

*Palestinian foreign minister
pleads for international
protection, says nation faces
existential threat*



United Nations, November 30 (RHC)-- The Palestinian foreign minister has pleaded with the world to provide international protection to the Palestinian people, who "are faced with an existential threat." Addressing a UN Security Council meeting on the situation in Gaza, Riyad al-Maliki said Israel does not seek security but wants to eliminate any chance for the creation of a Palestinian state.

"If it was, it would choose peace," he said, adding that Israel, and this Israeli cabinet specifically considers that the strategic threat it is confronted with is Palestinian statehood. "Our people are faced with an existential threat. Make no mistake about it. With all the talk about the destruction of Israel, it is Palestine that is facing a plan to destroy it, implemented in broad daylight," the UN website quoted him as saying.

The protection of Palestinians cannot be ensured by the occupying forces who are complicit in these crimes, he said. "We need international protection and international action to end impunity so as to prevent the recurrence of these crimes that occur daily and in broad daylight," he said. "What our people are enduring now is the result of the international community's failure to provide such protection and accountability."

He said the world must also put an end to the impunity of the Israeli regime and prosecute it over its war crimes. Maliki emphasized that Israel is trying to intimidate those criticizing it and defending the rule of international law across the globe, including governments that consider themselves allies of Israel, the UN secretary general and UN agencies, human rights, and humanitarian organizations.

He touched on the ongoing Gaza truce, saying it must become a permanent ceasefire to put an end to Israeli atrocities. "The truce must become a ceasefire, a permanent ceasefire. The massacres cannot be allowed to resume," Maliki told the council. "This is not a war," he said. "This is a carnage that no one can justify. It must be brought to an end."

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