



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 37th MEETING

Chairman: Mrs. NOWOTNY (Austria)

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AGENDA ITEM 64: REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE ISRAELI PRACTICES  
AFFECTING THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE POPULATION OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES (continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 64: REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE ISRAELI PRACTICES AFFECTING THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE POPULATION OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES (continued) (A/36/579, A/36/585, A/36/588)

1. Mr. OKWONGA (Uganda) recalled that by its resolution 2443 (XXIII), the General Assembly had established the Special Committee "to investigate Israeli practices affecting the human rights of the population of the occupied territories" and requested the Government of Israel to receive the Special Committee, co-operate with it and facilitate its work, but the situation had not improved since 1968. On the contrary, it had continued to deteriorate and the Israeli authorities had failed completely to co-operate with the Special Committee; but the Committee had nevertheless continued and was continuing to discharge its responsibilities admirably and was keeping the international community informed of the Israeli atrocities in the occupied territories.

2. The report exposed the Government of Israel as the chief enemy of peace in the Middle East; it had undertaken large-scale expropriations of the Palestinians' property in the occupied territories; it had encouraged settlements in those territories against the wishes of the Palestinian people and the international community; it had devised a policy of oppression and systematic terror against the Palestinian population and had imposed collective punishments, and ordered the deportation and detention of Palestinians.

3. Despite the denials of the Israeli authorities, the settlements established in occupied territories were contrary to the fourth Geneva Convention, and to many General Assembly and Security Council resolutions. The uprooting and expulsion of the inhabitants of the occupied territories in order to make way for settlements on the basis of the dubious and dogmatic "homeland" doctrine was illegal and should be condemned.

4. In their public statements, the Israeli leaders had made no secret of their ambition to use the settlements as a means of extending the borders of Israel. For instance, Yigal Allon had said in an interview that if the empirical behaviour of the Government of Israel in determining the points of settlements was examined, it could be seen that those points added up to a concept: settlements were placed in strategically important areas along existing borderlines or in the vicinity of areas likely to become borderlines in the future. In the Jerusalem Post of 22 April 1980, Prime Minister Begin was reported to have reaffirmed that settlement in the occupied areas were the soul of zionism. On 5 November 1981, the British Broadcasting Corporation had reported a statement by the Minister of Defence that Israel would respond to the eight-point peace plan proposed by Saudi Arabia by building eight new settlements in the occupied territories. It was clear that the Israeli leadership was not yet ready for peace.

5. Another cause for great concern to his delegation was the policy applied by the Israeli Government in the occupied territories, the most notorious feature of which was collective punishment of the inhabitants of those territories, through the demolition or sealing off of buildings by security forces. That punishment was imposed in cases of alleged criminal activity, well before any judicial determination

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(Mr. Okwonga, Uganda)

of responsibility. That practice was a gross violation of the human rights of the population of the occupied territories. The concept of collective guilt was alien to all civilized judicial systems and Israel's invoking of the emergency defence regulations was nothing but a thinly veiled pretext for unleashing terror on the population.

6. The imposition of curfews was another common phenomenon which exposed the population to such consequences as food shortages and loss of business. The delegation of Uganda called upon the Government of Israel to abandon the policy and practice of collective punishment immediately, thus helping to create a favourable atmosphere for the initiation of the peace process.

7. In 1980 a number of prominent Palestinians had been expelled from the West Bank, including Mr. Fahed Kawasme, Mayor of Hebron, Mr. Mohammed Milhem, Mayor of Halhul, and Sheikh Rajab Al-Tamimi, Cadi of Hebron. It was stated in an editorial in The New York Times of 27 July 1981 that the Palestinians could be driven to Lebanon or some new place that was not their own, but they would bear with them a genuine nationalism that could not be bombed out of existence. The Israelis were therefore fighting for a lost cause. The only option which remained for them was to come to terms with the Palestinians by starting negotiations with the PLO, the sole authentic representative of the Palestinian people.

8. In conclusion, his delegation wished to reiterate that peace in the Middle East was possible only if the following principles were recognized: the Palestinian people's right to self-determination in its homeland without any external interference; the Palestinians' right to national independence and sovereignty in a State of their own; the right of the displaced and dispossessed Palestinians to return to their homes, coupled with the guarantee of prompt and adequate compensation for those who did not wish to return; Israel's withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories; restoration of Arab sovereignty over the City of Jerusalem and the preservation of its authentic historic and religious character.

9. Mr. MATYUKHIN (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that his delegation had given very careful consideration to the report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories (A/36/579), which attested to the tremendous amount of work done by the Special Committee; although the report covered a period of only a little over a year, it provided an objective presentation of a great number of facts and proof of the serious violations of human rights in the occupied territories.

10. In order to implement Israel's policy of annexing the territories it had usurped, the Israeli authorities imposed a régime of terror and repression on the population. To establish new settlements and expand the existing ones, the occupying forces confiscated land and destroyed property belonging to Arab settlers and denied them the most fundamental freedoms.

11. As was stated in paragraph 298 of the report, since the beginning of the occupation about 200,000 security prisoners and detainees had passed through the Israeli prisons; that figure equalled nearly 20 per cent of all the inhabitants of the occupied territories. As a result of Zionist imperialist aggression, the

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(Mr. Matyukhin, Byelorussian SSR)

Palestinians had been uprooted and exiled or discriminated against and deprived of their fundamental human rights and freedoms. The occupiers made systematic use of the most brutal and merciless colonialist methods which were a direct outcome of their racist ideology aimed at satisfying their own needs at the expense of other nations through the use of brute force.

12. The Israeli aggressors and their supporters were depriving nearly 4 million Palestinians of their native land, their property, and their most elementary human rights. The policies of the Zionists, aimed at expansion, pillage and destruction, had aroused the righteous anger of the world's peoples and was meeting with determined opposition from the population of the occupied territories, which was intensifying its struggle to realize its just aspirations.

13. Recent events in the region, as well as the material contained in the report under consideration and the statements made by other delegations, showed that Zionist circles were intensifying their policies of annexation and perpetuation of changes imposed on the geography and demographic composition of the usurped territories.

14. Negotiations for the so-called "administrative autonomy" of the Palestinians left no room for doubt as to the intentions of the Zionist: to deprive the Palestinian people of their inalienable rights to self-determination and to the establishment of their own independent Palestinian State and to annex for themselves the territories occupied since 1967.

15. One proof of the ambitious intention of the occupying authorities was the constant intensification of terror and violence; daily, outrages and excesses were committed, patriots were pursued and detained and were confined in cells and tortured or deported.

16. In the economic sphere, the Israeli Forces were endeavouring to impede artificially the agricultural development of the occupied territories in order to reduce the means of livelihood of the population and destroy the social schema. All that was with the objective of clearing the land and installing their own infrastructure. With the machinations designed to drive out the Palestinians from their own lands, impose on them Jewish settlements and assume control of water and other natural resources, the Israeli aggressors were trying to place the Palestinians in such extreme and unbearable situations that they had no choice but to abandon their homes and emigrate to other countries. As facts showed, the aggressors had not failed completely in their intentions: since 1967, the Arab population of Jerusalem had been reduced by 30 per cent and that of the Golan Heights by 92 per cent. All that constituted a grave violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention and the relevant resolutions of the United Nations and an insolent defiance of the decisions of the international community.

17. The Byelorussian SSR vehemently condemned the policies and practices of the Israeli leaders, which included mass repression of the population, suppression of their liberties, expulsion and racial discrimination. An end should be put to those illegal activities, which complicated still further the situation in the Middle East and certainly did not contribute to its peaceful solution.

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(Mr. Matyukhin, Byelorussian SSR)

18. Byelorussian SSR supported the just request that the Security Council should consider the possibility of applying to Israel the relevant sanctions, in conformity with Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations; and it gave its firm support to the just struggle of the Arab people to put an end to Israeli aggression and arrive at a just solution in the Middle East. No just and lasting solution could be achieved without the Palestine Liberation Organization, the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian Arab people; moreover, it was essential to achieve the total withdrawal of Israeli forces from the territories occupied since 1967, including the eastern sector of Jerusalem, and the restoration of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to self-determination and to the establishment of an independent Palestinian State. In other words, the right of all countries to live independently and in conditions of security should be guaranteed.

19. Mrs. MARCOULLIS (Cyprus) said that, since its establishment in 1968, the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories had given the international community substantive information on the policy of annexation, expropriation and colonization of the occupied territories. That policy, which was followed in many similar cases of foreign occupation, reflected the desire of the occupiers to change the legal status and demographic structure of the occupied territories by force, thereby facilitating the consolidation of their conquest and making it much more difficult to obtain their withdrawal. The policy had earned the reiterated censure of the international community, because it constituted direct defiance of the Organization and its Charter, seriously violated international law, contravened the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and, in addition, rejected many relevant resolutions of the United Nations.

20. In the report of the Special Committee, ample proofs were given of the constant policy of annexation and implantation of settlements. Since the previous year's report, a great number of new settlements had been created, existing ones had been extended and plans had been made for the creation of hundreds of new ones. During the period dealt with in the latest report, there had been large-scale expropriations of lands. The Government of Cyprus, as it had done on many previous occasions, reaffirmed its position, based on the well-established principle of non-acquisition of territory by military conquest. The occupation of territories by force was inadmissible and violated the fundamental principles of the Charter and international law in general.

21. Regrettably, since the establishment of the Organization, there had been many cases of the use of force against the territorial integrity and political independence of other States, and, in many parts of the world, there were still territories under foreign occupation. Once land had been occupied by force, the occupying country had the legal and moral obligation, under article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, not to deport or transport groups of its own civilian population to the occupied territory. The natural and logical consequence of that fundamental principle was that the benefits of aggression and military conquest should be denied to the occupying country, which lacked authority and any kind of justification for changing the legal status of the occupied territories or changing the demographic characteristic. On the contrary, it was not only the duty of the occupying

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(Mrs. Marcoullis, Cyprus)

territory to treat the unfortunate people under occupation with generosity and magnanimity, but it should also abstain from adopting measures which made withdrawal from the occupied territories and the achievement of a peaceful solution impossible.

22. The policy of creating faits accomplis through the use of force and violation of fundamental rights and freedoms of the peoples, both in the occupied Arab territories and elsewhere in the world, had been condemned and rejected by the international community. In the case of Israel, the policy of annexation and colonization affected the rights of the population of the occupied Arab territories and those of the displaced persons who had been expelled by force from their homes and properties and who were denied the inalienable right to return to their place of origin.

23. The current year's report of the Special Committee gave a dark picture of the situation of civilians in the occupied territories. The policies of demolition, destruction, expulsion, eviction and systematic oppression continued unabated, as was reflected in the report. Her delegation reiterated its position of firm and whole-hearted solidarity with the Palestinian people of the occupied territories and maintained that their civil, political, cultural and religious rights must be protected. No occupying country should take away or usurp those rights. The international community, through the Organization, had the legal and moral obligation to protect and restore those rights.

24. The rights of the Arab people of the occupied territories, as well as the rights of all those who had been expelled by force from their homes and become displaced persons, were, by their very nature, fundamental and inalienable. Her delegation reaffirmed once again the right of all displaced persons to return to their homes and lands of origin, whether in Palestine or elsewhere in the world. The occupying country could not deprive the Palestinian people of their national aspirations to self-determination and the establishment of their own sovereign State in Palestine. Aggression and occupation did not create any kind of right over the occupied territories, which must be restored to their rightful owners.

25. Mr. AL-HIJRI (Oman) said that the Special Committee's report (A/36/579) gave a clear picture of Israeli practices in the occupied territories. It should be emphasized that the information contained in the report came from Israeli sources. Israel was prepared to continue to apply its expansionist and aggressive policies, which involved the construction of new settlements and the expulsion of the indigenous population to replace it by Jewish immigrants. Those activities were a violation of the Charter and resolutions of the United Nations and the Fourth Geneva Convention. The Israeli authorities expelled the Arab population from their homes in order to force them to abandon the area and applied a policy of collective punishment from which old people, women and children were not excluded and which appeared to be worse than the policy applied by the Nazis in the Second World War.

26. Referring to an incident at a school in Ramallah in which 70 students had been arrested and beaten although they had committed no offence, he deplored the fact that the occupying authorities closed schools and universities and urged

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11- and 12-year-old girls to work in the fields and in factories, thereby preventing them from attending school. Such practices were a violation of the human rights of the Palestinian people which the United Nations had an obligation to safeguard.

27. His delegation urged all Member States to consider the Special Committee's report in general and paragraph 401 in particular.

28. Mr. ANSELMO (Guyana), referring to the Special Committee's report (A/36/579), said that Israeli violations of the human rights of the population of the occupied territories were so widespread that it was difficult to select any one aspect for special attention. He would, however, like to draw attention to the restriction placed on academic freedom. When the Special Political Committee had considered the item on the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, members had agreed that the most important contribution made by the Agency was its education services and that those services could not be cut back. His delegation therefore viewed with deep concern the measures taken by the occupying authorities to require all educational institutions and persons seeking teaching positions to obtain permits from the military authorities. Such restrictions undermined the right to education of the population of the occupied territories, a right to which they were entitled under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international law.

29. Another important issue that the report brought to light was the occupying authorities' implementation of annexation policies, in direct contradiction of the collective call by Member States for Israeli withdrawal from territories occupied since 1967.

30. The Palestinian people were waging a valiant struggle for freedom from Zionist domination which violated the basic principles of international law. The establishment of new settlements in the occupied Arab territories and the intensified aggression against the Arab population created a dangerous situation, the consequences of which for peace and stability could not be overemphasized.

31. His delegation was concerned lest the debate on Israeli practices came to be seen as merely an annual ritual. It was not sufficient to call on Israel to change its policies towards the population of the occupied territories. As the General Assembly had consistently maintained, Israel must put an end to its occupation of those territories.

32. The framework for peace in the region must include the following principles: Israeli withdrawal from all lands occupied since June 1967; restoration of the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to their own independent State; and recognition of the right of all States in the area to live within secure and mutually recognized boundaries.

33. The international community must vigorously condemn Israel's policies which, by obstructing progress within that framework, imperiled the peace and security of the Middle East.

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34. Mr. WAHBI (Saudi Arabia) recalled that the item under consideration had been on the General Assembly's agenda for several consecutive years. Each year, the Special Political Committee considered the report and the General Assembly condemned Israeli violations of earlier United Nations resolutions. Those resolutions, which grew longer by the year, had been disregarded by Israel in violation of the principles of the Charter, the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Israel continued and intensified its attacks, expelled the inhabitants of the occupied territories, created new settlements of Jewish inhabitants whom it armed so that they could attack the region's indigenous population, banished Arab leaders, destroyed property, arrested inhabitants of the territories without due cause and subjected them to collective punishment.

35. There was also systematic oppression in the field of education. Universities were closed and teachers dismissed. Syllabuses and teachers' appointments were subject to the approval of the occupying authorities.

36. With regard to such Israeli practices as the attempt to replace the Al-Haram Al-Sharif mosque by a Jewish temple and to build a canal connecting the Mediterranean and the Red Sea which would have irreversible ecological, environmental and territorial consequences for the entire region, it should be noted that Israeli practices were no less dangerous than the methods used by the Nazis, to which Israeli leaders frequently referred but which they had themselves used for 36 years. It was not that he was trying to justify what had happened during the Second World War, but history would not forget Israel's actions against the Palestinian people either when the latter had only tried to defend themselves against aggression.

37. Israel's crimes of war and extermination were being perpetrated in full view of the international community and defied the principles of the Charter, United Nations resolutions and international law. The United Nations had been unable to implement the provisions of the Charter with regard to Israeli practices because one of the great Powers used its veto in the Security Council.

38. The report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories reached the same conclusions as the resolutions of the Third Islamic Conference held in January 1981, the resolutions of the Conference of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Non-Aligned Countries held in February 1981 and the twelfth session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers held in June 1981.

39. The Palestinian people should have exercised their right to self-determination as early as the First World War but the United Kingdom, although it had signed an agreement with El-Sharif Hussein in 1915, had violated that agreement at the end of the war and imposed its own government in the region, on the pretext of preparing the population for independence. Since then, the Palestinian people had suffered one tragedy after another.

40. The Arabs were a peace-loving people, while Israel rejected any resolution that might bring about a lasting peace. In his view, that situation could not be resolved by adding yet another resolution to the many that had condemned Israel. Peace and security in the Middle East depended on the ability to implement the resolutions already adopted.

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41. Mr. KUTSCHAN (German Democratic Republic) said that the report of the Special Committee (A/36/579) showed that Israel was continuing to disregard international law and United Nations decisions and to pursue its policy of the use of force, oppression and plunder. It was clear that the ruling circles in Israel felt encouraged by their "strategic alliance" with the strongest Western military Power, which was giving it increasing political, economic and military support. Israel was, moreover, taking full advantage of the aggravation of the international situation in order to implement its expansionist objectives at the expense of the Palestinian people and the peoples of Arab States, and at the cost of international security. Disregarding the lessons of history, Israel was continuing its policy of "de-Arabization" and annexation of foreign territories. As the Special Committee's report pointed out, the intention of the Government of Israel was to continue with the policy of annexing the occupied territories.

42. The attempts by the Israeli occupation forces to install a network of military facilities in the occupied territories were causing increasing alarm. The military annexation of the occupied territories was aimed at establishing "springboards" to launch new acts of aggression against neighbouring Arab countries. Considering further that Israel's "main strategic ally" was steadily increasing its military presence in the Middle East, one could imagine what a dangerous function the Israeli bridgeheads could have in the occupied Arab territories.

43. The imperialist and colonialist policy of Israel was aimed at fundamentally changing the geographical and demographical structures of the occupied territories. In its report of the previous year, the Special Committee had disclosed that Israel had annexed more than 27 per cent of the territory of the West Bank. Paragraph 394 of the Special Committee's report now under consideration pointed out that the role played by Israeli settlers in implementing the policy of annexing the occupied territories had increased considerably.

44. Contrary to the claims of certain circles, the terrorist practices of the Israeli occupation forces were not isolated attacks by settlers or military personnel: they were rather an integral part of Israel's policy of occupation. Paragraph 398 of the report stated that a military rule accompanied by grave breaches of the Fourth Geneva Convention could only bring about a further deterioration in the human rights situation of the population. No one could be astonished that the people in the illegally occupied territories were putting up resistance to the oppressive measures of the Israeli occupation forces. With good reason, all peace-loving States and peoples were supporting the Palestinian people in their defence of their inalienable rights. The German Democratic Republic would itself give full support to the Palestinian people under the leadership of its sole authentic representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization. That was in line with his Government's internationalist position, which was to render assistance to all national liberation movements struggling to assert their right to self-determination.

45. Paragraph 401 of the report of the Special Committee indicated that the threat to international peace and security was more serious than ever, thus reaffirming what had been stated in a multitude of resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and the Security Council. It was therefore appropriate to call upon Israel to

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(Mr. Kutschan, German  
Democratic Republic)

terminate immediately its illegal practices in the occupied territories. Lasting peace in the region could be reached only through a settlement of the Middle East conflict as a whole. There was sufficient evidence that the policy of separate arrangements had failed and that half-hearted declarations by some States were inappropriate. The restoration of peace in the Middle East depended in the first place on the withdrawal of Israeli troops from all Arab territories occupied since 1967 and on allowing the Palestinian people to exercise their inalienable right to self-determination, including the right to establish their own State. Once again his delegation supported the Soviet proposal to convene an international conference on the Middle East in which all the parties concerned would participate, including the Palestine Liberation Organization.

46. Mr. CABALLERO (Cuba) said that after studying the report of the Special Committee (A/36/579) it was impossible not to feel indignant over the systematic and vicious violations of human rights daily practised by the Israeli authorities against the population of Gaza, the West Bank and the Golan Heights. The report noted facts which the Zionist authorities could not conceal from international public opinion or from their own people. The situation provoked reactions such as that of the Israeli writer, Liza Levenberg, who had vigorously condemned the Arab policy of Israel. The paradox was that the policy of which that intellectual was ashamed was being pursued by those who claimed to represent the Jewish people. In that connexion, the statement in September 1979 by the President of the Councils of State and Ministers of Cuba, Fidel Castro Ruz, should be recalled. Referring to the tragedy of the Palestinian people, he had said that the revolutionary movement repudiated the merciless persecution and the genocide which in its time Nazism had unleashed against the Jewish people; but he could not recall anything more akin to it in present-day history than the expropriation, persecution and genocide which imperialism and Zionism were today carrying out against the Palestinian people.

47. The problem of the violation of human rights in the territories occupied by Israel should be assessed in a broader context. The intransigent denial by Israel and its principal ally of the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people was the most abominable violation of human rights being committed. Israeli practices in the occupied territories could not be separated from the systematic flouting of the repeated resolutions of the General Assembly, the Security Council and other United Nations organs. It was the same policy which had led Israel to make its indiscriminate air, sea and land attacks against Lebanon and its attack on the Iraqi nuclear plant and its constant threats against Syria and other Arab countries. The violations of human rights by Israel would end only with the end of attempts to impose on the Arab peoples partial accords or settlements intended to disavow the rights of the Palestinian people, destroy their very physical existence, satisfy the growing expansionist urges of Israel and bolster the imperialist positions in the region.

48. The situation was prompting increasingly vigorous pronouncements from the movement of non-aligned countries. Such statements had reiterated that a just and lasting solution to the Middle East conflict and the problem at its core — the Palestine question — must include the unconditional withdrawal from all occupied

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(Mr. Caballero, Cuba)

territories and the realization of the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to set up their own State, within the context of global negotiations in which the Palestine Liberation Organization would participate on an equal footing.

49. Mr. SAIF (United Arab Emirates) said that the constant refusal by Israel to allow the Special Committee to enter the occupied territories, and its lack of compliance with the fourth Geneva Convention and the resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly, constituted a serious violation of international law. Israel was resorting to aggression thanks to the support it was receiving from the United States. Without that support, Israel would not have been able to continue to occupy the Arab territories, disregard the judgement of the international community and set obstacles to the search for peace in the region. Israel seemed to be determined to persevere in its policy of annexation, in the establishment of settlements and the expansion of existing settlements.

50. The Special Committee expressed concern in its report (A/36/579) over Israel's policy of declaring Israeli sovereignty in the occupied territories. Israel was usurping land because of extraneous security considerations, and a design to change the institutional and demographic structure of the occupied territories.

51. His delegation was also concerned by Israel's violation of all international instruments. Israel, directly or indirectly, was violating the right of the civilian population by demolishing houses, imposing curfews, hampering education, attacking students, restricting the freedom of movement of Palestinian leaders and imposing an embargo on Arab assistance to the towns and villages of the West Bank. Israel had tried to impose a policy of autonomy on the Palestinian mayors and leaders in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. All the foregoing showed the determination of the occupation authorities to confront the people with the dilemma of either accepting the situation or abandoning the land. There was no doubt that the Zionists had used every available weapon to subjugate and break the will of the people in the occupied territories. The General Assembly and the Security Council had adopted a number of resolutions requesting the return of the leaders who had been exiled from Palestine. Nevertheless, Israel refused to permit them to return and live in their own society. The State of Israel imposed its will on everyone. In Israel, Government authorities turned a blind eye to crimes committed against Palestinian leaders and instituted no proceedings against the authors of those crimes. Clearly, what was happening was based on the idea that Israel was above the law.

52. Mr. HAMODY (Mauritania), referring to several events of recent weeks — a university, closed, a mosque endangered, houses dynamited — said that they were only a fraction of the physical and moral torture that the Palestinian people was going through in its struggle for a right to life and national identity ever since the Zionist aggression had begun and, especially since the creation of the State of Israel in 1948 and the occupation of Palestinian territory in 1967. Since the abuses and outrages committed by the Israelis in Palestinian territory were described in numerous reports, and it was not necessary to repeat them; that however, did not imply that the fate of thousands of people who had been dispossessed of their inalienable historical rights should be forgotten.

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(Mr. Hamody, Mauritania)

53. The report of the Special Committee (A/36/579) contained concise figures but they spoke eloquently of the tragedy which was unfolding in the Holy Land, where human rights were completely disregarded in the name of religious fanaticism and ill-disguised racial hatred. The report revealed that the occupier admitted having demolished 1,258 houses since 1967 — although the actual figure was 19,000 — and confirmed that 33 settlements had been established in occupied Palestinian territory and 6 in occupied Syrian territory. The report mentioned 2,500 prisoners in Israeli gaols "under inhuman conditions" and referred to restrictions on the freedom of movement and to various forms of passive and active resistance.

54. The representative of Israel had termed the acts of resistance of the Palestinian people "crimes". Thus, that which was regarded everywhere as patriotism became terrorism and sabotage. Bolivar, Washington, and many other historic patriots of America, Europe, Africa and Asia had also been terrorists and criminals in the eyes of the then occupiers of their countries; the same logic and language were now used with respect to South Africa, Namibia and Palestine. Patriotic and legitimate resistance — which merited the attention of the Committee, the United Nations, and the international community — was therefore likened to terrorism.

55. The oppressors of Palestine did not stop at confiscating land; they also practised a whole range of humiliating aggressive acts such as desecrating temples, banning literature that talked about "return" and persecuting a whole race and depriving it of its dreams and hopes.

56. A just and final solution to the Palestinian drama could only be achieved through the complete and genuine implementation of the relevant United Nations resolutions. For his country, such a solution required, inter alia, the following measures: the complete and unconditional withdrawal of Israelis from all Arab territories (including Arab Jerusalem), and the recognition of the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to create a State in the land of its ancestors, under the leadership of its sole and authentic representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization.

57. That was when the real and only terrorism would end: the State terrorism that had been converted into a political system by Israel to oppress the Palestinian people physically, morally and culturally. But in the meantime, it was the duty of the Committee and the entire international community to condemn the Israeli practices in the illegally occupied territories; those practices were contrary to human rights and dignity and uselessly complicated and jeopardized a situation which was already, in itself, complicated.

58. Mr. RAHAMTALLA (Sudan) said that his statement would be limited to two fundamental aspects of the item before the Committee. First, the attitude of the Israeli authorities, who for 13 years had refused to abide by the requests of the Secretary-General and the General Assembly to co-operate with the Special Committee. That refusal could only be explained by the fact that Israel had something to hide from international public opinion because the falsehood of its claim would unmask its policy of flagrant violation of the human rights of the Arab population.

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(Mr. Rahamtalla, Sudan)

Moreover, that refusal reflected a contempt for the United Nations which was consistent with the Zionist attitude towards the Organization.

59. Secondly, Israel continued to occupy Arab territories despite numerous resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly; that state of affairs was the root cause of all the violations committed against the Arab people. In that connexion, what was particularly disturbing was the statement of policy of the new Government of Israel with respect to the future claim of the "sovereignty of Israel over the occupied territories". Given the seriousness of that statement, the international community should intervene to put an end to Israel's policy of annexation and transfer of the civilian population in violation of article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention.

60. In accordance with international law and the United Nations Charter, the Arab people would never forfeit their lands nor would they fall into a state of despair. Therefore, the international community should act to uphold the cause of justice and peace and not allow Israel to rejoice at the inaction of the United Nations.

61. Mr. RAMIN (Israel), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said he wished to make two comments on recent statements. First, he was proud and not ashamed, that, as a number of representatives had so kindly pointed out, his country was a democracy in which criticism and dissent from official policy were possible: it was not ordained that there should be only one opinion, which must be respected by all, as was the case in many other countries. Second, he was not in agreement with the majority represented by the Arab States, a majority which adopted resolutions and motions that distorted reality. In the tragic Arab-Israeli conflict, Israel represented exactly 50 per cent and that fact must be taken into account in the search for a solution; instead of talking about Israel there should be direct talks with Israel which must be accepted as one of the participants in the dialogue.

62. Mr. SHAMMA (Jordan) said he was surprised that the representative of Israel should be just as proud of his country's seizure of foreign territory and its expulsion of the Palestinians from their homeland as he was of its democracy; the Special Political Committee was interested not in Israel's form of government but in its actions, to the extent that they affected human rights. In that connexion, he quoted several passages from the book Journey to Jerusalem (1981), by the American journalist Grace Halsell, in which the rabbis themselves had confirmed the absurdity of the Israeli effort to hold Old Jerusalem even at the cost of human lives. He also referred to statements by Dr. Hugh Harcourt, a professor at the State University of Illinois, who had described the precarious situation of the universities on the West Bank. Israel did not wish the Palestinians to have a university or to be educated and consequently had resorted to censorship, restrictions on freedom and every kind of obstacle.

63. Mr. TERZI (Observer, Palestine Liberation Organization) referred to the announcement made two days earlier by the Tel Aviv fascists regarding the death of two Arabs who had collaborated with the occupation forces and reminded the Committee of the fate which regularly befell such persons in all the occupied territories. He also referred to items which had been published in the Jerusalem

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(Mr. Terzi, PLO)

Post and The New York Times on 11 November. The former had identified the retention of the territories occupied in 1967 as the source of instability and insecurity, while the latter had referred to the lack of freedom of the only television channel on the West Bank.

64. A clear distinction had to be drawn between the aggressive and militaristic inclinations of the Israeli leaders and the attitude of peace-loving citizens who were ignorant of the proposals for aggression and exploitation, apart from those who, as the new owners of the property stolen from the Arabs, had a direct interest in being involved in the atrocities and outrages which the Israelis were committing. While the Israeli leaders continued to commit every kind of atrocity, it was logical to expect that the Arabs would resist firmly. There would be neither peace nor security for those who continued to occupy the homes and lands which legitimately belonged to the Palestinians, who denied them the right to return and prevented them from doing so. By way of illustration, he referred to a theatrical play in which those situations were vividly portrayed.

65. Mr. CABALLERO (Cuba) said that the statement by the representative of Israel added nothing new to facts which were known to all, except that it illustrated the difficult task of Israeli diplomats when innumerable proofs of the criminal policy of Israel in the occupied territories and the neighbouring countries were visible to all.

66. Mr. RAMIN (Israel), speaking in exercise of the right of reply for the second time, said that he greatly regretted the statement by the representative of Cuba as it lacked any basis in fact and helped the Arab countries which rejected the path of peace. In regard to the statement by the representative of Jordan, it should be remembered that fairness was a fundamental element of the pure Arab tradition with which he was personally acquainted. It was unfair to misrepresent the statements of the delegation of Israel, which had never claimed that Israel had created the University of Bir Zeit. He then read from a newspaper article according to which Bir Zeit had been a secondary school during the Jordanian occupation and had become a university in 1970. It was therefore clear that the school had already been in existence and that the Israeli authorities had raised it to the rank of university.

67. Mr. SHAMMA (Jordan) said that, whatever the passages quoted might have contained, it was clear that the Israeli authorities were following an entirely consistent policy, which was to confiscate the lands of the Arab population of the occupied territories, to ill-treat, repress and torture them and openly boasted of such activities.

68. In connexion with Israeli democracy and justice, the journalist Daniel Rubenstein had, during the preceding week, published an article in an Israeli newspaper which, inter alia, had stated that when the Israelis had seized the West Bank, the authorities had introduced a new legal system. Israeli law permitted the Israeli colonists to enjoy freedom of movement, to own property and to enter into transactions of all kinds, whereas the same law limited the rights of the Arab population and imposed restrictions of every kind on the right to property, building and expansion and on freedom of movement.

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69. Mr. MAHMOUD (Iraq), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that, when the Zionist representative had referred to the Arab majority in United Nations organs, he had insulted the intelligence of all delegations; they did not automatically accept the proposals and draft sponsored by the Arab countries condemning Israel's policy of aggression. In those cases where they supported such proposals, it was because those delegations also condemned the crimes and atrocities of Israel against the Palestinian Arab people. The international community was in agreement in condemning the brutal crimes committed by the Zionists, who not only wished to continue their illegal occupation of the Arab territories but also hoped that the Arabs would remain silent and would refrain from raising their voices in defence of their legitimate rights.

70. Mr. CABALLERO (Cuba), speaking in exercise of the right of reply for the second time, said it had been interesting to listen to the words of the representative of Israel on the services which one country could provide to another, when the international community was fully aware of the kind of services which Israel was providing to imperialism in the Middle East.

#### ORGANIZATION OF WORK

71. The CHAIRMAN suggested that, in accordance with the decision taken by the General Assembly, the afternoon meeting on Tuesday, 24 November, would be set aside so that the Committee could hear the representatives of the organizations which had requested hearings on the question of apartheid. If there were no objections, he would take it that the Committee approved the suggestion.

72. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 5.35 p.m.