

Welcome Remarks by
Shri Sudhir T. Devare
Director General, Indian Council of World Affairs

to commemorate the

“International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People”

at

Indian Council of World Affairs,
Sapru House, New Delhi
January 28, 2011

Hon’ble Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Ahamedji

Ms. Vijaya Latha Reddy, Secretary (East)

His Excellency Mr. Adli Shaban Hassan Sadeq , Ambassador of the State of Palestine,

His Excellency Dr. Ahmed Salem Saleh Al-Wahishi, Chief Representative,
League of the Arab States Mission,

His Excellency Mr. Miguel Angel Ramirez Ramos, Ambassador of Cuba,

His Excellency Ms. Amadon Moustapha Diouf, Ambassador of Senegal,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen

In the past the Indian Council of World Affairs has been privileged to hold the event expressing solidarity with the Palestinian people and today we are again highly pleased to welcome you all on the occasion of the commemoration of ‘International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People’. We are grateful that Hon’ble Minister of State, Shri Ahamed who has only a few days ago taken over as a new Minister of

State in the Ministry of External Affairs has kindly agreed to be the Chief Guest at this function. We would like to extend greetings and felicitations to him.

India has been a steadfast supporter of the cause of the Palestinian people. Even before India's independence, the Indian National Congress had consistently stood for the rights of the Palestinians. India was the first non-Arab state in 1974 to recognize the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people and in 1988 the first non-Arab country to recognize the state of Palestine. India has always held the position for a sovereign, Independent, viable and united state of Palestine living within secure and recognized borders, side-by-side and at peace with Israel, as endorsed in Quartet Road Map and UNSC Resolutions 1397 and 1515.

India has supported the Arab Peace Plan which calls for withdrawal of Israel to pre-1967 borders, and along with recognition of Israel and the establishment of the State of Palestine with East Jerusalem as its capital. India has called for an end of illegal Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories. Recently, India has also welcomed the 'direct talk' between Israelis and Palestinians that took place in September, 2010. India's unwavering support to the Palestinian cause has been strongly reiterated during the visit of our President to Syria in November, 2010 and at the IBSA+Palestine+Indonesia meeting on Palestine during the 65th UNGA session last September. The situation in West-Asia remains concern to India since this region is of vital importance.

To express solidarity with the Palestinian people, we have today with us Ambassador from Cuba and Senegal who wish to speak as representative from Latin America and Africa respectively. After their remarks, we will invite the Chief Representative of the League of Arab States Mission and the Palestinian Ambassador and then request the Guest of honour for today, our Minister of State to address us.