

Report on UNCTAD Assistance to the Palestinian people (TD/B/73/2)
Trade and Development Board, Seventy-second session
Geneva, 14–25 September 2026

Statement by the Asia Pacific Group
Item 6

Mr. Chairman:

The Asian Group appreciates UNCTAD's comprehensive report, which clearly illustrate the severe economic and humanitarian deterioration in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Decades of restrictions have eroded productive capacity, and deepened socio-economic vulnerabilities, while the situation since October 2023 has escalated into unprecedented economic losses, widespread destruction of infrastructure and collapse of livelihoods.

In Gaza, military operations have devastated agriculture, fisheries and other key sectors, causing economic activity to collapse and sharply increasing dependence on humanitarian assistance. Gaza's contribution to Palestinian economy has fallen dramatically, reflecting the near-total destruction of its productive foundations and the worsening structural imbalances affecting agriculture and manufacturing.

Mr. Chairman:

The Group is equally concerned by the long-term constraints facing the broader Palestinian economy. Persistent restriction on access to land, natural resources, technology and productive inputs have weakened agricultural and industrial resilience, limiting investment, employment creation and sustainable economic growth.

Heavy reliance on consumption, supported by external transfers, unpredictable aid flows and volatile income sources, has heightened economic vulnerability and reduced prospects for self-sustaining development. These combined pressures, low productive investment, infrastructure deficits, employment challenges, aid dependency and rising import reliance continue to undermine the prospect for self-sustaining development and long-term economic stability.

Mr. Chairman:

The Asian Group is deeply concerned by UNCTAD's findings on the accelerating annexation of the occupied West Bank and its grave implication for the Palestinian people and the prospects for a just, comprehensive and lasting peace. The report highlights the growing fragmentation of the West Bank through an extensive network of checkpoints, roadblocks, settlements and the separation wall, creating disconnected enclaves and undermining Palestinian territorial contiguity.

By the end of 2025, movement obstacles had reached 925 including more than 120 new road gates installed during the year. This represents a 43% increase over the annual average of the past two decades and reflects a growing reliance on permanent movement restrictions that further erode economic activity, disrupt daily life and deepen the coercive environment across the West Bank.

The permit regime further restricts access to agricultural land, essential services and markets, particularly in areas located between the separation wall and the Green Line. Settler outposts have risen to over 300, accompanied by a shift of legal powers from military to civilian authorities, signalling accelerated annexation, increase isolation, further erode the prospect of independent Palestinian State living side by side with Israel with peace. Demolitions and displacement have escalated sharply; almost 1,700 Palestinians were displaced in the first three months of 2026 alone, surpassing the total for all of 2025.

Therefore, the Asian Group reaffirms its unwavering support for the Palestinian people and its commitment to international law, relevant United Nations resolutions, and a just and lasting peace. In this regard, the Group recalls Security Council resolution 2334 (2016), which reaffirmed that settlements constitute a flagrant violation under international law, and calls on Israel to immediately and completely cease all settlement activities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem.

Mr. Chairman:

The Asian Group is gravely concerned by the deepening fiscal crisis facing the Palestinian Government, driven by the continued withholding of clearance revenues, severe economic contraction and mounting arrears. These pressures have sharply reduced public revenues, undermined the Government's ability to sustain essential services, and left vulnerable households without support following the suspension of the cash transfer programme in Gaza since 2023 and reduced assistance in the West Bank

The Group warns that this worsening fiscal situation poses serious risks to financial stability, including the banking sector, and threatens broader social and economic collapse. In this regard, the Group calls for the immediate and full transfer of all Palestinian fiscal revenues and urges stronger international support to reinforce fiscal resilience of Palestinian Government.

The Asian Group echoes the UN Secretary-General's warning that Gaza has become a "horror show", with a level of death and destruction without parallel in recent times and the humanitarian situation has reached catastrophic proportions

The Group reiterates its call for an immediate ceasefire, unimpeded humanitarian access, and full respect for international humanitarian law.

Mr. Chairman:

The Asian Group underscores the urgent need for coordinated international efforts to restore productive capacity, strengthen economic resilience, and create the conditions necessary for sustainable recovery and development in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Addressing these structural challenges is essential to achieving long-term peace, stability and prosperity for the Palestinian people. The Group also urges UNCTAD to secure the regular and extra-budgetary resources required to fully implement mandates under the Geneva Consensus, the “Maafikiano” and “Bridgetown Covenant”, as well as by the General Assembly resolutions requesting UNCTAD to assess the economic cost of the occupation.

Finally, Mr. Chairman:

The Asian Group reaffirms that the establishment of an independent State of Palestine, consistent with relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions, remains indispensable to achieving a just, lasting, and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.