

Mr. Mendoza-García (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*):

We commend the Russian presidency and Mission for the work they are carrying out this month at the helm of the Security Council. We also thank Mr. Nickolay Mladenov, Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, and Stephen O'Brien, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, for their briefings. I will focus my remarks on two conflicts in the Middle East: the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the situation in Syria. In both cases, the escalation of violence remains alarming and civilians, including women and children, continue to pay a high price, which we firmly condemn. We also extend our condolences to the Government and the people of Israel for the passing of former Prime Minister Shimon Peres. We will remember him for his role in the negotiations of the Oslo accords, for which he received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1994, along with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat. My country reiterates the urgency for the Palestinians and Israelis to resume negotiations on the central pending issues of the conflict, based on prior obligations and agreements previously reached by the parties, supported by international law and the decisions of the Security Council and the General Assembly. It is imperative that a political solution to this conflict be found and that a new peace architecture be created as soon as possible in order to resolve differences and achieve sustainable peace with a view to establishing the basis for direct negotiations that lead to the agreed objective of the international community: the harmonious coexistence between an independent Palestinian State and the State of Israel. We believe that it is urgent that we succeed in stopping any act that leads to the death of innocents. We also believe in the need to prosecute those responsible and join efforts to stop the spiral of violence and prevent suffering of more civilians. Costa Rica deeply regrets the way the conflict in Syria is progressing and how the situation is continuing to deteriorate while the Security Council fails to take action to resolve it. It is urgent that we put an end to armed confrontation and seek an early political solution, given the humanitarian crisis the country is experiencing. We very much regret what happened in this Chamber on 8 October, where the draft resolution sponsored by both France and Spain was not adopted, **19/10/2016** The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question **S/PV.7792** 16-33267 **47/64** despite its significant humanitarian component (see S/PV.7785). In that regard, we reiterate the call for the application of the code of conduct promoted by the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group, to

which we belong, so that the permanent members of the Council properly weigh the use of the veto in such situations and that a restriction on its use be implemented. As indicated by the Secretary-General himself in a recent report to the Council (S/2016/714), the humanitarian crisis threatening Aleppo could become the largest in these years of conflict. Hostilities are characterized by indiscriminate violation of fundamental rules of international humanitarian law, and the worst is that obligations to protect civilians are not being fulfilled. We regret that the meeting last weekend in Lausanne, Switzerland, convened by Secretary of State John Kerry, did not agree on a common strategy for reaching a peaceful solution and an end to hostilities. The remarks of the Special Envoy for the Syrian crisis, Staffan de Mistura, are particularly troubling. On Monday, 17 October, he said that if we cannot find a solution to such violence before December, the city of Aleppo “will not be there anymore”. We welcome the recent announcement of an eight-hour humanitarian pause in Aleppo, which will take place on Thursday, 20 October, and we hope that it will be recurring and extended. We continue to call on the Security Council to exercise its mandates to maintain international peace and security and to ensure the full application of international justice and the rule of law. In the light of the inaction of the Security Council we believe it would be appropriate for the General Assembly to be convened in an emergency session to address what is within its jurisdiction. We urge the international community continue its efforts until a new ceasefire is achieved, with the particular aim of ensuring the delivery of humanitarian assistance to Aleppo. Costa Rica reiterates its concern about the increasing tensions between regional Powers, which are raising tone of the fighting, as it makes a strong call for peace in the middle east.