

# Israeli Organization Pleads for Peace

Your Excellencies:

The **United Nations** was created in 1945 in order to prevent war and settle disputes peacefully. Over the years, we have seen many conflicts resolved peacefully through negotiation, with the help of the U.N. At other times, the U.N. has failed, with parties in dispute rejecting a peaceful settlement and walking away from the negotiating table.

Excellencies, today you will be faced with an important decision which relates to one of the first conflicts involving the U.N., namely the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Thursday, the president of the **Palestinian Authority**, Mahmoud Abbas, will apply for observer non-member state status at the U.N. If accepted, it could mean the end of the Oslo Peace Process which clearly stipulates that "neither side shall initiate or take any steps that will change the status of the West Bank and **Gaza Strip**, pending the outcome of the Permanent Status negotiations" (Article 31).

Nov. 29 also marks the 65th Anniversary of the U.N. Partition Plan for Palestine, which promised two states for two peoples, Jews and Arabs, living side by side in peace. Sadly, the plan was rejected by one side who walked away. Instead of reaching out for peace, five Arab armies attacked Israel the moment the Jewish people declared the independence of the State of Israel on May 14, 1948, based on the U.N. Partition Plan.

As we mark this historic day, it is important to remember that there would be no Palestinian refugees today if the Arab side had simply accepted the U.N. offer. Instead of observing International Solidarity Day for the Palestinian people, we

could tomorrow be marking the 65th anniversary of an independent Palestinian state.

Excellencies, today you will be faced with another historic vote. The choice is once again between negotiation and unilateralism. There is no way to peace other than through negotiation. This was true in 1947 and it is true still today.

History confirms that unilateral actions, whether declarations of war or a unilateral declaration of a state, have never solved any conflict, nor led to a sustainable peace. In 1947, the Arabs missed a unique opportunity to have their own state. Let us not be irresponsible and suggest that they walk the path of 1947 again. The Palestinian people deserve something better.

Your vote Thursday can be a vote for peace, however in order to give peace a chance, you need to vote for resumed negotiations and not for unilateralism. This is why you need to reject a premature and unilateral declaration of a **Palestinian state**.