**Mr. Abbas**:

1. I congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly.
2. I wish you every success in your noble mission and recognize your long experience in international political affairs.
3. I also extend our greetings and thanks to former President, His Excellency Father Miguel d’Escoto Brockmann, whose positions and active efforts reflected the spirit and principles of this international organization, which is headed by His Excellency Secretary-General Ban Ki‑moon, whom I also salute.
4. I express our appreciation for everything he has done personally and through the organs and agencies of the United Nations, notably the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, to assist the Palestinian people and defend their rights.
5. During this session we have a full agenda before us.
6. The peoples of the whole world are looking to this body to determine what can be done to save our planet from the effects of climate change and global warming and to address the world financial crisis.
7. Many countries, including small and developing countries, see the need to reform the United Nations, including the Security Council, so as to reflect the reality of the current international situation and to ensure more comprehensive representation of the international community.
8. These common concerns must not overshadow the fact that serious problems face the Middle East region in particular, first and foremost the lack of commitment to the Charter of the United Nations and the extent to which the resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council are actually being implemented without the application of double standards.
9. Everyone agrees on the need to achieve peace in the Middle East, to counter extremism and violence, and to establish the region as a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.
10. **Yet the larger wound and deeper tragedy remains the suffering of our Palestinian people since the Nakba — the catastrophe — more than 60 years ago, to which the United Nations is a living witness.**
11. **Its archives contain not dozens but hundreds of resolutions that have not been implemented.**
12. **The suffering of the Palestinian people as a result of Israel’s settler occupation is crystal clear to the world.**
13. **Since the occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, including East Jerusalem, in 1967, Israel has continued with its settlement policy on all Palestinian land, especially in holy Jerusalem, where that policy is being accelerated and escalated by many means, including the seizure of the homes of Palestinians in the city, the imposition of restrictions, even preventing Palestinians from building and sometimes from repairing their homes while new settlement neighbourhoods are established.**
14. **Jerusalem is becoming completely isolated from its surroundings because of the illegal settlements and the apartheid wall.**
15. **We now face a unique situation.**
16. **If international law stipulates the inadmissibility of the acquisition of the territory of others by force, how can we then deal with the current situation where Israeli settlement policies are undermining the goal of establishing a geographically contiguous Palestinian State in implementation of the will of the international consensus?**
17. **That consensus is reflected in the many resolutions and principles, including the Road Map, which we all agreed upon and which is based on the principle of land for peace and on an end to the occupation that began in 1967.**
18. **Immense efforts have been exerted and many conferences have been held over the years, particularly since the signing of the Oslo Accords in 1993.**
19. **Yet all of this has not led to an end to the conflict.**
20. **President Barack Obama gave much hope to our people and the peoples of the region when he announced his vision for a peace agreement on the basis of a two-State solution and the cessation of all settlement activities.**
21. **We welcomed the active American diplomacy to revive the peace process and all efforts of the international Quartet and its members: the United Nations, the European Union, the Russian Federation and the United States.**
22. **All these active efforts and initiatives, which have been welcomed and supported by us and by the Arab States, are however confronted by the intransigence of Israel, which refuses to adhere to the requirements for relaunching the peace process.**
23. **How is it conceivable that negotiations can be held on the borders and on Jerusalem while Israeli bulldozers are working to change the reality on the ground with the aim of creating a new reality and imposing the borders that Israel desires?**
24. **How can one conceive of holding negotiations without agreement on the terms of reference and the objective of those negotiations, which the whole world has unanimously agreed upon, namely ending the Israeli occupation of the territories occupied in 1967, establishing the State of Palestine, with Jerusalem as its capital, reaching a just and agreed upon solution to the question of Palestinian refugees on the basis of resolution 194 of 1948, and achieving peace on all the Palestinian, Syrian and Lebanese tracks, as affirmed in the Arab Peace Initiative, which provides a precious opportunity that must be seized to achieve peace?**
25. **In this regard, I should like to express our deep appreciation of the important speech delivered to the Assembly by President Obama two days ago, in which he affirmed the necessity of ending the occupation that began in 1967 and the illegitimacy of the settlements.**
26. **He also stressed the need to establish an independent, sovereign and viable Palestinian State and to address all the final-status issues in the negotiations, foremost among these Jerusalem, refugees, borders, water and settlements, along with others.**
27. **We reiterate that adherence to these principles, in addition to a complete freeze on all settlement activities, can salvage the peace process and open horizons for its success.**
28. **I reaffirm the eagerness of the Palestine Liberation Organization to achieve a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in accordance with the resolutions of international legitimacy.**
29. **At the same time, I caution that the settlement policy and the building of the separation wall, which continue to be pursued by the Israeli occupation, will abort opportunities to relaunch the peace process.**
30. **Time is running out and the risks are becoming greater as a result of the continued suffering of the Palestinian people under the last remaining occupation in the world.**
31. **We call upon the international community to uphold international law and international legitimacy and to exert pressure on Israel to cease its settlement activities, to comply with the agreements it has signed, to cease its policies of occupation and colonial settlement, to release the approximately 11,000 prisoners and detainees and to lift the unjust siege imposed on the Gaza Strip, which was subjected months ago to devastating aggression claiming thousands of civilian casualties among and causing unprecedented destruction of infrastructure and public facilities, including hospitals, mosques, schools and even United Nations facilities.**
32. **Our people, which continues to demand its rights and to be determined to remain in its homeland despite all of the suffering caused by the detentions, the blockade and the killings, is also keen to end internal division and to restore national unity.**
33. Our sister, Egypt, is making commendable efforts to achieve that goal.
34. In spite of all our suffering from the occupation and its practices, we continue to work to build and develop our national institutions.
35. We have made significant progress in this regard both in upholding the rule of law and public order and in promoting economic and social development, despite the harsh conditions of the occupation and the blockade.
36. We continue to make every possible effort for the success of the efforts of our brothers in Egypt to end the ongoing coup in the Gaza Strip and to restore our national unity by resorting to the ballot box and holding presidential and legislative elections on their constitutional date under the supervision and control of Arab and Islamic countries, the United Nations and the international community.
37. In that way, democracy will be firmly institutionalized in our political life.
38. Hope will remain alive in our souls and we will not despair of regaining our rights on the basis of relevant resolutions of the United Nations, the historic role of which we reaffirm for attaining peace and upholding the principle of “might for right” and not “right for might”.
39. **From this rostrum, I conclude by reaffirming our commitment to the Road Map, the Arab Peace Initiative and to all terms of reference of the political process.**
40. **We call upon all parties to respect and abide by them to provide the opportunity to launch a successful and effective peace process.**
41. **We are confident that all our brothers in sisterly Arab countries will adhere to the Arab Peace Initiative as a basis for safeguarding our rights and opening the way towards genuine peaceful relations with Israel once the occupation is ended and the independent State of Palestine is established.**

**Mr. Netanyahu**:

1. Nearly 62 years ago, the United Nations recognized the right of the Jews, an ancient people 3,500 years old, to a State of their own in their ancestral homeland.
2. I stand here today as the Prime Minister of Israel, the Jewish State, and I speak to the Assembly on behalf of my country and my people.
3. The United Nations was founded after the carnage of the Second World War and the horrors of the Holocaust.
4. It was charged with preventing the reoccurrence of such horrendous events.
5. Nothing has undermined that mission, nothing has impeded it more, than the systematic assault on the truth.
6. Yesterday, the President of Iran stood at this very rostrum spewing his latest anti-Semitic rants.
7. Just a few days earlier, he again claimed that the Holocaust was a lie.
8. Last month, I went to a villa in a suburb of Berlin called Wannsee.
9. There, on 20 January 1942, after a hearty meal, senior Nazi officials met and decided to exterminate my people.
10. They left detailed minutes of that meeting that have been preserved for posterity by successive German Governments.
11. I have here a copy of the minutes of the meeting of senior Nazi officials instructing the Nazi Government exactly how to carry out the extermination of the Jewish people.
12. Is that protocol a lie?
13. Are the German Government and all German Governments lying?
14. The day before I was in Wannsee, in Berlin I was given the original construction plans for the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp.
15. I now hold in my hand the Auschwitz-Birkenau plans.
16. They contain the signature of Heinrich Himmler, Hitler’s deputy, himself.
17. Are those plans for the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp, where 1 million Jews were murdered, a lie too?
18. In June, President Obama visited another concentration camp, one of many — the Buchenwald concentration camp.
19. Did President Obama pay tribute to a lie?
20. And what of the Auschwitz survivors, whose arms still bear the tattooed numbers branded on them by the Nazis?
21. Are those tattoos a lie, too?
22. One third of all Jews perished in the great conflagration of the Holocaust.
23. Nearly every Jewish family, including my own, was affected.
24. My wife’s grandparents, her father’s two sisters and three brothers, and all the aunts, uncles and cousins were murdered by the Nazis.
25. Is that a lie?
26. Yesterday, the man who calls the Holocaust a lie spoke from this rostrum.
27. I commend those who refused to come and those who left in protest.
28. They stood up for moral clarity and brought honour to their countries.
29. But to those who gave that denier of the Holocaust a hearing, I say on behalf of my people, the Jewish people, and of decent people everywhere:
30. Have they no shame?
31. Have they no decency?
32. A mere six decades after the Holocaust, they give legitimacy to a man who denies the murder of 6 million Jews, while promising to wipe out the State of Israel, the State of the Jews.
33. That is a disgrace.
34. It is a mockery of the Charter of the United Nations.
35. Perhaps some representatives think that that man and his odious regime threaten only the Jews.
36. If they believe that, they are wrong — dead wrong.
37. History has shown us time and again that what starts with attacks on the Jews eventually ends up engulfing many, many others.
38. For this Iranian regime is fuelled by an extreme fundamentalism that burst onto the world scene three decades ago after lying dormant for centuries.
39. In the past 30 years, that fanaticism has swept across the globe with a murderous violence that knows no bounds and with a cold-blooded impartiality in the choice of its victims.
40. It has callously slaughtered Muslims, Christians, Jews, Hindus and many others.
41. The adherents of that unforgiving creed, although it is comprised of different offshoots, seek to return humanity to medieval times.
42. Wherever they can, they impose a backward, regimented society where women, minorities, gays or anyone else deemed not to be a true believer is brutally subjugated.
43. The struggle against that fanaticism does not pit faith against faith, or civilization against civilization.
44. It pits civilization against barbarism, the twenty-first century against the ninth, and those who sanctify life against those who glorify death.
45. The primitivism of the ninth century ought to be no match for the progress of the twenty-first.
46. The allure of freedom, the power of technology and the reach of communications should surely win the day.
47. Ultimately, the past cannot triumph over the future, and our future offers all nations magnificent bounties of hope because the pace of progress is growing, and growing exponentially.
48. It took us centuries to get from the printing press to the telephone, decades to get from the telephone to the personal computer, and only a few years to get from the personal computer to the Internet.
49. What seemed impossible a few years ago is already outdated, and we can scarcely fathom the changes that are yet to come.
50. We will crack the genetic code.
51. We will cure the incurable.
52. We will lengthen our lives.
53. We will find a cheap alternative to fossil fuel, and we will clean up the planet.
54. I am proud that my country, Israel, is at the forefront of many of those advances in science and technology, medicine and biology, agriculture and water, and energy and the environment.
55. Those innovations in my country and in many others offer humanity a sunlit future of unimagined promise.
56. However, if the most primitive fanaticism can acquire the most deadly weapons, the march of history could be reversed for a time and, like the belated victory over the Nazis, the forces of progress and freedom prevail only after a horrific toll of blood and fortune has been exacted from mankind.
57. That is why the greatest threat facing the world today is the marriage between religious fundamentalism and the weapons of mass destruction.
58. The most urgent challenge facing this body today is to prevent the tyrants of Tehran from acquiring nuclear weapons.
59. Are the Members of the United Nations up to that challenge?
60. Will the international community confront a despotism that terrorizes its own people as they bravely stand up for freedom?
61. Will it take action against the dictators who stole an election in broad daylight and then gunned down Iranian protesters, who died on the sidewalks and in the streets choking in their own blood?
62. Will the international community thwart the world’s most pernicious sponsor and practitioner of terrorism?
63. Above all, will the international community stop the terrorist regime of Iran from developing atomic weapons and thereby endangering the peace of the entire world?
64. The people of Iran are courageously standing up to this regime.
65. People of goodwill around the world stand with them, as do the thousands who have been protesting outside this Hall throughout the week.
66. Will the United Nations stand with them?
67. The jury is still out on the United Nations.
68. Recent signs are not encouraging.
69. Rather than condemning the terrorists and their Iranian patrons, some here in the United Nations have condemned their victims.
70. **This is exactly what a recent United Nations report on Gaza did, falsely equating the terrorists with those they targeted.**
71. **For eight long years, Hamas fired rockets from Gaza on nearby Israeli cities and citizens — thousands of missiles and mortars hailing down from the sky on schools, homes, shopping centres and bus stops.**
72. **Year after year, as these missiles were deliberately fired on our civilians, not one single United Nations resolution was passed condemning those criminal attacks.**
73. **We heard nothing — absolutely nothing — from the Human Rights Council of the United Nations, a misnamed institution if ever there was one.**
74. **In 2005, hoping to advance peace, Israel unilaterally withdrew from every inch of Gaza.**
75. **It was very painful.**
76. **We dismantled 21 settlements, really bedroom communities and farms.**
77. **We uprooted over 8,000 Israelis; we just yanked them out of their homes.**
78. **We did this because many in Israel believed that it would win peace.**
79. **Well, we did not get peace.**
80. **Instead we got an Iranian-backed terror base 50 miles from Tel Aviv.**
81. **But life in the Israeli towns and cities immediately adjacent to Gaza became nothing less than a nightmare.**
82. **The Hamas rocket attacks not only continued after we left, they actually increased dramatically.**
83. **They increased tenfold.**
84. **And again, the United Nations was silent — absolutely silent.**
85. **Well, after eight years of this unremitting assault, Israel was finally forced to respond.**
86. **But how should we have responded?**
87. There is only one example in history of thousands of rockets being fired on a country’s civilian population.
88. This happened when the Nazis rocketed British cities during the Second World War.
89. During that war, the Allies levelled German cities, causing hundreds of thousands of casualties.
90. I am not passing judgement;
91. I am stating a fact, a fact that is the product of the decisions of great and honourable men — the leaders of Britain and the United States — fighting an evil force in the Second World War.
92. **It is also a fact that Israel chose to respond differently.**
93. **Faced with an enemy committing a double war crime — firing on civilians while hiding behind civilians — Israel sought to conduct surgical strikes against the rocket-launchers themselves.**
94. **That was no easy task because the terrorists were firing their missiles from homes and schools, using mosques as weapons depots and missile caches, and ferreting explosives in ambulances.**
95. **Israel, by contrast, tried to minimize casualties by urging Palestinian civilians to vacate the targeted areas.**
96. **We dropped countless flyers over their homes.**
97. **We sent thousands and thousands of text messages to the Palestinian residents.**
98. **We made thousands and thousands of cellular phone calls urging them to vacate, to leave.**
99. **Never has a country gone to such extraordinary lengths to remove the enemy’s civilian population from harm’s way.**
100. Yet faced with an absolutely clear-cut case of aggressor and victim, who do you think the United Nations Human Rights Council decided to condemn? Israel.
101. A democracy legitimately defending itself against terror is morally hanged, drawn and quartered, and given an unfair trial to boot.
102. By these twisted standards, the Human Rights Council would have dragged Roosevelt and Churchill to the dock as war criminals.
103. What a perversion of truth!
104. What a perversion of justice!
105. The delegates to the United Nations and the Governments that they represent have a decision to make.
106. Will they accept this farce?
107. Because if they do, the United Nations would revert to its darkest days, when the worst violators of human rights sat in judgement against the law-abiding democracies, when Zionism was equated with racism and when an automatic majority could be mustered to declare that the Earth is flat.
108. If you had to choose a date when the United Nations began its descent, almost a freefall, and lost the respect of many thoughtful people in the international community, it was the day in 1975 it decided to equate Zionism with racism.
109. Now this body has a choice to make.
110. If it does not reject this biased report, it would vitiate itself, it would recommence the process of vitiating its own relevance and importance.
111. But it would also do something else.
112. It would send the message to terrorists everywhere that terrorism pays:
113. all you have to do is launch your attacks from densely populated areas, and you will win immunity.
114. **A third point: in condemning Israel, this body would also deal a mortal blow to peace.**
115. **Let me explain why.**
116. **When Israel left Gaza, many hoped that the missile attacks would stop.**
117. **Others believed that, even if they did not stop, at the very least Israel, in having made this extraordinary gesture for peace, would have international legitimacy to exercise its right of self-defence if peace failed.**
118. **What legitimacy?**
119. **What self-defence?**
120. **The same United Nations that cheered Israel as it left Gaza and promised to back our right of self-defence now accuses us — my people, my country — of being war criminals?**
121. **And for what?**
122. **For acting responsibly in self-defence?**
123. **For acting in a way that any country would act, with a restraint unmatched by many?**
124. **What a travesty!**
125. **Israel justly defended itself against terror.**
126. This biased and unjust report provides a clear-cut test for all Governments.
127. Will the Assembly stand with Israel or will it stand with the terrorists?
128. We must know the answer to that question now.
129. Now, not later.
130. **Because if Israel is again asked to take more risks for peace, we must know today that the Assembly will stand with us tomorrow.**
131. **Only if we have the confidence that we can defend ourselves can we take further risks for peace.**
132. **Make no mistake: all of Israel wants peace.**
133. Any time an Arab leader genuinely wanted peace with us, we made peace.
134. We made peace with Egypt led by Anwar Sadat.
135. We made peace with Jordan led by King Hussein.
136. **And if the Palestinians truly want peace, my Government and I, and my people, will make peace.**
137. **But we want a genuine peace, a defensible peace, a permanent peace.**
138. **In 1947, this body voted to establish two States for two peoples — a Jewish State and an Arab State.**
139. **The Jews accepted that resolution.**
140. **The Arabs rejected it and invaded the embryonic Jewish State with the hopes of annihilating it.**
141. **We ask the Palestinians to finally do what they have refused to do for 62 years: say yes to a Jewish State.**
142. **It is as simple, as clear and as elementary as that.**
143. **Just as we are asked to recognize a nation-State of the Palestinian people, the Palestinians must be asked to recognize the nation-State of the Jewish people.**
144. **The Jewish people are not foreign conquerors in the Land of Israel.**
145. **It is the land of our forefathers.**
146. Inscribed on the walls outside this building is the great Biblical vision of peace:
147. “Nation shall not lift up sword against nation.
148. They shall learn war no more.”
149. These words were spoken by the great Jewish prophet Isaiah 2,800 years ago as he walked in my country, in my city, in the hills of Judea and in the streets of Jerusalem.
150. **We are not strangers to this land.**
151. **This is our homeland.**
152. **But as deeply connected as we are to our homeland, we also recognize that the Palestinians also live there and they want a home of their own.**
153. **We want to live side by side with them — two free peoples living in peace, living in prosperity, living in dignity.**
154. **Peace, prosperity and dignity require one other element: we must have security.**
155. **The Palestinians should have all the powers to govern themselves except a handful of powers that could endanger Israel.**
156. **That is why the Palestinian State must be effectively demilitarized.**
157. **I say “effectively” because we do not want another Gaza, another south Lebanon, another Iranian-backed terror base abutting Jerusalem and perched on the hills a few kilometres from Tel Aviv.**
158. **We want peace.**
159. **I believe that with goodwill and with hard work such a peace can be achieved.**
160. But it requires that all of us roll back the forces of terror led by Iran that seek to destroy peace, that seek to eliminate Israel and to overthrow the world order.
161. The question facing the international community is whether it is prepared to confront those forces, or will it accommodate them.
162. Over 70 years ago, Winston Churchill lamented what he called the “confirmed unteachability of mankind”.
163. By that he meant the unfortunate habit of civilized societies to sleep and to slumber until danger nearly overtakes them.
164. Churchill bemoaned what he called the
165. “want of foresight, unwillingness to act when action would be simple and effective, lack of clear thinking, confusion of counsel until the emergency comes, until self-preservation strikes its jarring gong …”.
166. I speak here today in the hope that Churchill’s assessment of the “unteachability of mankind” is for once proven wrong.
167. I speak here today in the hope that we can learn from history, that we can prevent danger in time.
168. In the spirit of the timeless words spoken to Joshua over 3,000 years ago, let us be strong and of good courage.
169. Let us confront this peril, secure our future and, God willing, forge an enduring peace for generations to come.
170. May God bless his people with peace;
171. may God give strength to his people;
172. may God bless his people with peace.