President Abbas (*spoke in Arabic*):

1. **In this year 2014, proclaimed by the General Assembly as the International Year of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, Israel has chosen to make it the year of a new war of genocide perpetrated against the Palestinian people.**
2. **It is the year in which the Assembly, on behalf of the countries and peoples of the world, conveyed the world’s yearning and determination to make a just peace that would achieve freedom and independence for the Palestinian people in their State of Palestine alongside Israel.**
3. **The occupying Power has chosen to defy the entire world by launching its war on Gaza, in which its jets and tanks brutally destroyed lives and devastated the homes, schools and dreams of thousands of Palestinian children, women and men and, in reality, destroying any remaining hopes for peace.**
4. **I addressed the Assembly on similar days in 2012, when I cautioned that the colonial occupying Power was preparing a new Nakba against the Palestinian people.**
5. **I appealed to the Assembly then to prevent a new Nakba and to support the establishment of a free and independent State of Palestine.**
6. **I returned to the Assembly Hall two months later as Palestine was healing its wounds and its people were burying their beloved martyred children, women and men after yet another war waged then against the Gaza Strip.**
7. **On that day, I stated that there was certainly not a single person in the world who needed the loss of the lives of thousands of Palestinian children in order to confirm that Israel insisted on occupation.**
8. **The international community also did not need thousands of deadly raids and tons of explosives to remind it that there was an occupation that must end and a people who must be freed.**
9. **Again today, we find ourselves full of grief and bitterness, raising the same long-standing conclusions and questions after a new war, the third in five years, waged by that racist occupying State against Gaza, a small, densely populated and precious part of our country.**
10. **The difference today is that the scale of that genocidal crime is larger.**
11. **The list of martyrs, especially children, has grown, as has the number of the wounded, the disabled and the dozens of families who have been completely decimated.**
12. **The difference today is that approximately half a million people have been displaced from their homes.**
13. **An unprecedented number of homes, schools, hospitals, public buildings, residential buildings, mosques, factories and cemeteries have been destroyed**
14. **the Israelis pursued their vengeance against our young even into the cemeteries.**
15. **The difference today is that the devastation caused by that recent aggression is unmatched in modern times, as confirmed by a witness, the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East.**
16. **The latest war against Gaza constituted a series of absolute war crimes, carried out before the eyes and ears of the entire world, moment by moment.**
17. **It is inconceivable that anyone today could claim not to grasp the magnitude and horror of the crimes.**
18. **No one can support Israel’s right to self defense without regard for the fate of the thousands of victims of our people.**
19. **No one can ignore the simple fact, upon which we insist, that the life of a Palestinian is as precious as the life of any other human being.**
20. **Ignoring the facts on the ground cannot erase such facts.**
21. **We must also assume that no one can continue to wonder why extremism is rising and why the culture of peace is losing ground and receding, while efforts to achieve it are collapsing.**
22. **And yet we continue to believe and hope that this time no one will try to help out the occupation by supporting its impunity and its attempts to evade accountability for its crimes.**
23. **Here, today, in the name of Palestine, I affirm that we will not forget or forgive, and we will not allow war criminals to escape punishment.**
24. **Before the Assembly, I affirm that the Palestinian people will hold fast to their legitimate right to defend themselves against the Israeli war machine and to resist Israel’s colonial, racist occupation.**
25. **At the same time, I want to affirm that not for one moment will our grief, trauma and anger make us abandon our humanity, our values and our ethics.**
26. **We will always maintain our respect for and commitment to international law, international humanitarian law and the international consensus.**
27. **We will maintain the traditions of our national struggle established by the Palestinian martyrs, to which we have been committed since the start of the Palestinian revolution in early 1965.**
28. **In the midst of a torrent of massacres and the turmoil of vast destruction, we saw the peoples of the world gather in huge demonstrations on the streets of many cities to announce their condemnation of Israel’s aggression and occupation and their support of freedom for Palestine.**
29. **We also saw how an overwhelming majority of countries around the world declared themselves for the same noble position and rushed to give our people all kinds of support and assistance.**
30. **And we saw a qualitative and quantitative expansion in the activities of the international grassroots boycotting campaign against Israel’s policies of occupation, apartheid and colonial settlement, especially among academic, cultural, student and youth groups.**
31. **In the name of Palestine, we pay tribute to all who chose to stand with human values and demanded freedom, justice and peace.**
32. **All of those manifestations of true solidarity constituted an important message to those who faced genocide in Gaza, helping them to feel that they were not alone.**
33. **The recent war confirmed on the ground the essence of what the Israeli Government had been saying behind closed doors in negotiations.**
34. **It came after long, difficult negotiations held over more than eight months under the auspices of the United States and through the efforts of President Barack Obama and his tenacious Secretary of State, John Kerry.**
35. **We engaged in that endeavor and with the American Administration’s efforts with open minds and in good faith and a positive spirit.**
36. **We laid out firm positions based on resolutions of international legitimacy.**
37. **We genuinely respected all our commitments and understandings.**
38. **Even as we watched the ongoing and escalating Israeli violations, we exercised incredible self-restraint, silencing our cries and tending to our own wounds in order to give the American efforts the best possible chance for success.**
39. **However, as usual, the Israeli Government missed no opportunity to undermine the chances for peace.**
40. **Throughout the months of negotiations, settlement construction, land confiscation, home demolition, killing and arrest campaigns and large-scale forced displacement in the West Bank continued unabated.**
41. **The unjust blockade of the Gaza Strip was tightened.**
42. **The occupation’s campaign specifically targeted the city of Jerusalem and its inhabitants, attempting to artificially alter the spirit, identity and character of the Holy City and focusing on Al-Aqsa Mosque while threatening grave consequences.**
43. **At the same time, armed gangs of racist settlers persisted in their crimes against the Palestinian people and their land, mosques, churches, property and olive trees.**
44. **Again as usual, the Israeli Government failed the test of peace.**
45. **It breached an agreement with the United States Administration regarding the release from the occupation jails of a number of Palestinian prisoners, who we continue to insist should all be released.**
46. **When confronted with simple questions during the direct negotiations or through the United States mediator, Israel had no hesitation in revealing its true positions.**
47. **It refuses to end the occupation of the State of Palestine that began in 1967;**
48. **rather it seeks to continue and entrench it, rejecting the Palestinian State and refusing to reach a just solution to the plight of the Palestine refugees.**
49. **That is the Government of Israel’s official position.**
50. **At best, the future it proposes for the Palestinian people consists of isolated ghettos for Palestinians on fragmented lands, without borders or sovereignty over its air space, water and natural resources, under the subjugation and control of the racist settlers and the army of occupation; at worst, it is a totally abhorrent form of apartheid.**
51. **Some of the Israelis say they are for two States.**
52. **Where is the State of Palestine?**
53. **This is what they intend for the State of Palestine.**
54. **Israel confirmed during the negotiations that it rejects making peace with its victims, the Palestinian people.**
55. **All of this has been carried out along with an attempt to brand the conflict as a religious one against a background of increasingly rampant racism in Israel’s political and media discourse, as well as its entrenchment in the school curriculum and a series of laws and practices in favor of the occupation and its settlers.**
56. **This culture of racism, incitement and hatred was glaringly apparent some months ago in an appallingly despicable crime committed by fascist settlers, who abducted Mohammed Abu Khdeir, a young boy from Jerusalem, burned him alive and killed him.**
57. **This brings me to another fact of history.**
58. **Over the years, the occupying Power has pursued a policy aimed at deliberately weakening the Palestinian National Authority in order to undermine it and make its role irrelevant.**
59. **The occupation has targeted our relentless efforts to establish the foundations for the kind of State of Palestine that we want — a sovereign and independent State living in peace and building bridges of mutual cooperation with its neighbours, respecting its commitments, obligations and agreements and strengthening the values of citizenship, equality, nondiscrimination, the rule of law, human rights and pluralism.**
60. **We want a State that deepens Palestine’s enlightened traditions of tolerance, coexistence and non-exclusion, strengthens the culture of peace, promotes the role of women, establishes an effective administration committed to the standards of good governance, and cares for the needs and interests of its people.**
61. **The occupation struck, and continues to strike, a blow at this effort because our quest is the antithesis of Israel’s settlement policies, and because Israel seeks to destroy Palestine’s chance of creating an independent State within the framework of the two-State solution.**
62. When our efforts to end the internal division through national dialogue succeeded a few months ago and we prepared to restore the unity of our land, nation and institutions, we formed a national-consensus Government and began a process that was to lead to presidential and legislative elections.
63. **All countries around the world welcomed this achievement, with the exception of Israel, which has constantly sought to fragment our land and our national unity.**
64. **Where do we go from here?**
65. The idea that one can simply return to the past patterns of actions that failed repeatedly is naive at best and, in any case, wrong.
66. For it ignores the fact that it is no longer acceptable or possible to repeat methods that have proved futile, or to continue with approaches that have repeatedly failed and that require comprehensive review and radical correction.
67. **It is impossible — I repeat, impossible — to return to the cycle of negotiations that failed to deal with the core of the Palestinian question.**
68. **There is neither credibility nor seriousness in negotiations in which Israel predetermines the results via its settlement activities and the occupation’s brutality.**
69. **Nor is there meaning or value in negotiations in which the agreed objective is not ending the Israeli occupation and achieving the independence of the State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem as its capital, on the entire Palestinian territory occupied in the 1967 war.**
70. **Moreover, negotiations that are not linked to a firm timetable for the implementation of this goal have no value.**
71. **The time has come to end this colonial occupation.**
72. **Palestine refuses to have the right to freedom of its people, who suffer terrorism at the hands of the racist occupying Power and its settlers and remain hostage to Israel’s security conditions.**
73. **The Palestinian people are actually the ones who need immediate international protection — a protection they are seeking through international organizations.**
74. **They are in need of the security and peace that they more than any other people are denied**.
75. **And the children of Palestine are worthy of the world’s efforts to ensure that their childhood,**
76. **dreams and lives will not once again be destroyed.**
77. **It is time for the chapters of this renewed, ongoing tragedy to be closed.**
78. **Those who were uprooted from their warm homes, good land and beautiful country in Al-Nakba 66 years ago, who were pushed into the misery of exile to live as refugees and are now being forced into new waves of expulsion or onto ships of death on the world’s seas, need assurances.**
79. **They need to be assured that they will not be displaced from their homes again, that their homes will not be destroyed again, and that they will not spend their lives waiting for the outbreak of a new war.**
80. **Is it not time for this long tragedy to end?**
81. **We will not forever accept demands to prove our good intentions by making concessions at the expense of our rights, to remain silent as we are killed and our land is stolen, and to understand the conditions of the other party and the importance of preserving its coalition Government, while its occupation becomes more entrenched.**
82. **We are exhausted by the additional tests that we must undergo to prove our efficiency, competence and eligibility to earn our natural, simple right to live a normal life; our inherent right to expect a stable and ordinary tomorrow and to dream about more beautiful days**; **and the right of our youth to plan their future safely with peace and freedom prevailing over our land, like other peoples of the world.**
83. **The time has come for a genuine and just peace to prevail in the land of peace.**
84. **As I have said more than once, we are the only people in the world that remain under occupation.**
85. **All the Arab countries and ourselves have constantly warned about the disastrous consequences of the continuing Israeli colonial occupation and the denial of freedom and independence to the Palestinian people.**
86. **We have repeatedly pointed out that allowing Israel to act as a State above the law without being held accountable or punished for its policies, aggression and defiance of the international community’s will and legality has provided fertile ground for, and an environment conducive to, the growth of extremism, hatred and terrorism in our region.**
87. Confronting the terrorism that plagues our region by groups like the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant and others, which have no basis whatsoever in the tolerant Islamic religion or humanity, and whose members are committing vile and heinous atrocities, requires much more than military confrontation.
88. The matter is of the utmost urgency and requires much more than condemnations and declarations of positions, which are of course necessary.
89. What is needed, first and foremost, is a comprehensive, credible strategy to dry up the sources of terrorism and eradicate its roots in all political, intellectual, economic and social spheres in our region.
90. It requires the creation of solid foundations for a practical consensus rendering the fight against all forms of terrorism everywhere a collective task to be undertaken by an alliance of peoples, nations and civilizations.
91. **It requires, as a priority, ending the Israeli occupation, that in its practices and perpetuation, constitutes an abhorrent form of State terrorism and a breeding ground for incitement, tension and hatred.**
92. **At a time when we are still suffering from the horrors of war, we face a formidable challenge to reconstruct what has been destroyed by occupation.**
93. **This is the third time we are attempting to rebuild after the destruction inflicted on us by the occupation.**
94. We greatly appreciate the fact that next month, at the invitation of the Arab Republic of Egypt and the Kingdom of Norway, the city of Cairo will host an international conference on relief and reconstruction for the Gaza Strip.
95. Our Government will present comprehensive reports to the conference on the losses the acts of aggression have inflicted on various sectors of society,
96. and it will provide details of plans and programs to be rapidly implemented in the Gaza Strip, aimed at meeting immediate relief needs and the requirements for reconstruction, in full coordination with and under the supervision of the relevant United Nations agencies and bodies.
97. Just a couple of days ago, the Palestinian faction emphasized its support for Gaza in order to facilitate reconstruction.
98. While we reiterate our appreciation and gratitude to all the countries and organizations that hastened to help the Palestinian people both during and after the war, we are confident that brotherly and friendly countries will not waver in their support for the plans and programs we will present, and that the conference will have practical results that can meet the expectations and needs of the victims of this act of aggression.
99. **We reaffirm here that the chief prerequisite for the success of all these plans and efforts is an end to the despicable ongoing Israeli blockade that has suffocated the Gaza Strip for years and turned it into the largest prison in the world for nearly 2 million Palestinian citizens.**
100. **At the same time, we affirm our commitment to and the importance of consolidating the ceasefire through the negotiations being conducted under the auspices of Egypt.**
101. **However, in order to avoid a repetition of the cycle of war and reconstruction every two or three years, it is imperative that we focus on the fundamental issue and starting point, which is that Gaza’s suffering will never be completely over until the occupation is ended and the State of Palestine’s independence achieved.**
102. **During the past two weeks, Palestine and the Group of Arab States have been working intensively with the various regional groups in the United Nations to prepare for the introduction of a draft resolution on the Israeli Palestinian conflict for adoption by the Security Council and to advance efforts to achieve peace, which we still believe can be accomplished through international legitimacy.**
103. **This endeavor reaffirms our commitment to achieving a just peace through a negotiated solution and a diplomatic and political effort through United Nations bodies.**
104. **It is inspired by and based fully on the spirit and provisions of the many resolutions that have been adopted in the General Assembly and the Security Council, laying the foundations for a lasting solution and a just peace.**
105. **There is nothing new here.**
106. **All of these are previously adopted resolutions.**
107. **This endeavor hopes to correct the failure of previous efforts to achieve peace by affirming the goal of ending the Israeli occupation and achieving a two-State solution for the State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem as its capital, over the entire territory occupied in 1967, alongside the State of Israel, and with a just and agreed-on solution to the plight of the Palestine refugees on the basis of resolution 194, with a specific time frame for implementing those objectives, as stipulated in the Arab Peace Initiative.**
108. **There must be a time frame.**
109. **That will be linked to the immediate resumption of negotiations between Palestine and Israel in order to demarcate the borders, reach a detailed and comprehensive agreement on all final status issues and then draft a comprehensive peace treaty between us and them.**
110. **We are confident that this endeavor will enjoy the full support of those who are committed to ensuring that our country will not witness new wars and atrocities, who wish to support a campaign to combat terrorism, who believe we must act expeditiously to rectify the historical injustice inflicted by the Nakba on the people of Palestine, and who wish to see peace prevail in the land of monotheistic religions.**
111. **The adoption of that draft resolution will affirm that this year the Assembly is striving to realize the International Year of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, who will continue to be steadfast in their struggle and will rise brave and strong from the rubble of destruction.**
112. As our poet Mahmoud Darwish has said, we are infected with the incurable disease of hope, and we love life if we are given a chance at it.
113. **There is an occupation that must end now.**
114. **There is a people who must be freed immediately.**
115. **The hour of independence of the State of Palestine has arrived, and I believe you are listening for it.**

Mr. Netanyahu (Israel):

1. I come here from Jerusalem to speak on behalf of my people, the people of Israel.
2. I have come to speak about the dangers we face and about the opportunities we seek.
3. I have come to expose the brazen lies spoken from this very rostrum about my country and the brave soldiers who defend it.
4. The people of Israel pray for peace, but our hopes for peace, and those of the world, are in danger, because everywhere we look militant Islam is on the march.
5. It is not militants; it is not Islam; it is militant Islam, and typically, its first victims are other Muslims.
6. But it spares no one.
7. Christians, Jews, Yazidis, Kurds — no creed, no faith, no ethnic group is beyond its sights, and it is rapidly spreading in every part of the world.
8. We know the famous American saying “All politics is local”.
9. For the militant Islamists, all politics is global, because their ultimate goal is to dominate the world.
10. Now that threat might seem exaggerated to some, since it starts out small, like a cancer that attacks a particular part of the body.
11. But left unchecked, the cancer grows, metastasizing over wider and wider areas.
12. To protect the peace and security of the world, we must remove that cancer before it is too late.
13. Last week, many of the countries represented here rightly applauded President Obama for leading the effort to confront the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham (ISIS);
14. **and yet weeks before, some of those same countries — the same countries that now support confronting ISIS — opposed Israel for confronting Hamas.**
15. **Evidently, they do not understand that ISIS and Hamas are branches of the same poisonous tree.**
16. **ISIS and Hamas share a fanatical creed that they both seek to impose well beyond the territory under their control**.
17. Let us listen to what ISIS’s self-declared Caliph, Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi, said two months ago.
18. He said that the day would soon come when the Muslim would walk everywhere as a master, and that Muslims would cause the world to hear and understand the meaning of terrorism, and destroy the idol of democracy.
19. **Now let us listen to Khaled Mashal, the leader of Hamas.**
20. **He proclaims a similar vision of the future.**
21. **“We say this to the West”, he says.**
22. **“By Allah it will be defeated, and tomorrow our nation will sit on the throne of the world”.**
23. **As its Charter makes clear, Hamas’s immediate goal is to destroy Israel; but it has a broader objective.**
24. **It also wants a caliphate.**
25. **Hamas shares the global ambitions of its fellow militant Islamists,**
26. **and that is why its supporters cheered wildly in the streets of Gaza when thousands of Americans were murdered on 9/11.**
27. **That is why its leaders condemned the United States for killing Osama Bin Laden, whom they praised as a holy warrior.**
28. **When it comes to their ultimate goals, therefore, Hamas is ISIS and ISIS is Hamas.**
29. And what they share in common, all militant Islamists share in common — Boko Haram in Nigeria, Al-Shabaab in Somalia, Hizbullah in Lebanon, Al-Nusra in Syria, the Al-Mahdi Army in Iraq and the Al-Qaida branches in Yemen, Libya, the Philippines, India and elsewhere.
30. Some are radical Sunnis, some are radical Shiites.
31. Some want to restore a pre-medieval caliphate from the seventh century.
32. Others want to trigger the apocalyptic return of an imam from the ninth century.
33. They operate in different lands.
34. They target different victims.
35. They even kill each other in their battle for supremacy.
36. But they all share a fanatic ideology.
37. They all seek to create ever expanding enclaves of militant Islam, where there is no freedom and no tolerance, where women are treated as chattel, Christians are decimated and minorities are subjugated, and sometimes given the stark choice: convert or die.
38. For them, anyone can be considered an infidel, including fellow Muslims.
39. Militant Islam’s ambition to dominate the world seems mad, but so too did the global ambitions of another fanatic ideology that swept into power eight decades ago.
40. The Nazis believed in a master race.
41. The militant Islamists believe in a master faith.
42. They just disagree as to who among them will be the master of the master faith.
43. That is what they truly disagree about.
44. Therefore, the question before us is whether militant Islam will have the power to realize its unbridled ambitions.
45. There is one place where that could soon happen — the Islamic State of Iran.
46. For 35 years, Iran has relentlessly pursued the global mission that was set forth by its founding ruler, Ayatollah Khomeini, with the following words: “We will export our revolution to the entire world, until the cry ‘There is no God but Allah’ will echo throughout the world over”.
47. Ever since, the regime’s brutal enforcers, Iran’s Revolutionary Guards, have done exactly that.
48. Let us listen to its current commander, General Mohammad Ali Jafari, who clearly stated that goal: “Our Imam did not limit the Islamic Revolution to this country. Our duty is to prepare the way for an Islamic world Government.”
49. Iran’s president, Mr. Rouhani, stood here last week and shed crocodile tears over what he called the globalization of terrorism.
50. Maybe he should spare us those phony tears and have a word instead with the commanders of Iran’s Revolutionary Guards.
51. He could ask them to call off Iran’s global terror campaign, which has included attacks in two dozen countries on five continents since 2011 alone.
52. To say that Iran does not practice terrorism is like saying Derek Jeter never played shortstop for the New York Yankees.
53. The bemoaning by the Iranian President of the spread of terrorism has got to be one of history’s greatest displays of double talk.
54. Some argue that Iran’s global terror campaign — its subversion of countries throughout the Middle East and well beyond the Middle East — is the work of the extremists.
55. They say that things are changing.
56. They point to last year’s election in Iran.
57. They claim that Iran’s smooth-talking President and Foreign Minister have changed not only the tone of Iran’s foreign policy but also its substance.
58. They believe that Rouhani and Zarif generally want to reconcile with the West, that they have abandoned the global mission of the Islamic Revolution.
59. Really?
60. Let us look at what Foreign Minister Zarif wrote in his book just a few years ago: “We have a fundamental problem with the West, and especially with America. This is because we are heirs to a global mission which is tied to our raison d’être”.
61. A global mission which is tied to our very reason for being?
62. Then Zarif asks a question — an interesting question, in my view.
63. He says, “How come Malaysia” — referring to an overwhelmingly Muslim country — “does not have similar problems?” Then he answers: “Because Malaysia is not trying to change the international order”.
64. That is our moderate.
65. Let us not be fooled by Iran’s manipulative charm offensive.
66. It is designed for one purpose and one purpose only — to have the sanctions lifted and the obstacles to Iran’s path to the bomb removed.
67. The Islamic Republic is now trying to bamboozle its way to an agreement that will remove the sanctions it still faces and leave it with the capacity of thousands of centrifuges to enrich uranium.
68. That would effectively cement Iran’s place as a threshold military nuclear Power.
69. In the future, at the time of its choosing, Iran, the world’s most dangerous regime, in the world’s most dangerous region, would obtain the world’s most dangerous weapons.
70. Allowing that to happen would pose the gravest threat to us all.
71. It is one thing to confront militant Islamists on pickup trucks armed with Kalashnikov rifles.
72. It is another thing to confront militant Islamists armed with weapons of mass destruction.
73. I remember that last year everyone here was rightly concerned about the chemical weapons in Syria, including the possibility that they would fall into the hands of terrorists.
74. Well, that did not happen, and President Obama deserves great credit for leading the diplomatic effort to dismantle virtually all of Syria’s chemical weapons capability.
75. We can only imagine how much more dangerous the Islamic State — ISIS — would be if it possessed chemical weapons.
76. Now, let us imagine how much more dangerous the Islamic State of Iran would be if it possessed nuclear weapons.
77. Would you let ISIS enrich uranium?
78. Would you let ISIS build a heavy-water reactor?
79. Would you let ISIS develop intercontinental ballistic missiles?
80. Of course you would not.
81. Then you must not let the Islamic State of Iran do those things either, because if you do, here is what will happen.
82. Once Iran produces atomic bombs, all the charm and all the smiles will suddenly disappear — they will just vanish.
83. It is then that the ayatollahs will show their true face and unleash their aggressive fanaticism on the entire world.
84. There is only one responsible course of action to address this threat.
85. Iran’s nuclear military capabilities must be fully dismantled.
86. Make no mistake — ISIS must be defeated, but to defeat ISIS and leave Iran as a threshold nuclear Power is to win the battle and lose the war.
87. The fight against militant Islam is indivisible.
88. When militant Islam succeeds anywhere, it is emboldened everywhere.
89. When it suffers a blow in one place, it is set back in every place.
90. **That is why Israel’s fight against Hamas is not just our fight; it is everyone’s fight.**
91. **Israel is fighting a fanaticism today that other countries may be forced to fight tomorrow.**
92. **For 50 days this past summer, Hamas fired thousands of rockets at Israel, many of them supplied by Iran.**
93. **I want members to think about what their countries would do if thousands of rockets were fired at their cities.**
94. **Let them imagine millions of their citizens having seconds at most to scramble to bomb shelters, day after day.**
95. **Members would not let terrorists fire rockets at their cities with impunity, nor would they let terrorists dig dozens of terror tunnels under their borders to infiltrate their towns in order to murder and kidnap their citizens.**
96. **Israel justly defended itself against both rocket attacks and terror tunnels.**
97. **Yet Israel faced another challenge.**
98. **We faced a propaganda war because, in an attempt to win the world’s sympathy, Hamas cynically used Palestinian civilians as human shields.**
99. **It used schools — not just schools, United Nations schools — private homes, mosques and even hospitals to store and fire rockets at Israel.**
100. **As Israel surgically struck at the rocket launchers and at the tunnels, Palestinian civilians were tragically but unintentionally killed.**
101. **There are heartrending images that resulted, and these fueled libelous charges that Israel was deliberately targeting civilians.**
102. **We were not.**
103. **We deeply regret every single civilian casualty.**
104. **And the truth is, Israel was doing everything to minimize Palestinian civilian casualties.**
105. **Hamas was doing everything to maximize Israeli civilian casualties and Palestinian civilian casualties.**
106. **Israel dropped flyers, made phone calls, sent text messages, broadcast warnings in Arabic on Palestinian television — all this to enable Palestinian civilians to evaluate targeted areas.**
107. **No other country and no other army in history have gone to greater lengths to avoid casualties among the civilian population of their enemies.**
108. **Such concern for Palestinian life was all the more remarkable given that Israeli civilians were being bombarded by rockets, day after day, night after night.**
109. **And as their families were being rocketed by Hamas, Israel’s citizen army, the brave soldiers of the Israel Defense Forces, our young boys and girls, upheld the highest moral values of any army in the world.**
110. **Israel’s soldiers deserve not condemnation but admiration — admiration from decent people everywhere.**
111. **Here is what Hamas did.**
112. **Hamas embedded its missile batteries in residential areas and told Palestinians to ignore Israel’s warnings to leave.**
113. **And just in case people did not get the message, they executed Palestinian civilians in Gaza who dared to protest.**
114. **And, no less reprehensible, Hamas deliberately placed its rockets where Palestinian children live and play.**
115. **Let me show the Assembly a photograph.**
116. **It was taken by a France 24 crew during the recent conflict.**
117. **It shows two Hamas rocket launchers, which were used to attack us.**
118. **Three children can be seen playing next to them.**
119. **Hamas deliberately put its rockets in hundreds of residential areas like this — hundreds of them.**
120. **That is a war crime.**
121. **I say to President Abbas, these are the crimes — the war crimes — committed by his Hamas partners in the national unity Government which he heads and for which he is responsible.**
122. **These are the real war crimes he should have investigated or spoken out against from this rostrum last week.**
123. **As Israel’s children huddle in bomb shelters and Israel’s Iron Dome missile defence knocked Hamas rockets out of the sky, the profound moral difference between Israel and Hamas could not have been clearer.**
124. **Israel was using its missiles to protect its children;**
125. **Hamas was using its children to protect its missiles.**
126. **By investigating Israel rather than Hamas for war crimes, the United Nations Human Rights Council has betrayed its noble mission to protect the innocent.**
127. **In fact, what it is doing is to turn the laws of war upside down.**
128. **Israel, which took unprecedented steps to minimize civilian casualties, is condemned;**
129. **Hamas, which both targeted and hid behind civilians — that is a double war crime — is given a pass.**
130. **The Human Rights Council is thus sending a clear message to terrorists everywhere: “Use civilians as a human shield. Use them again and again and again.”**
131. **And you know why?**
132. **Because, sadly, it works.**
133. **By granting international legitimacy to the use of human shields, the Human Rights Council has become a terrorist rights council,**
134. **and it will have repercussions — it probably already has — in terms of the use of civilians as human shields**.
135. **It is not just our interests and values that are under attack: it is the interests and values of all of us.**
136. We live in a world steeped in tyranny and terror, where gays are hanged from cranes in Tehran, political prisoners are executed in Gaza, young girls are abducted en masse in Nigeria and hundreds of thousands are butchered in Syria, Libya and Iraq,
137. yet nearly half of the Human Rights Council’s resolutions focusing on a single country have been directed against Israel — the one true democracy in the Middle East;
138. Israel, where issues are openly debated in a boisterous Parliament, where human rights are protected by independent courts, and where women, gays and minorities live in a genuinely free society.
139. The biased treatment of Israel by the Human Rights Council — that is a misnomer, but I will use it just the same — is only one manifestation of the return of one of the world’s oldest prejudices.
140. We hear mobs today in Europe calling for the gassing of Jews.
141. We hear some national leaders compare Israel to the Nazis.
142. This is not a function of Israel’s policies; it is a function of diseased minds, and that disease has a name.
143. It is called anti-Semitism.
144. It is now spreading in polite society where it masquerades as legitimate criticism of Israel.
145. For centuries, the Jewish people have been demonized with blood libels and charges of deicide.
146. **Today, the Jewish State is demonized with the apartheid libel and charges of genocide.**
147. **In what moral universe does genocide include warning the enemy civilian population to get out of harm’s way or ensuring that they receive tons of humanitarian aid each day, even as thousands of rockets are being fired at us, or setting up a field hospital to aid their wounded?**
148. **I suppose it is the same moral universe in which a man who wrote a dissertation of lies about the Holocaust and who insists on a Palestine free of Jews — *Judenrein* — can stand at this rostrum and shamelessly accuse Israel of genocide and ethnic cleansing**.
149. In the past, outrageous lies against the Jews were the precursors to the wholesale slaughter of our people.
150. But no more; today, we the Jewish people have the power to defend ourselves.
151. We will defend ourselves against our enemies on the battlefield
152. and we will expose their lies against us in the court of public opinion.
153. Israel will continue to stand proud and unbowed.
154. Despite the enormous challenges facing Israel, I believe we have a historic opportunity.
155. After decades of seeing Israel as their enemy, leading States in the Arab world increasingly recognize that together we and they face many of the same dangers.
156. Principally, that means a nuclear-armed Iran and militant Islamist movements gaining ground in the Sunni world.
157. Our challenge is to transform those common interests in order to create a productive partnership that would build a more secure, peaceful and prosperous Middle East.
158. Together we can strengthen regional security.
159. We can advance projects in water, agriculture, transportation, health care, energy and so many other fields.
160. **I believe that the partnership between us can also help facilitate peace between Israel and the Palestinians.**
161. **Many have long assumed that an Israeli-Palestinian peace can help facilitate a broader rapprochement between Israel and the Arab world.**
162. **But I believe that, these days, it may work the other way around, namely, that a broader rapprochement between Israel and the Arab world may help facilitate an Israeli-Palestinian peace.**
163. **Therefore, to achieve that peace, we must look not only to Jerusalem and Ramallah but also to Cairo, Amman, Abu Dhabi, Riyadh and elsewhere.**
164. **I believe that peace could be realized with the active involvement of Arab countries that are willing to provide political, material and other indispensable support.**
165. **I am ready to make a historic compromise, and not because Israel occupies a foreign land.**
166. **The people of Israel are not occupiers in the land of Israel.**
167. **History, archaeology and common sense all make clear that we have had a singular attachment to this land for over 3,000 years.**
168. **I want peace because I want to create a better future for my people.**
169. **But it must be a genuine peace, one that is anchored in mutual recognition and enduring security arrangements — rock-solid security arrangements — on the ground.**
170. **Israel’s withdrawal from Lebanon and Gaza created two militant Islamic enclaves on our borders from which tens of thousands of rockets have been fired at Israel.**
171. **Those sobering experiences heighten Israel’s security concerns regarding potential territorial concessions in the future.**
172. Those security concerns are even greater today.
173. Let us just look around.
174. The Middle East is in chaos.
175. States are disintegrating, and militant Islamists are filling the void.
176. **Israel cannot have territories from which it withdraws taken over by Islamic militants yet again, as happened in Gaza and Lebanon.**
177. **That would place the likes of ISIS within mortar range, a few miles of 80 per cent of our population.**
178. **Think about that.**
179. **The distance between the 1967 lines and the suburbs of Tel Aviv is similar to the distance between United Nations Headquarters and Times Square.**
180. **Israel is a tiny country.**
181. **That is why in any peace agreement, which will obviously necessitate a territorial compromise, I will always insist that Israel be able to defend itself, by itself, against any threat.**
182. **Yet despite everything that has happened, some still do not take Israel’s security concerns seriously,**
183. **but I do and I always will.**
184. That is because as Prime Minister of Israel I am entrusted with the awesome responsibility of ensuring the future of the Jewish people and the future of the Jewish State.
185. No matter what pressure is brought to bear, I will never waver in fulfilling that responsibility.
186. I believe that with a fresh approach on the part of our neighbors, we can advance peace despite the difficulties we face.
187. In Israel, we have a record of making the impossible possible.
188. We have made a desolate land flourish, and with very few natural resources we have used the fertile minds of our people to turn Israel into a global centre of technology and innovation.
189. **Peace would enable Israel to realize its full potential and to bring a promising future not only to our people and not only to the Palestinian people, but to many, many others in our region.**
190. **But the old template for peace must be updated.**
191. It must take into account new realities and new roles and responsibilities for our Arab neighbours.
192. There is a new Middle East.
193. It presents new dangers but also new opportunities.
194. Israel is prepared to work with Arab partners and the international community to confront those dangers and to seize those opportunities.
195. **Together, we must recognize the global threat of militant Islam, the primacy of dismantling Iran’s nuclear weapons capability, and the indispensable role of Arab States in advancing peace with the Palestinians.**
196. All that may fly in the face of conventional wisdom, but it is the truth.
197. And the truth must always be spoken, especially in the United Nations.
198. Isaiah, a great prophet of peace, taught us nearly 3,000 years ago in Jerusalem to speak truth to power.
199. He said: “For the sake of Zion, I will not be silent. For the sake of Jerusalem, I will not be still until her justice shines bright and her salvation glows like a flaming torch”.
200. Let us light a torch of truth and justice to safeguard our common future.