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Seventh emergency special session

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE FIFTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,  
on Thursday, 24 July 1980, at 10.30 a.m.

President:

Mr. SALIM

(United Republic of Tanzania)

- Question of Palestine /5/ (continued)



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The meeting was called to order at 10.55 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 5 (continued)

QUESTION OF PALESTINE

Mr. ZACHMANN (German Democratic Republic): Mr. President, my delegation wishes to express its pleasure at the fact that the emergency special session of the United Nations General Assembly on the question of Palestine is being held under the able guidance of a representative of a country with which the German Democratic Republic maintains friendly relations.

The convening of this emergency special session testifies, first and foremost, to the fact that the question of Palestine constitutes the most important element of a comprehensive and just solution to the Middle East problem. That is the basic position which has always guided the German Democratic Republic, both as a longstanding member of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and as a member of the Security Council.

The German Democratic Republic, which has at all times felt closely attached to the just struggle waged by the Palestinian people for the implementation of its inalienable national rights, is deeply concerned about the present exacerbation of the situation in the Middle East. To bring about a positive turn of events in that region is in the interests both of the peoples of the region and of international security.

Lasting peace in the Middle East could have been established long ago if the policy of separate deals had not further complicated a comprehensive political settlement in that region. Thus a new obstacle has been erected before the Palestinian people in its quest for self-determination - an obstacle the elimination of which is the prime necessity of our time.

The settlement of the dangerous conflict in the Middle East requires the withdrawal of Israeli troops from all Arab territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem, the restoration of the inalienable right of the Arab people of Palestine to self-determination, including the establishment of an independent State of its own, and ensuring the sovereignty and security of all States of the region.

(Mr. Zachmann, German Democratic Republic)

Like any other people, the Arab people of Palestine is entitled to the enjoyment of the right to self-determination and the right to establish a sovereign State of its own. That is a well-founded demand deriving from modern international law.

The road to a just solution of the Middle East conflict can only be via a comprehensive political settlement with the direct participation of all interested parties, including the Arab people of Palestine in the person of its representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).

All attempts at arriving at a settlement without the participation of the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people are inconsistent with the interests of this people. The Palestine Liberation Organization is universally recognized as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people's interests. It must be accorded its due place in all international bodies and all negotiations dealing with questions touching upon the interests of the Palestinian people.

(Mr. Zachmann, German Democratic Republic)

This, the only feasible programme for the Middle East region, received support in the declaration adopted at the meeting of the Political Consultative Committee of the States Parties to the Warsaw Treaty in May of this year. The declaration clearly underscores that a political settlement in the Middle East requires that no action impeding the achievement of that aim be taken. No State has the right to interfere in the internal affairs of the countries and peoples of the region or to prescribe to them what socio-political systems they should establish. No State should lay claim to or try to encroach upon the natural resources of the peoples in that region.

During this debate, a large number of speakers have referred to the fact that the situation in the Middle East has been further aggravated as a result of the fateful political decisions adopted at Camp David.

Israel is not responding to the growing international reputation of the Palestine Liberation Organization and the general recognition of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination with understanding for the objective reality, but rather with an intensification of its policy of occupation, which is contrary to international law.

Israel in fact is trying everything to achieve its far-reaching intentions of annexation by means of aggressive acts against Lebanon, a violent policy of colonization, continued occupation of land and the closing of Arab schools and universities, as well as by massive action against prominent Palestinians in the occupied territories who put up persistent resistance to the so-called autonomy negotiations.

This is done with blatant disregard for numerous United Nations General Assembly and Security Council resolutions as well as for basic provisions of the United Nations Charter. We consider that it is more than justified to ask what else has to happen in order to bring about a change in Israel's position. The Security Council has been repeatedly urged to apply coercive measures against Israel in accordance with the United Nations Charter. All States Members of the United Nations are called upon to abstain from any military or economic co-operation with Israel.

(Mr. Zachmann, German Democratic Republic)

Such necessary steps are now as before blocked by imperialist Powers. Israel is politically, economically and militarily enabled to carry on without restriction its policy of disregarding the rights of the Palestinian people. Even more, not only the United States, but also other imperialist Powers, are still far away from recognizing the decisive rights of the Palestinian people. Just recently, Israel's major ally again openly demonstrated that, by its negative attitude towards a Security Council resolution that was aimed at the implementation of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people.

We agree with all those speakers who characterized the recognition of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination - particularly to the creation of its own State - as well as the participation of the PLO in all negotiations on the solution of the Middle East conflict, as indispensable elements for the implementation of the rights of the Palestinian people.

The struggle for a just solution of the problem of Palestine as the most essential element of a comprehensive and just settlement of the Middle East conflict is an integral part of the peace strategy of the States of the socialist community. Their policy is now as before aimed at removing the potential hotbed of war in the Middle and Near East, at making peace and security stable and lasting in the region and at creating the possibility for all peoples of this area, including the Palestinian people, to start on the road to national and social independence.

We feel that that should also be the concern and task of this emergency special session of the United Nations General Assembly.

The German Democratic Republic will also in the future stand unwaveringly by the side of the people of Palestine and its representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization, in firmly advocating the implementation of the Palestinians' inalienable rights.

Mr. Ho YING (China) (interpretation from Chinese): Mr. President, allow me first of all to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of this important session. The Palestinian question has been one of the important items on the agenda of every session of the United Nations General Assembly in recent years, but this is the first time that an emergency special session of the General Assembly has been convened to consider this question. On behalf of the Chinese Government, I sincerely wish the session success and hope that it will make a positive contribution to a just solution of the Palestinian question.

(Mr. He Ying, China)

The Palestinian question is a result of the imperialist and colonialist policy of aggression. With imperialist backing and connivance, Israel has, from its very inception, pursued a policy of aggression and expansion that has led to repeated wars in the Middle East and brought untold misery to the Arab people, especially the Palestinian people. The homeland of the Palestinian people was ravaged, and their national rights trampled underfoot. Large tracts of Arab territory remain under Israeli occupation, and the Palestinian people in their millions were driven from their homeland where they had lived for generations and became displaced persons leading a hard life in various parts of the world. The one million and more Palestinians living in areas under Israeli rule and occupation suffer all sorts of discrimination and persecution without any guarantees for their personal safety.

(Mr. He Ying, China)

The realities in the past three decades and more have demonstrated again and again that the Palestinian question is by no means a problem of refugees, but one of enabling the Palestinian people to return to their homeland, exercise the right of self-determination and regain their national rights. Their struggle is an integral part of the national liberation struggle in the world today. Without a just resolution of the Palestinian question, there can be no comprehensive settlement of the Middle East question and no peace and stability in this region.

For many years the heroic Palestinian people have waged an unyielding struggle for the restoration of their sacred national rights. Particularly in the past decade or so, they have been waging an arduous struggle, supported by the Arab countries and peoples and all the other justice-upholding countries and peoples. Their power and influence have grown and expanded, and they have won ever-wider international sympathy and support. As an active political force, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, the Palestine Liberation Organization has become an active participant on the political scene in the Middle East and the world as a whole, winning the recognition of an increasing number of countries and international agencies. It has ties with more than 100 countries and sends representatives or observers to more than 80 capitals and international organizations. We in China have a saying: "A just cause enjoys abundant support while an unjust cause finds little support." Future developments will predictably be more favourable to the Palestinian people and unfavourable to the Israeli aggressors. The Palestinian people are sure to win complete victory in their liberation cause.

The United Nations, the Non-Aligned Movement, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the Organization of African Unity have adopted many constructive resolutions, and the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People has done much work in order to settle the Palestinian question. Regrettably, however, the question remains unresolved. This is mainly because the Israeli authorities have stubbornly clung to their aggressive and expansionist stand and rejected the efforts of all the peace-loving and justice-upholding countries and peoples to resolve the Middle East question. Moreover, they have in recent years continued a

(Mr. He Ying, China)

series of hostile acts against the Palestinian and other Arab peoples; for instance, the establishment of settlements in the occupied territories for 'security's sake', the wanton arrest, deportation or killing of Palestinian people in areas under Israeli occupation on all sorts of pretexts and the use of every means to annex Jerusalem, a holy city to three major religions. In addition, they violate principles guiding international relations by repeatedly invading Lebanon, infringing upon its sovereignty and territorial integrity and inflicting heavy losses in life and property on the Lebanese and Palestinian peoples. Their outrageous acts have evoked condemnation and opposition from all justice-upholding countries and people.

Israel's obstinacy in sticking to its policy of aggression and expansion is no accident, but can be accounted for by historical reasons as well as current developments. . . As everyone knows, for the past 30-odd years forces from outside the region and the super-Powers have directly or indirectly supported and connived at Israel's aggression and expansion. The support and shielding given by one super-Power to Israel is obvious to all. While admitting that the Palestinian question must be resolved and professing readiness to be friendly with all Arab countries, it disregards the stark realities in the Middle East, ignores the present world trend and has thus far refused to recognize the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and the Palestine Liberation Organization. Its policy has inflated Israel's arrogance and delayed and obstructed a Middle East settlement. Moreover, it has given its adversary a rare opportunity to split Arab unity and carry out expansion in the Middle East.

Taking advantage of the weakness of its adversary and Israel's intransigence, the other super-Power is practising a dual policy in the Middle East and trying hard to maintain the state of "no war, no peace" in the region, so that it may fish in troubled waters, step up infiltration and expansion, control strategic positions and oil resources in the Middle East and thus achieve its strategic goal of outflanking Europe. People may easily recall that up till the early 1970s, it was still blaming and denouncing the Palestinian people's just struggle. But when this struggle continued to develop and the rivalry between the two super-Powers in the Middle East grew

(Mr. He Ying, China)

more intense, it abruptly changed its tune and proclaimed itself to be the "natural ally" of the Arab and Palestinian peoples. Under the signboard of opposing imperialism, opposing Israel and "supporting" liberation movements, it is seizing air and naval bases, enlarging its spheres of influence and selling large quantities of weapons to extort huge sums of petro-dollars. On the other hand, it has provided Israel with a large pool of manpower and potential soldiers. In a word, its objective is to create and aggravate divisions and turmoil in the Middle East so as to serve its selfish interest of seeking hegemony in the Middle East and the world as a whole. While it paid some attention in the past to disguising its expansion in the Middle East, its massive invasion of Afghanistan last year was carried out without even a fig leaf. The nakedness of its aggression has opened the eyes of the people of the world. Since it did not hesitate to trample upon the United Nations Charter unscrupulously and commit wanton aggression against a non-aligned, Moslem sovereign State, how can people possibly believe that it will support in good faith the Palestinian and Arab peoples as well as the people of Moslem countries in their just struggle to combat Israeli aggression and expansion and to win or safeguard their national independence and State sovereignty? It is evident that the struggle of the Palestinian and other Arab peoples to regain their national rights and recover their lost territories is inseparably linked with the struggle against hegemonist expansion and rivalry in the Middle East. There can be no genuine peace in the area if Israel does not give up its aggression and the super-Powers do not stop their expansion and rivalry there.

The Chinese Government and people have consistently supported the Arab and Palestinian peoples in their just struggle against imperialism, hegemonism and Israeli aggression and expansion and for the recovery of their lost territories and the restoration of their national rights. We strongly condemn Israel's policy of aggression and the super-Powers' rivalry and expansion in the Middle East at the expense of Arab and Palestinian interests.

(Mr. He Ying, China)

We maintain that the Palestine Liberation Organization, as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, ought to participate in a comprehensive settlement of the Middle East question. The just struggle of the Palestinian people will undoubtedly continue to receive the deep sympathy and firm support of the Chinese Government and people.

Many countries and organizations, deeply concerned about peace in the Middle East and the world at large, have come forward with various proposals for the resolution of the Middle East question. They all maintain that Israel must withdraw from the Arab territories it has occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem, that the national rights of the Palestinian people must be restored, including the right to return to their homeland, the right to national self-determination and to the establishment of a State, and that all countries in the Middle East have the right to independence and existence. We believe that these proposals merit attention and exploration in the search for a comprehensive and just settlement of the Middle East question.

With regard to the question of Jerusalem, we consider that as Jerusalem is a holy city to the world's three major religions, followers of these faiths have the right of free access to it for pilgrimage. We understand and sympathize with the sentiments of the Islamic countries and peoples towards Jerusalem, and we are opposed to any Israeli action to change its character and status unilaterally. Any measures taken by Israel to annex Jerusalem are illegal, null and void and not to be recognized.

We appreciate the efforts of the European Economic Community countries to seek a Middle East settlement. We hope they will work together with the third-world countries and continue to make a positive contribution to promoting a Middle East settlement.

In our view, if the Israeli authorities should continue obdurately to disregard the general world trend and reject the reasonable proposals advanced by various parties, they will only become more isolated in the international community and bring endless disasters to the people in the region, including the Israeli people. Israel's security will never be obtained through occupying other peoples' territories. There is no certainty, and it is very dangerous indeed to rely on the force of arms. Israel's future can only lie in changing its course by renouncing its policies of aggression

(Mr. He Ying, China)

and expansion, seeking to live in peace and harmony with the Palestinian and other Arab peoples and turning swords into ploughshares.

The great Arab people, with their glorious tradition, are the creators of their own history and masters of their own national destiny. The Arab people's unity is the best guarantee of their victory. We are deeply convinced that all the Arab countries and the Palestine Liberation Organization, working together for the great goals of the Arab people, will keep the over-all interests in mind, overcome super-Power interference and schemes for sowing discord, enhance mutual understanding and close ranks again in a concerted effort to achieve at an early date the lofty goal of recovering their lost territories and regaining their national rights.

Mr. KRAVETS (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): The Arab people of Palestine, who have suffered so much, have once again turned to the international community in the hope that the United Nations will provide them with effective assistance and support in their efforts to realize their just and legitimate aspirations to live in their own land under conditions of peace, national independence, sovereign equality and freedom.

For several decades now the peoples of the world have been following with concern and great anxiety the development of events in the Middle East following the aggressive policy of Israel. In this whole series of very complicated Middle East problems which the United Nations is endeavouring to resolve, the crucial issue is the problem of Palestine, the tragedy of 4 million people who have been deprived of their right to self-determination, to the establishment of their own State and to free and independent development.

The inclusion of an item on Palestine as a separate item on the agendas of the sessions of the General Assembly beginning in 1974 bears witness to the awareness of the majority of Members of the United Nations of the exceptional importance of this problem. A large number of resolutions have been adopted emphasizing the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. A great deal of valuable work has been done in drafting specific proposals to implement the inalienable rights of the people of Palestine. Since 1975, the Special Committee of the United Nations has had its recommendations approved by the

(Mr. Kravets, Ukrainian SSR)

General Assembly of the United Nations - at its thirty-first, thirty-second, thirty-third and thirty-fourth sessions.

The Ukrainian delegation feels it has to mention that because Israel and the United States of America, opposing implementation of the right of the Arab people of Palestine to self-determination, are stubbornly continuing to ignore the existence of almost unanimous international opinion on this matter. They are continuing simply to ignore the decisions of the General Assembly, and they are blocking the adoption of any measures to ensure a just solution to the question of Palestine.

Proof of this is the present emergency special session of the General Assembly of the United Nations. A majority of Members of the United Nations felt obliged to convene this session in view of the fact that, owing to the obstructionist position of the United States of America, the Security Council was not able to take a decision on the well-known recommendations of the United Nations Special Committee on the Implementation of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian people.

(Mr. Kravets, Ukrainian SSR)

This emergency special session of the General Assembly is of great significance. In it are placed hopes for specific, positive moves forward in resolving the problem of Palestine. Moreover, the significance of this session is determined by the fact that it has to make a positive contribution to the normalizing of the situation in the Middle East as a whole and to the elimination of the acute and critical situation in the region, which indeed poses a very real, serious threat to international peace and security. Years of debate and a multitude of resolutions have not yet brought any positive results. Unfortunately, we are obliged to say that today the Middle East is further from true peace, further removed from a real and lasting settlement than it has ever been in the past. In addition, it can be stated with certainty that this dangerous and critical situation not only will continue to prevail in the future but will become even more acute if the underlying reasons for it are not removed and if the main problems of the Middle East are not resolved.

The Ukrainian SSR, like all the countries in the socialist community and like the overwhelming majority of Members of the United Nations, has been and remains a consistent supporter of a comprehensive settlement in the Middle East, in which all the interested parties, including the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) would participate. Such a settlement must involve the withdrawal of Israeli troops from all the Arab territories occupied in 1967, including Jerusalem; the implementation of the inalienable rights of the Arab people of Palestine, including their right to self-determination and the establishment of their own State; and the implementation of the right of all States in the region to a secure and independent existence and development. Only if these fundamental principles are applied in practice can peace in the Middle East become truly lasting rather than being a fragile truce.

The approach of making unilateral concessions to and holding separate negotiations with Israel cannot lead us to that goal. The tremendous acclamation of the supposed advantages of the so-called direct talks between Israel and each of the Arab countries that it has attacked represents, in fact, nothing but an attempt to deprive the Arab countries of their strength - a strength based on their unity, and the support of other States for their just cause. No verbal demagoguery, no political subterfuge can now confuse or mislead the

(Mr. Kravets, Ukrainian SSR)

international community in respect of the true designs of Israel and its supporter, the United States. Such blandishments as offering the Palestinians some kind of administrative autonomy are nothing other than a cover-up of the Zionist programme of establishing a "Greater Israel", which was in effect approved by the participants in the Camp David deal. The facts clearly demonstrate that the results of the conclusion of the separate Egyptian-Israeli deal and the continuing negotiations about so-called autonomy are actually leading to a deterioration of the situation of the Palestinians in the West Bank of Jordan and in the Gaza Strip, to an intensification of Israeli process of driving the Palestinians out of their own lands and to an increase in terrorist activities against the Palestinians and their representatives by extremists in Israel as well as to an increase in the number of Israeli settlements.

In spite of the fact that on 1 March the Security Council called upon the Government of Israel to dismantle the existing settlements and to cease the establishment of new settlements in the Arab territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem, the Israeli authorities nevertheless, a few days after the Security Council had adopted resolution 465 (1980), took new measures for the settlement and annexation of Arab lands, thereby very grossly flouting the Charter of the United Nations itself.

The New York Times reported on 10 July this year that the leaders of Israel intend to establish over the next few years 35 new settlements on the West Bank of Jordan and to increase the Jewish population in that region to 150,000.

The annexation by Israel of Arab lands and the establishment of more and more Israeli settlements in those lands, the forced expulsion of the Arab people of Palestine and the repressive measures against the indigenous population - all are directed in the final analysis towards the elimination of Palestine as a nation and as a people.

The aggressor, who has gone to the limits and beyond, is nevertheless trying to give some semblance of legality to its actions. The height of cynicism was reached with the declaration of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and the attempt to establish some sort of legal basis for it by the adoption of an appropriate bill by the Knesset.

(Mr. Kravets, Ukrainian SSR)

New, illegal actions by the Israeli leaders further to change the character and status of Jerusalem and the brazen decision by Begin's Government to transfer its headquarters to the Arab sector of Jerusalem aroused a storm of protest throughout the world. Most of those who spoke in the Security Council in June this year strongly condemned the aggressive intentions of Israel to change the physical character, demographic composition, institutional structure and status of Jerusalem. But unfortunately, because of the position taken by certain permanent members of the Security Council, the Council was unable to adopt a resolution containing effective measures to halt the annexationist aspirations of Israel.

It is perfectly clear that Israel would never be able to behave so boldly, to flout so brazenly international public opinion and the views of the international community, to disregard so openly the demands of the overwhelming majority of Members of the United Nations, were it not enjoying the powerful support of the United States. In addition to the well-known political and diplomatic support of the United States, Israel every year receives from the same source military and economic assistance on a vast scale. During the term of the current American Administration the extent of United States assistance to Israel has exceeded \$10 billion.

The ruling circles in the United States certainly do not consider those funds squandered. Those billions are simply payment to Israel for maintaining constant pressure and tension in the Middle East, under the cover of which it will be easier for the United States to achieve its strategic objectives. Those objectives are quite well known, namely: to turn the region of the Middle East into a United States sphere of influence, to establish a network of American military bases there, to make stronger and more cohesive the new military blocs and, in the final analysis, to establish complete and undivided control over the very rich natural resources of the region.

The links and the convergence of the foreign policy interests of the United States, Israel and recently Egypt have become quite clear - particularly in the case of Egypt, which has since Camp David shown its true colours more clearly. The concerted actions of those parties in the Middle East are nullifying all the efforts of the United Nations to find a just settlement of the question of Palestine, and are removing even further the comprehensive settlement of the crisis in the region.

(Mr. Kravets, Ukrainian SSR)

The situation in which the Palestinian people has been placed because of the aggressive policy of the Israeli Zionists, supported by the United States, leaves no alternative but a just struggle which that valiant people is waging under the leadership of its political vanguard, the Palestine Liberation Organization. This struggle has met with broad understanding and support throughout the world, just as it has here at the United Nations. In this struggle for their inalienable rights, the Palestinians can always rely on the support and solidarity of all progressive forces in the world, including the people of the Ukrainian SSR.

The oppressed Arab people of Palestine, who have suffered so much - and, indeed, the whole international community - expect this emergency special session of the General Assembly to take practical measures towards a just settlement of the Palestinian issue and to achieve a true, full and lasting peace in the Middle East. The United Nations cannot stand on the sidelines at a time when certain States are unethically engaged in colonial trading and dealing, in which the goods involved are, in fact, a whole people, that people's land, resources and future. Inaction on the part of the international community will simply encourage Israel to continue its aggressive, expansionist and annexationist activities.

This emergency special session of the General Assembly must firmly demand that Israel immediately withdraw from all Palestinian and other Arab territories it has occupied since 1967 and call on the Security Council to take coercive measures against Israel under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter in the event of its refusing to comply with the decisions of this Organization.

Mr. PESIC (Yugoslavia) (interpretation from French): Mr. President, I wish to express the great satisfaction of the Yugoslav delegation and my own pleasure at seeing the representative of a friendly and non-aligned country, Tanzania, presiding over this particularly important session of the United Nations General Assembly. We hope that under your presidency this session, which is being held 13 full years after the last emergency special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to the Question of Palestine, will be a true turning point in the settlement of the question of Palestine and of the Middle East crisis in general.

At their Ministerial Conference held in Belgrade in 1978, the non-aligned countries, including Yugoslavia, took the initiative -- which was subsequently endorsed by the Sixth Summit Conference of Non-Aligned Countries in Havana, for the convening of another emergency special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to the question of Palestine. The decision of the non-aligned countries to appeal to the United Nations was motivated by their deep conviction that any settlement of this extremely complex crisis, which poses a constant, imminent threat to peace and security in the world, must be sought under the auspices of the world Organization. For this reason, we attach particular importance to this emergency special session of the General Assembly, which, because of its development and orientation, must contribute to the speediest possible settlement of the Question of Palestine and, thereby, to the settlement of the Middle East crisis.

I am convinced that we all agree that it is high time to remove, once and for all, every existing obstacle to the liberation of the Palestinian people, whose very existence has been threatened by Israeli expansionism. We can no longer tolerate a continuation of this situation, for whatever reason, at a time when the ideals of self-determination, national independence, free development and human rights have become inviolable, lasting values for mankind. The political responsibility of countries which, in one way or another, directly or indirectly, deliberately or involuntarily, have allowed Israel to pursue such policies is only the greater thereby.

(Mr. Pesic, Yugoslavia)

In this as in other situations, history can assess the various positions and actions only in the light of their real nature and ramifications.

The importance of this emergency special session is increased by the fact that it is taking place at a time of turbulence in international relations. The intensification of rivalry between the major Powers and blocs for spheres of influence and strategic strong points, the growing resort to force and other kinds of interference in the internal affairs of sovereign States, the persistence of the perilous spiral of the arms race and the bloc approach to the process of détente are just some of the basic features of the present international situation. Not only have existing sources of crisis not been limited or eliminated, but new ones have been created throughout the world.

These negative trends in international relations; which essentially reflect the crisis in the policy of blocs and an inability to find solutions on the basis of that policy, are particularly evident in the Near and Middle East, in the Gulf area, in central Asia and in the Indian Ocean zone. Those areas in which attempts are being made to create new strategic strong points through the resort to military and other forms of intervention, which is a direct threat to the security of that part of the world have become the focal point of new tensions, posing a genuine danger to world peace.

These developments have undoubtedly had an untoward effect on the question of Palestine and on the Near East region proper. At the same time, an attempt is being made to impose formulas and solutions on the Palestinian people which respect neither its desires nor the results of its struggle.

A halting of these negative trends and the elimination of their causes would mark an important step towards amelioration of the international situation. In the face of this worsening situation, the non-aligned countries are making constructive efforts to settle major international issues and reduce the sources of crisis, in keeping with the genuine purposes and principles of non-alignment and with the legitimate aspirations of all peoples and countries for development in conditions of independence and freedom.

(Mr. Pesic, Yugoslavia)

More than three decades ago, the world Organization decided to assume direct responsibility for the settlement of the question of Palestine. Because of the necessity of taking effective action to enable the Palestinian people to exercise its rights to self-determination and independence, which are the inalienable rights of all peoples, the present emergency special session is faced with the need to examine its conscience.

Although the Palestinian people has not yet achieved its national rights, the time is long since past when we would speak about the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people exclusively as a humanitarian issue. That people's national existence and its right to possess a State of its own have long been universally acknowledged and recognized. The Palestine Liberation Organization has long been recognized as the sole representative of the Palestinian people and as an active member of the international community. It is now a full-fledged member of the Non-Aligned Movement and of the Group of 77; it has been granted observer status at the United Nations and has become a member of a whole series of agencies and international organizations.

(Mr. Pesic, Yugoslavia)

There can no longer be any doubt that the question of Palestine is at the very centre of the Middle East conflict. It is also generally acknowledged that only a comprehensive and just settlement of that crisis can ensure conditions in which all the peoples and countries of the Middle East will be able to exercise their legitimate right to live in peace, security and independence.

Contrary to that positive development in the attitude of the international community, Israel continues to pursue its policy of occupation, annexation and denial of the national rights of the Palestinian people, thereby flagrantly violating both the Charter and the decisions of the United Nations. By carrying out acts in the occupied territories that are forbidden by the international community such as settlement, denationalization, exploitation of natural resources and threatening the cultural and historic heritage of the area, Israel has deliberately tried to modify the geographical, ethnic, economic, cultural, religious and other features of the area.

The Israeli Government has tried unilaterally and arbitrarily to alter the character and status of Jerusalem by making that city the capital of Israel, and that has been of primary concern.

If the international community does not put an end to that policy of Israel, we shall unquestionably have to deal with a serious aggravation of the Middle East crisis that would inevitably increase the risk of a conflict in a broader area.

The establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East constitutes an obligation for the international community and is in its interest, and this has been repeatedly reaffirmed by decisions of the United Nations, of the Non-Aligned Movement, of the Organization of African Unity and of other international organizations. It has been universally recognized that the exercise of the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people is a sine qua non for the achievement of that peace, it being understood that only the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) can negotiate on their behalf. It is obvious that we can do this only in a comprehensive framework, dealing with all aspects of the crisis, and that partial or separate approaches to the problem will not achieve that goal. It is encouraging to note that most countries accept these facts and that this positive change of attitude has become increasingly dominant.

(Mr. Pesic, Yugoslavia)

Essentially, the Palestinian people are not asking for any gifts. Their rights have been won by their sacrifices and responsible conduct, and no one can prevent them from implementing them. However, the international community has an obligation to help them because support for the liberation of peoples under colonial and foreign domination has become the primary principle underlying international relations today.

The present emergency special session of the General Assembly offers us an excellent opportunity to reaffirm the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and independence and to adopt decisions that will make an effective contribution to the settlement of the problem. In the interest of promoting an active contribution by the United Nations, it is important that we begin effective negotiations that will pave the way to a comprehensive, just and lasting solution of that crisis, which is one of the most complex in the world today.

The Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia has always given close attention to this problem, as we do today, in the conviction that fundamentally the crisis in the Middle East involves fundamental principles of contemporary international relations, such as recognition of the right of peoples to self-determination and the right of States to live in peace and security; the prohibition of the appropriation of territories by force or other means; rejection of any policy of *fait accompli*; support for the freedom struggle of all peoples under foreign domination for their national independence; aid to countries and peoples which are opposed to violence and aggression; and the need to settle disputes through negotiations and by peaceful means.

Respect for all these principles, which form the basis of the policy of non-alignment, constitutes the only proper framework within which a just, lasting and comprehensive settlement can be sought to this and all other crises.

Starting from these basic principles, we believe that in order to settle the question of Palestine and the Middle East crisis as a whole, it is necessary to create the following conditions:

First, Israel must withdraw from all Arab and Palestinian territories occupied since 5 June 1967, including Jerusalem.

(Mr. Pesic, Yugoslavia)

Secondly, the implementation of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination, independence and sovereignty, including the right to establish their own State.

These rights have a political and legal basis, not only in the Charter, but also in a host of United Nations resolutions and decisions.

Thirdly, recognition of the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people and trustee of their rights to sovereignty and independence, because only a settlement reached with the genuine representatives of the people can be viable.

Fourthly, recognition of the right of all States of the Middle East to a national life in security and to an autonomous social development.

Fifthly, the exercise of the right of the Palestinian refugees to return to their homes. That right is based both on resolution 237 (1967) of the Security Council and on the universally accepted right of every individual freely to choose his own place of domicile.

Sixthly, a comprehensive approach in seeking a settlement based on United Nations decisions, with the full participation of all the parties, including the Palestine Liberation Organization, in the negotiations. Believing as we do that every people must have the right to determine its own future, we cannot accept partial and separate solutions at the expense of the Palestinian people.

Seventhly, the active participation of the United Nations in the implementation of all decisions, which means that effective means of inducing Israel to bow to its decisions must be sought in the United Nations Charter.

In accordance with our policy based on the principles of non-alignment, the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia will continue to give consistent support to the just struggle of the Palestinian people for the implementation of their legitimate rights. We will continue to work with tenacity and consistency for a comprehensive, peaceful, lasting and just solution of the crisis in the Middle East, bearing fully in mind the special responsibility of the United Nations and the active role that it must play in this matter.

I should like to recall here one of President Tito's last messages, which he issued last November to the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People on the occasion of the Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. He said, inter alia:

(Mr. Pesic, Yugoslavia)

"I should like to say once again that it is our profound conviction that any just and lasting settlement of the Middle East crisis must be based upon Israel's withdrawal from all territories occupied during the war of 5 June 1967 and upon the achievement of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to return to its homeland, the right to self-determination and the right to establish its own State.

"Recognition of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people is of decisive importance for the settlement of the crisis. Only a comprehensive solution can guarantee the existence of all peoples and States of this inflamed region in independence and security."

It is our profound belief that, even in the extremely complex conditions of today's international relations, the creation of the conditions for a comprehensive settlement of the Middle East crisis, by permitting the Palestinian people to achieve freedom and independence, is one of the most urgent tasks facing the United Nations. Therefore we hope for what has already been confirmed by the current debate: that this emergency special session will deal with the substance of the problem and that, aware of its responsibilities, the General Assembly will adopt decisions which will speed the settlement of the question of Palestine. The way to achieve this is to reject the policy of faits accomplis and to eliminate all consequences of aggression. We are convinced that only in this way will the present session signal a decisive turning point in the settlement of the question of Palestine and the whole of the Middle East crisis.

Mr. THORN (Luxembourg) (interpretation from French): The complex questions which are the subject of the present emergency special session of the General Assembly are, alas, not new to our Organization. They have been discussed seven times in the past months by the Security Council, and they remain before that Council.

The nine countries members of the European Community, on whose behalf I have the honour to speak today, have anxiously followed the development of the situation in that tortured region of the world. They deeply regret the hardening of the positions on both sides, when it is only dialogue and understanding that can prepare the road to peace. On many occasions, the Nine

(Mr. Thorn, Luxembourg)

have made known their views from this rostrum either through the Community's spokesman or through the heads of the delegations of the nine member countries of our Community. They believe that, today more than ever before, it is necessary that Europe make its voice heard and act in a more concrete manner in support of a return to peace. This is the purpose of the declaration issued a little over a month ago, on 13 June 1980, by the nine countries of the European Community after the European Council which was convened in Venice.

It is clear - and I should like to stress this point - that the stand taken by the nine countries members of the European Community finds its essential origin in our concern to promote and encourage a comprehensive solution of the Israeli-Arab conflict. The Nine are determined in this connexion to encourage all positive initiatives, whatever their source. But they consider that the close, traditional links and the common interests which unite Europe and the Middle East impel them to undertake the search for a peaceful solution.

Too much emotion, too much suffering, too much hatred has built up in a land which seemed, rather, predestined to harmony and brotherhood among its peoples. It is time for the language of violence to cease and for the commencement at last of an equal dialogue among all the parties concerned. It is also time to pass from rhetoric to concrete negotiation on the conditions and modalities for the restoration of peace.

This is how the declaration published at Venice should be understood. There must be no more ambiguity; we must recognize the facts as they are -- facts which until now we have been too inclined to skirt. For us, these facts are the State of Israel and the Palestinian people. The solution to the Middle East problem lies in their living together and in these two essential facts being reconciled.

In the view of the nine countries members of the European Community, there are two fundamental principles which are essential to the search for a comprehensive peace settlement: the right of all States in the region, including Israel, to existence and security, and justice for all peoples, which implies recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people.

This fundamental premise leads naturally and logically to everything else. First of all, as the Venice declaration said,

"All of the countries in the area are entitled to live in peace within secure, recognized and guaranteed borders. The necessary guarantees for

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a peace settlement should be provided by the United Nations by a decision of the Security Council and, if necessary, on the basis of other mutually agreed procedures. The Nine declare that they are prepared to participate within the framework of a comprehensive settlement in a system of concrete and binding international guarantees, including on the ground." (A/35/299-S/14009, p. 2)

Secondly,

"A just solution must finally be found to the Palestinian problem, which is not simply one of refugees. The Palestinian people, which is conscious of existing as such, must be placed in a position, by an appropriate process defined within the framework of the comprehensive peace settlement, to exercise fully its right to self-determination." (Ibid.)

The recognition and implementation of Israel's right to existence and to security and the Palestinian people's right to self-determination must be the basis of negotiations which must lead to a comprehensive peace settlement. Further, the Nine are convinced that no comprehensive and lasting peace settlement for the Middle East is possible if the occupation of territory by force continues.

They are also convinced that Israeli settlements are a serious obstacle to the peace process. Further they recognize the especially important role of the question of Jerusalem for all the parties involved, and they will accept no initiative aimed at changing the status of that city and they emphasize that any agreement on this matter must guarantee the right of free access for all to the Holy Places. Finally, the Nine believe that the renunciation of violence is a precondition - and an essential one - to constructive negotiations. A climate of confidence must be created; this is the indispensable element for a just and equitable solution of the Middle East conflict.

These are the bases, these are the principles on which the member countries of the European Community will base their efforts in searching for a peace settlement. These principles are - and must be - binding on all the parties concerned, and are therefore binding on the Palestinian people and on the PLO, which must be involved in the negotiations.

The Nine decided to make the necessary contacts with those parties - with all the parties - in order to find out about their positions and to be able, in

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the light of the results of these consultations, to determine the form which an initiative on our part might take.

The day before yesterday, the Foreign Ministers of the European Community countries decided on the practical procedures for this mission of making contact, a mission which I personally shall have the honour and the privilege - but above all the very difficult task - of leading as Acting President of those Ministers. This mission is to get under way immediately, and the Nine are aware that contacts with the various parties concerned will be marked by the feelings of friendship and co-operation which characterize the traditional links between Europe and the Middle East.

(Mr. Thorn, Luxembourg)

I have just stated - briefly, as you requested, Mr. President - the positions and the concerns of the nine countries members of the European Community on the Middle East conflict. It is on those bases - and those bases alone - that they are participating in this session. Unfortunately, the draft resolution that has been distributed does not at this time appear to be one that will be helpful in seeking comprehensive, just and lasting solution, which we advocate.

As representatives know, the Nine have always supported, and continue strongly to support, Security Council resolution 242 (1967). They recognize that this resolution is not adequate, or not completely adequate, particularly in so far as concerns the Palestinian people, and they have on several occasions explained their position in this regard. None the less, despite those inadequacies, the basic principles stated in that resolution continue to be of fundamental value for any settlement of the conflict. Accordingly, it is essential that any resolution adopted at this session should refer explicitly to resolution 242 (1967) and not conflict with it, which would be the case should we confine ourselves to addressing admonitions to Israel and inviting it to negotiate without offering it the guarantees essential to its existence.

The Nine will decide - and I stress this - how they will vote at this session on the basis of the criteria I have stated here. However, I should like, in conclusion, to express the hope that the outcome of this session will in the final analysis contribute to a slackening of tension rather than to confrontation.

The Nine are convinced that it is only through negotiation that peace can be restored in this region of the world, which has already suffered too much from confrontation and bloodshed.

Lastly, I should like, then, to emphasize Europe's determination, the determination of a unanimous and committed Europe, to take concrete action now towards the restoration of peace, which presupposes the establishment first of all of a climate of confidence, that is to say, the abandonment of every kind of extremism. In my talks with all those with whom I shall be meeting, I shall do my utmost to encourage understanding and dialogue, in the conviction that thus, and only thus, shall I be preparing the path towards peace.

Mr. AL-SAFFAR (Bahrain) (interpretation from Arabic): Mr. President, my delegation is very pleased to see you presiding over this emergency special session of the General Assembly on the question of Palestine, because you are particularly qualified to carry out this task in view of your great experience in United Nations affairs and your extensive knowledge of international politics. Further, you enjoy the confidence and respect of all the Members of the United Nations.

My delegation attaches special importance to this session and hopes that positive results which will have an influence on the crisis situation in the Middle East will be the natural outcome of our debate.

The General Assembly is holding this emergency special session at a time when the region of the Middle East is going through the most difficult period of its long history, for Israel, which at its inception was playing the role of a weak child, has today become an aggressive force, threatening its neighbours and the Palestinian people with extermination in pursuing its purpose of completely dominating Palestine and the occupied Arab territories. The true Zionist entity in Palestine has revealed itself to the world, because Israel is no longer content with the borders that were laid down in the partition resolution adopted in 1947; its greed goes beyond those borders, and Israel has constantly given proof of this. In recent years our Organization has not been able to implement all the resolutions adopted on the Middle East because of the failure of Israel and its allies to co-operate with the United Nations. Even the first resolution, which provides for the partition of Palestine and which constitutes the basic problem and the *raison d'être* of the Zionist entity, has not been respected by Israel's allies, although they were among the first to adopt it. For a very long time the General Assembly did not concern itself with the substance of the problem of the Middle East, which is the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination.

It is clear today, especially after the signing of the Camp David agreements and their failure to provide a just solution of the problem of the Middle East and to establish peace in the area, that it is essential for the Palestinian people, represented by the Palestine Liberation Organization, to participate in all negotiations aimed at finding a solution of the problem of the Middle East. Otherwise, the crisis will continue and peace will not be restored.

(Mr. Al-Saffar, Bahrain)

There is a consensus in the international community on the need for the participation of the PLO in all negotiations aimed at arriving at a peaceful and just solution of the question of Palestine, on an equal footing with all the other parties concerned. In 1974 the General Assembly showed that it realized that the crisis in the Middle East could not be resolved without recognizing the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and the Palestine Liberation Organization as the sole legitimate representative of that people.

The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People is the outcome of the General Assembly's growing awareness of the path that must be followed to arrive at a solution of the Middle East crisis. Similarly, that Committee is the fruit of the world-wide consensus on the Middle East crisis.

On this occasion, I should like to express our thanks and appreciation to the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, represented by its Chairman, Mr. Kane, of Senegal, and its Rapporteur, Mr. Gauci, of Malta, for the efforts that have been made in carrying out its task during the past few years and for having promoted the holding of this session.

At a time when the General Assembly has become aware of the reality of the Middle East problem, the Security Council - which is considered to be the highest authority of the Organization and which is responsible in the preservation and maintenance of world peace - has not yet succeeded in playing an effective role in the search for a solution of this problem because of the negative attitude adopted by the United States whenever the question of Palestine and of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination are considered. Even the ill-famed resolution 242 (1967), adopted by the Security Council in November 1967, which Israel and its allies consider to be the basis for a solution of the problem, has not yet been implemented, although Israel claims it is keeping to this incomplete resolution.

(Mr. Al-Saffar, Bahrain)

Pursuant to its mandate from the General Assembly, the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People has undertaken the task of preparing recommendations for the restoration of peace and security in the Middle East. Although those recommendations have been in keeping with the principles of international law and in keeping with the principles of the United Nations Charter, Israel, as usual, has not implemented them, and the Security Council has further not been able to discharge its responsibility because of the negative attitude adopted by the United States vis-à-vis the question of Palestine. While the Security Council is unable to adopt and implement its resolutions, Israel is pursuing its acts of aggression against the Palestinian people and its policy of expansion and of the occupation of Arab lands.

It is clear that the material and military support provided to Israel by the United States has encouraged the former to pursue these aggressive policies against the neighbouring Arab countries, just as this support has encouraged Israel to pursue its inhumane policies regarding the Palestinian people and to disregard the United Nations resolutions.

The world today realizes that Israel does not really want peace, but that it wants to dominate the whole of Palestine and certain neighbouring Arab lands through war and constant acts of aggression. The Israeli authorities, by continuing to occupy Arab lands, aim to turn this occupation into a national policy which aims at establishing permanent leases for their illegitimate occupation of Arab lands and for their final annexation.

It is clear that Israel's measures in Arab lands over the past few years have been aimed at achieving those objectives. Ever since Israel occupied the West Bank of the River Jordan in 1967 it has been setting up settlements which very often are near Arab towns and villages. These settlements are established on land confiscated from Arabs in flagrant contravention of international law and the resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council. In the Holy City of Jerusalem, Israel has driven the Arab people from their homes and has confiscated Arab lands devoted to moslem charitable purposes. It has deliberately destroyed historical monuments in order to erase what was left of the Arab character of the city and to pave the way for its transformation into a purely Jewish city. Israel has deliberately destroyed entire Arab lares

(Mr. Al-Shaffar, Bahrain)

and has doubled the number of Jewish inhabitants in the city. According to the report prepared by the Commission of Inquiry, which was set up under Security Council resolution 446 (1979), the Arab population since 1967 has decreased by 32 per cent, while 12 Israeli lares have been built on the ruins of former Arab lares and now 50,000 Jews live there. The whole purpose of this is to turn the entire city into a Jewish city, scorning the aspirations of millions of Moslems and Christians who wish to preserve the religious character of the city of Jerusalem for Moslems, Christians and Jews. If the Jews have historical bonds with the Holy City of Jerusalem, the other religions are also bound to it by historical and religious ties. The City of Jerusalem has a very special place in the hearts of Christians and Moslems throughout the world and the Arab population has preserved the special status of Jerusalem over the centuries and they have never tried to make Jerusalem their capital. Throughout its entire history the city has been open to all religions, without any exceptions whatsoever, whereas today we note that Israel is trying to make that city its capital, thereby scorning the feelings and aspirations of those who follow other religions. In the last month Israel has set up a plan to annex the city of Jerusalem once and for all and to turn it into Israel's capital. Only yesterday this plan was submitted to the Israeli Parliament for adoption. Since 1967, when Israel occupied the city, it has constantly worked to set up this plan and try to implement it.

The reaction of the Security Council and the General Assembly has been quite clear. The Security Council and the General Assembly have asked Israel to refrain from adopting any measure involving the modification of the legal status, the geographical and historical features or the demographic composition of any Arab areas occupied by Israel in 1967, including Jerusalem.

The United Nations has, then, opposed this Israeli plan and its opposition is based on fundamental principles of international law and the principles of the United Nations Charter.

Recent events in occupied Arab territory have given rise to concern and should prompt the international Organization to take speedy action to put an end to Israeli violations of human rights in Palestine and to compel Israeli forces to withdraw from Arab territory.

(Mr. Al-Shaffar, Bahrain)

Israel has perpetrated inhuman and brutal acts against the Palestinian people, both those in exile and those under occupation. The savage raids on Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon still cause dozens of victims among women, children and old people. In the occupied territories the Israeli authorities have even thrown large numbers of young Palestinians into prison and often there have been mass arrests and they have been expelled from their homeland. More recently Israel has resorted to attempts to assassinate Arab leaders who have refused to submit to the policy of fait accompli and to be driven to participate in the conspiracy organized against the Palestinian people at Camp David. The international community still recalls the most recent attempt on the life of Bassam Al Shaka and his colleague Mr. Karim Khalef, Mayor of Ramallah.

(Mr. Al-Saffar, Bahrain)

The Zionist fanatics, with the support of the Israeli Government, have perpetrated a number of acts which have been of constant concern to us. What is taking place in that part of the world is the result of the wayward policies that Israel pursues in that area, policies which are based on the military assistance and the moral and material support provided by the United States. The continued occupation of Arab territories and the violations of human rights in the area by Israel will certainly not lead to a peaceful solution of the problem of the Middle East. Those policies are being resisted by the Palestinian people. The Palestinians are now more aware than ever before of their legitimate rights and they refuse to allow anybody else to negotiate for them. The Zionist leaders claim that they are prepared to live in peaceful coexistence with the Arabs, but quite obviously they would be willing to do so only if they keep the territories that they have occupied. Peace cannot be based on the use of violence against the disarmed inhabitants of the occupied territories or on the destruction of homes. Peace cannot be based on terrorism or on the confiscation of land or the property of others. Peace can only be based on justice and on the recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people to their homeland.

Everybody is aware of the fact that Israel has occupied a large portion of Arab land since 1967 -- and nobody can deny it. Israeli leaders in the past have pretended that they were prepared to withdraw from Arab occupied lands as part of a global settlement of the Middle East problem, thereby guaranteeing peace and security for all the parties concerned. But what is happening in that part of the world today and what we hear by way of statements does not seem to indicate any willingness on the part of Israel to withdraw from Arab lands or to stop expansionism. The same old tune is repeated, conveying the general intention of continuing the occupation of Arab land indefinitely.

The Israeli policy based on the establishment of settlements in occupied Arab lands has been condemned by the international community, including the United States, Israel's ally, which has stated that it considers that policy to be unlawful and that it is an obstacle to peace in the area. The Palestinian people

(Mr. Al-Saffar, Bahrain)

have not only refused to accept the settlements policy in their territory but they have resisted the occupation of that territory. Resistance to occupation is a sacred duty for all peoples, especially when the occupation involves settlements, and the Palestinian people are no different from any other people. They have suffered from occupation and from foreign settlements and they understand the true meaning of resistance. Resistance to foreign occupation is a heroic act which deserves the highest respect, esteem and admiration. For that reason, the Palestinian people will continue to resist the Israeli occupation of their land as long as any Israeli soldier or settler remains there.

The Camp David agreements, which some would say are aimed at achieving a just solution to the Middle East problem, have failed. Those agreements have not dealt with the substance and the cause of the Palestinian problem. The agreements have not taken into account the hundreds of thousands of Palestinians who have been driven from their land and they have not taken up the problem of Jerusalem. In general, they have said nothing at all about the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination.

It is now clear that since the signing of those agreements Israel has intensified the building of settlements for use by armed Jews. That policy obviously has led to an increase in armed acts of aggression against Arabs.

The United States has a major responsibility for the suffering of the Arab people both within their territory and in exile in Lebanon as a result of the destructive weapons which the United States supplies to Israel. How much longer will Israel continue to defy the international community represented by the United Nations? How much longer will Israel continue to occupy Arab lands? How much longer will Israel continue with its aggressive policies against Arabs and with its policy of terrorism and extermination directed against the Palestinian people? How much longer will the United States continue to support those policies? It is high time for the international community, represented by this Assembly, to put an end to Israel's policy of expansion and terrorism in the occupied Arab territories; it is high time for States to stop supporting that policy, either directly or indirectly.

Mr. MARINESCU (Romania) (interpretation from French): As we have often had occasion to state from this rostrum, socialist Romania and the President of my country, Nicolae Ceausescu, attach every special importance to the solution of the problem of the Palestinian people, which is the subject of this emergency special session of the United Nations General Assembly.

The Romanian people throughout its long history has waged a permanent struggle for its freedom and national independence and for economic and social progress. It fully understands the Palestinian people and stands side by side with them in their tireless efforts to affirm their national identity, to achieve the recognition of their inalienable national rights and to enjoy freedom and dignity in their lives.

This position taken by my country is part of the very essence of our foreign policy, which supports and continually works for a settlement of all international conflicts and disputes exclusively through peaceful means. In keeping with this policy, Romania has supported, and continues actively to support, all efforts to establish a global, just and lasting peace in the Middle East and to find a settlement for the problem of the Palestinian people in accordance with their legitimate rights.

In supporting the request for the convening of this emergency special session, we proceeded from three premises. First, the disturbing deterioration in the last few months of the situation in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, a result of the continuing military occupation of those territories by Israel, which has confirmed the fact, if there were any need for confirmation, that there is a serious danger of new military eruptions in the Middle East which would have very serious consequences for the fate of peace in the region and throughout the world.

(Mr. Marinescu, Romania)

In view of this situation the United Nations, which has primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, must make further determined efforts to go beyond its current impasse, to move towards a just solution to the Palestinian problem and to achieve a peaceful over-all solution to the Middle East conflict. That is what we consider to be the principal purpose of this session of the General Assembly.

Romania, like most of the international community, is deeply convinced that there is no rational alternative to a negotiated settlement of the Middle East situation. War is no answer. The tragic history of the region and of the Palestinian people themselves is there to prove that postponement of a political solution to the conflict has led only to further military confrontations, each more devastating than the last, and each armed confrontation has only further complicated the existing problems. That is why we feel that steps should be taken without any further delay to ensure the necessary conditions for serious peace negotiations among all the parties concerned. In our view, the current deliberations and the resolution that is to be adopted should make a positive and constructive contribution to the attainment of that objective.

Thirdly, our positive response to the initiative to convene this emergency special session stemmed from Romania's constant concern that the role and effectiveness of the United Nations in settling the major problems of the world of today should be enhanced. In our opinion, when a United Nations body is unable to discharge its functions that does not mean that the Organization as a whole has no other option than to abdicate the responsibilities for the maintenance of international peace and security which are incumbent on it under the Charter. We believe that in such circumstances it is up to all of the Member States, gathered in the General Assembly, to take a position on the dispute involved and to act in order to find a peaceful and universally acceptable solution in the interests of peace and international security and justice.

The basic elements of this problem, which is once again being discussed by the General Assembly, are well established. In its decisions on the question of Palestine, the General Assembly has recognized and reaffirmed the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, particularly their right to return,

(Mr. Marinescu, Romania)

their right to self-determination, and their right to independence and national sovereignty. The General Assembly has endorsed the view, which is very broadly shared, that viable peace cannot be established in the Middle East unless there is a just solution to the question of Palestine and implementation of the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people. Implementation of those rights certainly requires Israel's withdrawal from the Arab territories it occupied after the 1967 war, and a demand to that effect is formally included in many United Nations resolutions.

The General Assembly has granted the Palestine Liberation Organization, as the authentic and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, observer status in the United Nations, and it has invited the PLO to participate in all its work, including all the efforts and deliberations and conferences devoted to the Middle East organized under the auspices of the United Nations.

In recent years, international support for recognition of the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people has constantly increased. Recent developments in the positions of many countries on the need for and the basis of the solution to the question of Palestine and any lasting settlement in the Middle East convincingly demonstrate the growing awareness of the real factors involved in the Palestinian problem.

Today there is almost unanimous international agreement on recognition of the Palestinian dimension of the Middle East conflict as the cardinal element of any real peace settlement in the area and the need to provide a correct response to the question of Palestine that is in keeping with the fundamental principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the legitimate interests and aspirations of the Palestinian people and the interests of all the peoples of the region.

Under these circumstances, our task is not to define the objective of the peace settlement but rather to take a realistic approach and to agree on organizing practical and serious negotiations between the parties concerned with a view to actually achieving the peace, the main co-ordinates of which have already been determined by the United Nations.

(Mr. Marinescu, Romania)

Since the outbreak of the 1967 war, Romania has constantly advocated a political settlement of the conflict in the region. As we have emphasized more than once, we firmly support all efforts and all initiatives for a global, just and lasting peace in the Middle East based on Israel's withdrawal from the Arab territories it occupied following the 1967 war and a solution to the problem of the Palestinian people that is in keeping with its right to self-determination and the establishment of its own independent State, and based on a guarantee of the independence, integrity and sovereignty of all the States of the region.

As far as we are concerned, exercise by the Palestinian people of their right to self-determination is above all a matter of justice. This is a fundamental principle of the United Nations Charter. It applies to all the peoples of the world without exception, and it is the very basis of the contemporary international order. Full exercise of that right is closely linked to the fate of peace in the Middle East, because, as most are convinced, the establishment of a lasting atmosphere of peace, tranquillity and security in the Middle East can be achieved only if there is a just solution to the Palestinian problem. That is why, six years ago, Romania was one of those States that took the initiative of calling for the inclusion in the agenda of the General Assembly of an item on Palestine, regarded correctly as a national problem and an essential component of the Middle East conflict. The same considerations determined the position and action taken by my country as a member of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian people. It is also why Romania was one of the first countries of the world to recognize the Palestine Liberation Organization as the sole authentic and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, and Bucharest was one of the first capitals to have a permanent Palestinian representative.

My country's deep desire to contribute to a political solution of the Palestinian problem and to the establishment of peace in the Middle East has been reflected in many meetings and discussions between President Nicolae Ceausescu, the leaders of all the parties concerned, and the leaders of the Palestine Liberation Organization. Meetings, discussions and talks between the President of the Socialist Republic of Romania, Nicolae Ceausescu, and

(Mr. Marinescu, Romania)

the chairman of the executive council of the Palestine Liberation Organization, Yasser Arafat, have contributed to the development of friendly relations between the Romanian and Palestinian peoples and to the promotion of the just cause of the Palestinian people at the international level.

I should like to take this opportunity once again to express my country's firm determination to extend complete political, diplomatic, material and moral support to the Palestinian people and to do all that we can to establish a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

(Mr. Marinescu, Romania)

As I stated earlier, it is our belief that there is no alternative to a negotiated solution of the problems of the Middle East. We also firmly believe that the hour is late and that the moment of decision can no longer be put off without incurring very serious risks. The very convening of this emergency special session of the General Assembly reflects the broadly based view in the international community that there is an urgent need for sustained political and diplomatic action with a view to achieving an over-all settlement in the Middle East.

As was emphasized in the communiqué issued on the meeting of the President of Romania with a large delegation of the Palestine Liberation Organization which visited Romania earlier this week, under present circumstances, new initiatives and new actions are required to bring about an over-all political solution of the situation in the region that can lead to the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East, in keeping with the interests of all the peoples of the region and of international peace and security.

This debate on the question of Palestine has highlighted once again the need to enhance the role of the United Nations in the process of finding a settlement of the Middle East situation. It appears to us that the very idea of a negotiated solution implies, as a logical and substantive corollary, the establishment of an international context or framework, under the aegis of the United Nations, for official and unofficial contacts in which all the parties concerned can participate and agree on how to bring peace to the Middle East.

As we have stated before in this Assembly, Romania believes that such a political settlement can be negotiated within the context of an international peace conference organized under the auspices and with the active participation of the United Nations. If such a conference is to be effective, it must be held with the participation of all the interested parties, including the PLO as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, the Soviet Union and the United States of America in their capacity as co-chairmen of the Geneva Conference, as well as with that of other States that can make a positive contribution to the process of bringing about a peaceful settlement of the conflict in the Middle East.

(Mr. Iarinescu, Romania)

In that connexion it is appropriate to recall that in its resolution 34/65, adopted by a large majority at its last session, the General Assembly endorsed the idea that it was important to convene such an international conference in the present circumstances.

There is no need to labour the point that, any peace settlement is to be workable, it must have the explicit support of all the parties to the conflict. Accordingly, it must emerge from negotiations carried on among all the parties on a basis of equality.

With regard to the participation in the negotiations of authorized representatives of the Palestinian people, we believe that the presence of the PLO is fully justified, juridically, politically and morally. Indeed, it is up to the Palestinian people to decide upon the competent authority that will lead and represent them faithfully and the PLO has clearly become that representative from both the national and the international points of view. The participation of the PLO in the negotiations is also necessary as a precondition for the future of a lasting peace, for the PLO is the only Palestinian authority able to assume valid obligations on behalf of its people and to ensure the adherence of the Palestinian people to the over-all settlement that will ultimately be negotiated.

The situation in the Middle East remains dangerous and indeed is further deteriorating, which indicates to the Romanian delegation that we must intensify our efforts, first of all within the context of the United Nations, with a view to negotiating an over-all political solution in the region. The path to a real peace, to security for the peoples of the region, cannot and will not be achieved, as historical experience amply demonstrates, by the continued occupation of foreign territories.

In the light of that experience, as well as of the dangerous tension in the area, it is clear that clinging to rigid positions, dodging the issue of the withdrawal of Israeli troops from the Arab territories occupied by force since 1967, and refusing to recognize the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people are factors which perpetuate instability and are a source of conflict and confrontation.

(Mr. Marinescu, Romania)

Given the imperative need for a political solution of the Middle East conflict, Romania has expressed and reiterates its disapproval of Israel's illegal practices and acts in the occupied Palestinian and Arab territories, including East Jerusalem. In our view, there must be an end to the discriminatory and oppressive measures taken against the Palestinian Arab population as a fundamental prerequisite for any progress towards an over-all settlement of the Middle East situation. We are convinced that a just and lasting settlement of the conflict would be in the best interests of the economic and social progress of all States and all peoples in the Middle East, as well as in the interests of international peace, security and co-operation. The establishment of peace would enable the Palestinian people to devote their resources and their talents to shaping a free and independent future. That would ensure for all the peoples in the region, including the Israeli people, true security based on relations of mutual understanding and peaceful co-operation with the neighbouring Arab peoples.

In that connexion, as the Romanian Government has already stressed, the Government of Israel must understand that the security and independence of Israel can only be ensured to the extent that it respects the independence and security of others, the right of the Palestinian people to freedom, its right to its own State and to independence, within the framework of an over-all peace that would guarantee to all the States and peoples in the region their right to independence and territorial integrity.

The pressing need for an immediate solution of the Middle East conflict highlights the importance of all parties' eschewing any measures and actions that might increase tension and further aggravate the existing situation and intensifying their efforts to achieve an over-all political solution.

Before concluding, I should simply like to reaffirm the determination of Romania to do all it can to contribute to the establishment, without delay, of a global, just and lasting peace in the Middle East. We consider that it is absolutely essential that the General Assembly, both in this debate and in the decisions it will adopt, make a tangible contribution to the establishment of such a peace in that important region of the world.

Mr. BELKHODJA (Tunisia) (interpretation from Arabic): Mr. President, it is a great pleasure, on behalf of the Tunisian delegation, to convey to you our sincere greetings and to express to you our feelings of friendship and gratification at seeing you assume the responsibility of guiding our work and of presiding over this emergency special session of the General Assembly on the question of Palestine.

We greatly appreciate, Sir, your unshaken faith in the principles of our Organization and the outstanding qualities which mark you as a man of Africa, devoted to justice, peace and fraternity. We firmly believe that, thanks to your wisdom and your noble efforts, this session will meet the hopes our peoples have placed in it.

(Mr. Belkhodja, Tunisia)

I am also pleased to express our appreciation to Ambassador Falilou Kane the Permanent Representative of Senegal and Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, as well as to the members of that Committee, not only for their devotion but for their efforts to ensure that right, justice and law prevail.

I should be remiss if I failed to pay tribute to the devotion displayed and the tireless efforts made by Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim, who is doing his utmost to spread the benefits of peace, strengthen the spirit of international co-operation and ensure a just, lasting and comprehensive settlement of the Palestinian problem as well as of the over-all conflict in the Middle East, on the basis of the United Nations resolutions, thus helping to safeguard international peace and establish a basis for security and stability in the region.

To be sure, the General Assembly has periodically considered this very question and has already adopted many resolutions on it. However, in our view, this emergency special session is of particular significance: first of all, because of the immense hopes placed in it by so many peoples and countries, but, above all, because of the authority and power that this Assembly has, which will enable it to overcome the impasse stemming from the Security Council's failure to take a decision pursuant to its mandate and the resolutions of the General Assembly.

For more than 30 years, the Palestinian people has been subjected to oppression, domination and violence. This situation has become one of the major disputes of our time, a problem which has taken a heavy human toll upon a people that has fallen victim to one of the ugliest forms of injustice, persecution and rampant colonialism.

The Palestinians have been driven from their homes; their land has been snatched from them; their territory has been confiscated by force. At the same time, legions streaming in from abroad, alien to Palestine and the entire region, have been replacing them, having proclaimed on their very territory a State based on race and religion. This has been one of the most monstrous forms of settlement that history has ever known.

(Mr. Belkhodja, Tunisia)

From the very beginning, Israel adopted a Lebensraum policy by practising hegemony and by means of faits accomplis. In so doing, it has flouted, among other things, the resolutions of the United Nations, first and foremost resolution 181 (1947), of 29 November 1947, which lies at the origin of the State of Israel.

Even today, after imposing four wars on the Middle East, Israel shows nothing but scorn for the purposes and principles of the Charter of our Organization and stubbornly pursues its confiscations of Palestinian and neighbouring Arab lands; it refuses to evacuate the occupied territories and continues to deny the Palestinian people their legitimate rights in the face of the General Assembly resolutions on the subject. In this regard, Israel's refusal to co-operate with United Nations bodies is just further proof of the arrogance it displays with respect to the clearly expressed will of the international community and international law.

Thus Israel continues to run rampant in the occupied territories, annexing portions of them for the establishment of settlements, destroying houses and confiscating land from which it drives the Arab inhabitants, who are thus doomed to death or to exile without the right of return. Mass arrests, terrorism and torture have become daily practices within the occupied territories.

In the Holy City of Jerusalem, Israel stubbornly persists in its attempt to change the Arab and Islamic nature of its institutions, carrying its defiance so far as to proclaim its overt intention of turning the Holy City into the united capital of Zionist racism.

Stepping up its penetration of the occupied territories, Israel has pushed its aggression to the North, East and South and has even invaded Lebanese territory, in flagrant violation of Lebanese territorial integrity and sovereignty, and indeed continues to launch periodic acts of aggression against it on all fronts - by land, sea and air.

(Mr. Belkhodja, Tunisia)

Will the United Nations - made up, as it is, of peace- and justice-loving countries - allow this provocative and oppressive policy to continue indefinitely? Must we stand idly by as stability and peace are threatened with contemptuous disregard for all conventions and for international law and practice?

The threat is no longer just to Palestine, but to the entire Middle East and Mediterranean, because Israel has constantly - and still is spreading - instability in the area, having already disturbed the countries of the region and even threatened peace well beyond the area.

The international community has clearly perceived the gravity of the threat. The European Economic Community recently laid stress on it in Venice and, in this connexion, identified the danger and took a position aimed at preventing the situation from deteriorating further, it is already undermining peace inasmuch as it is such a serious threat to the world economic and financial situation.

Ever since the end of the Second World War, mankind has been devoting its efforts to the promotion of peace, prosperity and international co-operation. But in the Middle East, growing anarchy, terrorism and subversion have always resulted from Israel's deliberate policies. These policies have attracted their share of followers and have encouraged acts of subversion and hegemony against developing countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

The alleged need for lebensraum - and, more particularly, for territory in which to pursue its policies - is at the core of Israeli strategy and has nurtured that adventurism, on the pretext of self-defence, to the detriment of the smaller countries, in spite of the powerful means at the disposal of the upholders of this doctrine. The condoning of Israeli policy, and the impasse in which the international community finds itself, have paved the way for other countries to use the same excuse to justify their own flagrant invasions.

(Mr. Belkhodja, Tunisia)

Israeli methods have served as an example for certain countries which don the same hypocritical mantle in their adventures in Africa and Asia. Thus it is that certain countries, in the name of security, have tried to impose client-Governments on their neighbours and to provide them with military means to maintain themselves in power against the will of their own peoples. The South African régime is rampaging against Angola on the strength of similar allegations. It is much to be feared that such policies, based on the supposed need for lebensraum and on expansion in the name of security, may re-emerge as they existed in the heyday of Nazism, which was fought by both East and West.

(Mr. Belkhodja, Tunisia)

Tunisia cannot condone the occupation of any territory, of any country, no matter what slogans may be used to support that occupation. Such a practice inevitably leads to the strong dominating the weak and to substitution of the law of the jungle for the rule of law and justice.

In the hope that our friends among the great Powers know where their true interests lie, we trust that the United Nations, and in particular the permanent members of the Security Council, will put an end to Israel's acts of defiance and oppose any attempt to undermine the right of peoples to dignity and independence.

All Member States, and especially the weaker Members, have placed their hopes in the United Nations; all are committed to protecting the security and integrity of every country against any form of foreign aggression. In this area, our Organization has had considerable success and has prevented certain serious crises. It is up to our Organization once again to devote its energy to the problem of Palestine, to take up the challenge and to spare us any further destruction. It is necessary that all peace-loving countries co-ordinate their efforts to protect the world from destruction and to preserve the fruit of our civilization - freedom, knowledge and culture - the product of the efforts of successive generations from the birth of mankind. It is our duty to mobilize our efforts and our capacities to defend the principles which underlie the creation of our Organization and to protect, firmly, disinterestedly and sincerely, the weaker against intervention and subversion.

It is only in this way that our Organization can make a firm and effective contribution to a better future for mankind. It requires that we discharge our responsibility fully and do our duty, whatever the price, particularly when the international community is called on to oppose Israel's ambitions and those of all States basing their policies on hegemonism and on a desire to dominate the weak.

Tunisia, which has known and fought against settler colonization, fully understands the ferocity of such colonialism, its greed and stubbornness. We know that Israel wishes to continue with its occupation, to defy morality and law and to remove all traces of Arab-Islamic civilization in the occupied territories; but it will never succeed in destroying a right for which a militant people are fighting. Tunisia has followed all the stages of the question of Palestine

(Mr. Belkhodja, Tunisia)

and will never stray from its support for the just struggle of the Palestinian people or from active solidarity with the cause of law, justice, freedom and independence.

In November 1937, the leader of the neo-Destour Party, Habib Bourguiba, affirmed the support of the Tunisian people for the Palestinian people in its struggle for freedom and independence.

On 4 March 1946, in Cairo, Bourguiba, speaking on behalf of the peoples of the Arab Maghreb before the Anglo-American Commission entrusted with studying the Palestinian problem, refuted Zionist allegations made at the time and affirmed that peace in Palestine required the eradication of the Zionist mentality among the Jews.

On 3 March 1965, President Habib Bourguiba, in a solemn speech delivered in Jericho, invited the Palestinian people to put their faith in international law which had fixed the borders of the State of Israel and had by the same act decided on the establishment of a Palestinian Arab State in Palestine.

On 15 May 1968, during an official visit to Washington directly after the war of June 1967, President Bourguiba stated:

"The new element in this context is the re-emergence of the Palestinians themselves on the field of battle... Scarcely a day goes by without our seeing ever more obvious traces of their presence... I appeal to all statesmen to take **this** element into account and to avoid basing their consideration of the problem on outmoded data".

The President added:

"I do not want to be called an extremist, but I say that we Tunisians support this struggle because it is just and because we are convinced that it alone will lead to a lasting settlement".

On 20 May 1968, speaking from this rostrum President Bourguiba stated:

"... Whatever that solution may be, it can only be conceived with the participation and with the agreement of the principal party concerned: the Palestinian people". (1658th meeting, para. 15)

(Mr. Belkhodja, Tunisia)

The Palestinian people has time and time again, through its sole legitimate representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization, demonstrated that it is prepared to discharge its full responsibility in this area as the party with the most right on its side, seeing that it is the victim of aggression.

As far as we are concerned, we are prepared to assume our responsibility towards that people? Steps that have already been taken outside the Organization have ended in the exclusion of Egypt from the Arab family, to its retirement from the field of battle and to the paralysis of its military potential, which will doubtless have an effect on the balance of power in the region. Egypt would, of course, have it that progress has been made, but the fact of the matter is that it has, in the final analysis, weakened the ranks of those countries that would like to see a just and lasting peace established in the area. In the meantime, Israel continues to pursue its policies. The situation has become worse, while claims are made of progress in the process of a peaceful settlement. It is time that our Organization brought the necessary pressure to bear on Israel to induce it to bow to a comprehensive settlement based on the true nature of the problem and on the unequivocal recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people.

The fundamental settlement of the problem must, in our view, be based on four elements: first, the question of Palestine must be considered as being at the very heart of the problem of the Middle East as a whole; secondly, the Palestine Liberation Organization must be admitted as a full partner inasmuch as it is the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people; thirdly, we must restore international legality which has recognized the right of the Palestinian people to return to their homes, to self-determination and to the establishment of their State on their own territory; and fourthly, we must ensure the withdrawal of Israel from all occupied Arab and Palestinian territories, including the Holy City of Jerusalem, in keeping with international law which condemned the acquisition of territories by force.

These are the essential conditions for a just and lasting peace in the Middle East and to put an end to an unjust situation that has lasted for over a century.

(Mr. Belkhodja, Tunisia)

We are convinced that such a solution will open wide prospects for coexistence between peoples in stability and peace in this land where there has been bloodshed for the past 40 years and that it will spare mankind the perils of war and constant confrontation.

Quite recently the Security Council met and, because of the use of the veto, was unable to reach the decisions that were required to put an end to injustice and to restore law and order. That is why we have convened this emergency special session. In fact, we fear that the present situation in the area, which is characterized by the absence of a just and comprehensive solution of the Palestine question and by a policy of domination, repression and defiance on the part of Israel, may lead to a widespread confrontation that will contain the seeds not only of the destruction of the countries of the region, but also of all our countries and values.

(Mr. Belkhodja, Tunisia)

In spite of these fears and these dangers, we dare to hope - for it is man's nature to hope - that wisdom and realism will prevail and that we shall succeed, by joining our efforts, in ensuring that the supreme interest wins out over the short-term interests that guide the choice of some parties and in compelling Israel to accept the simple facts, even if this is contrary to its custom. We should undoubtedly then be able to put an end to the manoeuvres and subterfuges which have permitted it up to now to perpetuate the status quo, but which inevitably lead to stalemate, if they do not spark off a third world war.

Have Israel and its allies - especially those with the primary responsibilities in the maintenance of international peace and security - seriously considered where the status quo will lead, if Israel is supported in its obstructive attitude? And is it even realistic to think in terms of an indefinite continuation of the status quo? Can we not imagine what would happen in such a case?

The formal recognition of the rights of the Palestinian people is necessary not only in justice and under the law, but also because that people exists whether we wish it or not. Whatever Israel's pretexts and excuses, it is in no way possible to turn back the course of history: attempts to do this in the past have always led only to destruction and ruin.

Thus, we continue to hope that wisdom and realism will prevail. In that way, we shall have restored to the Palestinian people its right and its homeland, to the Middle East stability and to the world security and peace.

Mr. ALWAN (Iraq) (interpretation from Arabic): Mr. Président, it is my pleasure to express to you our great appreciation for your efforts and for your wisdom and objectivity in the course of your presidency of the General Assembly. I should also like to say how much we esteem and respect the courageous attitude you have adopted at this lofty international rostrum. We should also like to express our gratitude for the reports which have been prepared by the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. Those reports have shown great accuracy, objectivity and are the expression by the members of the Committee of their sense of responsibility

(Mr. Alwan, Iraq)

in regard to the cause of the Palestinian people and its just struggle for its inalienable rights. I wish to thank, in particular, Ambassador Kane, the Chairman of the Committee and the Committee's Rapporteur, Ambassador Gauci, for their great efforts in this connexion.

After the Security Council failed to produce a just and lasting solution of the question of Palestine, this emergency special session of the General Assembly was convened pursuant to the resolution adopted by the General Assembly at its last regular session, in response to the resolution adopted by the Summit Conference of the non-aligned countries and in conformity with the resolutions of Arab and Islamic summit conferences. The whole world, as represented by this international Organization, today affirms that the reason for the Security Council's failure to produce a resolution on the question of Palestine that would lead to a just and lasting peace that would be upheld by the overwhelming majority of the international community is the stubbornness of the Zionist entity and its failure to comply with General Assembly resolutions regarding that question, and its constant defiance of the authority of the General Assembly and the Security Council. That failure was due also to the constant, unlimited support given Israel by the United States in various areas, military, political, economic and humanitarian and to the use of the veto by the United States, which made it impossible for the Council to agree on the long-desired solution to the problem of Palestine by adopting a resolution which would have guaranteed the withdrawal of the Zionist occupation forces from all occupied Arab territories, including Jerusalem.

We are convinced that the members of the Security Council sincerely wanted such a solution, but the stubbornness of the United States and its partiality in favouring aggression led to failure.

In response to the unanimous will of the international community, this session must now adopt practical solutions which will be implemented by all the parties.

(Mr. Alwan, Iraq)

No international problem has been so closely linked to the United Nations as this problem. Since early in 1947 when Great Britain submitted the question of Palestine to the United Nations this Organization and various United Nations-related bodies have adopted more than 400 resolutions. As this Organization has moved ever closer to universality the General Assembly has adopted relevant resolutions, in particular resolution 3236 (XXIX) in 1974, which put the question of Palestine in the proper perspective. From that time on, it was defined as the cause of a people and their inalienable rights, and was no longer considered a question of refugees. Since then there have been other resolutions which have stressed the recognition of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, thus giving expression to a world-wide consensus regarding the fact that these rights must be viewed as the substance of the Palestinian problem which is in turn the core of what has come to be known as the Middle East conflict.

These developments have proved that the international community feels that there can be no solution to the problem of the Middle East without a proper settlement of the cause of the Palestinian people, guaranteeing their right to return to their homes, their right to a nation and their right to the creation of an independent State in their homeland.

(Mr. Alwan, Iraq)

This unanimous recognition by all the countries and Governments of the world of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people has prompted us to consider the Zionist entity and its aggressive policies. It was the first country to scorn United Nations resolutions and refuse to comply with them. The Palestinian people has been enduring this situation for the past 30 years, and is now suffering under a new form of colonialism which no other people in the modern world has had to experience. It has been subjected not only to Zionist occupation but also to all forms of racial discrimination and persecution. In addition, the 2 million Palestinians who have been expelled from their historical homeland and forced to live in exile have been replaced by approximately 2 million persons who have left their countries of origin - mainly in Europe - and entered Palestine by force in order to colonize it.

All that is taking place at a time when the world has been witnessing and is still witnessing the disappearance from almost all parts of the world of all those inhuman practices and phenomena which the international community rejects.

The Zionist entity persists in considering the question of Palestine as a conflict between Israel and the neighbouring Arab countries, simply ignoring the existence of the Palestinian people, the original owners of the land and the victims of the Zionist invasion of Palestine. An illustration of this is provided by all the misleading invitations to what are termed Arab-Zionist negotiations and peace conferences aimed at forcing the Arab party to recognize the fact of the Israeli invasion of Arab territories and the Judaization of Palestine, while disregarding the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. Within the framework of this Zionist plan come the Camp David accords and the separate peace treaty between the Zionist entity and Sadat's régime. These simply reaffirm Israel's persistence in denying the rights of the Palestinian people and losing sight of them through partial and separate solutions which enable it to impose its will on a given party by force and thereby find a means to compel other parties to accept formulas that have in fact already been rejected.

Any agreement based on the exploitation of advantages deriving from the power of the aggressor or made available to it to be used against the victim so as to force it to accept a fait accompli is in fact an unlawful agreement. Nor is it a permanent solution; it is sheer blackmail in order to divert and side-track progress towards a solution. That is what happened at Camp David

(Mr. Alwan, Iraq)

where the Zionists used the force they derived from American support to get a separate peace treaty signed with the Sadat régime. Hence the rejection by the Arabs of those accords which they consider a threat to world peace and something that will simply usher in an era in which unrest and disturbances in the Arab fatherland in particular and the Middle East in general will increase. This will undermine all international efforts to arrive at a stable world with no war, with no hotbeds of tension.

The Baghdad and Tunis Summits reaffirmed the guarantee of the full rights of the Palestinian people and set up a plan of action of the Arab countries, enabling them to prevent the implementation of the Zionist-American plan, which aims at imposing complete hegemony on the Arab fatherland.

A critical situation is developing in a very frightening way in the Arab area, which is one of the most sensitive areas of the whole world. Everybody knows why. It is because of the aggressive and extremist Zionist policy hostile to the Arabs and their historical and legitimate rights, which have been recognized by the international community. Despite condemnation of the Jewish settlement policy by the United Nations and world public opinion Menachem Begin's Government is insisting on and persisting in establishing settlements in the occupied Arab territories. The number of such settlements is now 130. This activity is accompanied by the criminal destruction and devastation of Arab villages in the occupied Arab territories and, indeed, within the Zionist entity itself. A total of 385 Arab villages inside Israel have been destroyed since 1967.

Here we must emphasize the persistence of Begin's Government in annexing the Arab City of Jerusalem and considering it the capital of Israel, despite the fact that the whole world rejects that annexation.

More recently, the Zionist entity has been constantly organizing murderous operations, such as those directed against the mayors of the West Bank, and the expulsion of other mayors, in addition to the usual policy of the Zionist entity based on persecution of the Arab population, and the imprisonment of Arabs. There has been moral and physical torture and people have been expelled from their own territory. The emigration of Jews throughout the world is being encouraged; they are going to Palestine to live in the houses and on the land of the Arabs who were expelled by force.

(Mr. Alwan, Iraq)

This emergency special session must consider all recent developments and aspects of the situation, taking into consideration the fact that the entire region is coming closer to another devastating conflagration - and this time the world would not escape the dangers of such a conflagration. For those reasons, exceptional efforts must be made in order to implement the just resolutions adopted by the international community as represented by this international Organization. This includes recognition of the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to self-determination and the establishment of their own independent State on the land of their ancestors.

Whereas the Security Council failed to reach a decision in this concern because of the American veto, I believe that it is now the duty of this session of the General Assembly to get over that defeat and go beyond it. And here I must mention the danger of the American position with regard to the question of Palestine. The Washington Government is now the greatest supporter of the Zionist entity, encouraging it to practise invasion, aggression, occupation and expansion by giving it modern sophisticated weaponry and financial and technical aid without which it could not launch its aggression nor practise a policy of expansionism. Iraq strongly condemns the American policy in support and encouragement of the Zionist entity. We believe that it is a direct threat to the Arab nation and its interests and rights, and we wish to warn the American people and tell them that this policy will lead to an extremely dangerous situation, where the American people will have to pay the exorbitant price of their policy. It is certainly not in their interest to continue following that policy.

(Mr. Alwan, Iraq)

It is regrettable that the candidates for the United States Presidency are competing with one another to increase their support for the Zionist entity and their hostility to the Arab peoples. This is an indication either of their complete ignorance of the situation or of a direct submission to Zionist pressures, and is at the same time evidence of their disregard and contempt for United Nations resolutions. We may also confirm that the military, financial and technical support provided by the United States to the Zionist entity is no longer the only source of threats to world peace. The relations between the Zionist entity and the similar régime in South Africa have become a new source of danger, particularly in the nuclear and nuclear weapons field, because the fact that the two racist régimes in South Africa and occupied Palestine possess nuclear weapons will place the whole world in an extremely complicated and dangerous situation.

Peace does not mean that we have to give in to the blackmail of force. Peace cannot be based on partial solutions which would enable the aggressor to enjoy the fruits of his aggression. Peace is a process based on the guarantee of the full rights of the Palestinian people, the withdrawal of the invading Israeli forces from all the occupied Arab territories - and primarily from Jerusalem - and devising guarantees that would contain the aggressive and expansionist nature of the Zionist entity.

What are we asking this session to do? We understand that previous attitudes and previous resolutions adopted by the United Nations through their various organs require us to make special efforts this time and evolve a direct practical procedure. To ensure that the United Nations resolutions no longer remain purely theoretical, and to let them gain strength through actual implementation, we must demand to know the reason why these resolutions have not been implemented - although they are directly related to the Palestinian issue, especially resolution 3236 (XXIX) - and consider or propose means to ensure their implementation.

For all those reasons, it might be a good idea to set up some specialized body responsible for that task, or to entrust it to one of the bodies concerned, such as the Special Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, so that it may achieve the withdrawal of the Zionists

(Mr. Alwan, Iraq)

from all the occupied Arab and Palestinian territories, including Jerusalem, in accordance with previous resolutions of the United Nations, and compel the Government of Tel Aviv to carry out that withdrawal and allow the Palestinian people to return to their homeland, where adequate conditions must be provided for them to exercise their right to self-determination and establish their own independent State.

We also call on all States to stop providing any military, economic or other assistance to Israel that enables it to continue its aggressive policy.

These are the components of a just and comprehensive settlement of the problems of Palestine and the Middle East. If we intend to be serious in achieving the required solution, our Organization must force the Zionist entity to comply with its resolutions. If we succeed in reaching a formula for this, we may indeed be able to say that the world has started to get away from the crater of the destructive volcano which has been in constant eruption for more than 30 years. The persistence of the Zionist entity in its previous attitude and its failure to comply with United Nations resolutions require that we impose military, political, economic, and cultural sanctions upon it, under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter.

The meeting rose at 1.45 p.m.