

Mr. Bu Dhhair (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to begin by expressing our gratitude and appreciation to the presidency for convening this important meeting to discuss the protection of civilians in armed conflicts. This is taking place while many civilians are continuing to suffer in several armed areas and conflicts.

Our world today endeavours to establish the values and principles of human rights. Any violations of those rights, regardless of the colour, race, religion or political affiliation of those who commit them, have become absolutely unacceptable, particular during armed conflict. The United Nations Charter, global humanitarian laws and human rights laws, as well as divine law, hold all Member States — particular States members of the Security Council — responsible and accountable to seek all possible means, and to seek them in a permanent way, to grant the United Nations a

vital, important and tangible role on the ground in protecting human beings, especially civilians.

The tragic circumstances faced by the unarmed population of the occupied Gaza Strip, due to the savage onslaught in which civilians are subjected to all kinds of killings, horrors and expulsions, call for urgent action and a firm stand to stop the aggression immediately, with no delay, to protect the lives of civilians. One and a half million people live in the Gaza Strip, the majority of them civilians. A helpless minority militia faces a professional military institution that is using bombs that sow fear in the hearts of children and kill them indiscriminately. That can only lead to the creation of a generation that is more violent, more extreme, and will engender more hatred and resentment as the days go by. The same applies to those who live under siege, who are denied food and medicine, as we hear from the testimony of international organizations working on the ground in Gaza. It is as if the Israelis had not learned any lessons from history.

The practice of the Israeli occupation army is a clear violation of international laws and conventions, and that must oblige us to take a very clear stand vis-à-vis such inhumane practices and practices that do not guarantee the safety of civilians. We must take a stand against such practices. When arrogant countries allow the voices of arms and bombs to prevail and think that by killing, terrorizing and starving innocent civilians they achieve their political goals or that that will bring them peace, they are totally mistaken. That is a dead-end road and will only bring more instability and counter-violence, more pain and suffering, and will transform those who are defenceless — civilians who are seeking a better life for themselves — into extremists who know only the language of violence, blood-letting and extremism in all its forms.

Any life lost means that we have lost a human being who could have made a positive contribution to a better society. That is why we call on the Council to take into consideration the Secretary-General's proposal of 27 November 2007. His vision, which we share, is a practical solution to ensure the commitment of the Security Council to the protection of civilians in armed conflict. The Security Council has established a working group on the protection of civilians that will assist it in moving effectively towards providing genuine and appropriate protection for unarmed civilians in armed conflict similar to the working group established pursuant to resolution 1612 (2005) on children

and armed conflict.

The armed conflicts currently raging and their psychological and physical harm to civilians in various corners of the world — including Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq, Somalia, Chad, the Philippines, Nepal and elsewhere — should compel Member States to draw on all proposals on the protection of civilians in armed conflict made by the United Nations, and the Secretary-General and his representatives in particular, in order to draft effective resolutions establishing investigative committees or similar entities to protect civilians in a practical and concrete manner.

My delegation invites all peace-loving Member States to create a new and effective system or methodology for taking serious action against any country that undertakes the kind of military aggression that Israel has unleashed on the Palestinians, threatening the lives of civilians. No human logic or conscience can accept a country that preaches democracy, respect for human rights, especially those of women and children, and love of peace using tanks and bombs to kill, maim and terrorize civilians.

If the proposals presented by the United Nations through its Secretary-General and his representatives are not given due consideration, the Organization and its main bodies, the Security Council in particular, will lose all credibility in the eyes of unarmed civilians, who call on us to assume our responsibility for protecting them in armed conflict.