will not be contained within our region's borders.

Thank you, Mr. President.