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at 10.30 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 27th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. STARCEVIĆ (Yugoslavia)

CONTENTS

AGENDA ITEM 73: UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY FOR PALESTINE REFUGEES IN THE NEAR EAST (continued)

- (a) REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER-GENERAL (continued)
- (b) REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON THE FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY FOR PALESTINE REFUGEES IN THE NEAR EAST (continued)
- (c) REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONCILIATION COMMISSION FOR PALESTINE (continued)
- (d) REPORT OF THE JOINT INSPECTION UNIT (continued)
- (e) REPORTS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 70: INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION IN THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE (continued)

- (a) REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE (continued)
- (b) IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SECOND UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE EXPLORATION AND PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 11 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 73: UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY FOR PALESTINE REFUGEES IN THE NEAR EAST (continued)

- (a) REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER-GENERAL (continued) (A/38/13)
- (b) REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON THE FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY FOR PALESTINE REFUGEES IN THE NEAR EAST (continued) (A/38/558)
- (c) REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONCILIATION COMMISSION FOR PALESTINE (continued) (A/38/397)
- (d) REPORT OF THE JOINT INSPECTION UNIT (continued) (A/38/143)
- (e) REPORTS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/38/149, 361 and Add.1, 382, 386, 418, 419, 420)

1. Mr. ABOUCHAER (Syrian Arab Republic) thanked the Commissioner-General for the concern shown in his report for the plight of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon and his efforts to provide ongoing humanitarian and relief services to the refugees and rebuild UNRWA camps and facilities which had been destroyed by Israel in June 1982.

2. The report contained much that was positive, including references to the destruction wrought in the Agency's refugee camps and installations by the Israeli aggression in June 1982, the occupation of its schools and clinics, the arrest of its employees and the looting of equipment and material in the Sibliin Training Centre by Israeli troops.

3. His delegation also welcomed the fact that the Commissioner-General had spoken in his report of the Israeli authorities' acts of repression against the camps containing Palestinian refugees from the West Bank and Gaza and had placed particular emphasis on the demolition of houses as a punitive measure, the killing of Arab civilians by armed Israeli settlers, the attacks on and closing of vocational training centres, the obstructing of construction work in Gaza and the other occupied territories and the interrogation of UNRWA staff members by the occupying forces, not to mention the torture of refugees, young and old, during the frequent curfews imposed in the refugee camps by the Israeli authorities, in violation of the rules of international law.

4. His country further thanked the Commissioner-General for his tribute, in paragraph 43 of the report, to the efforts of Palestinian members of the UNRWA staff and for his statement that they belonged to a community which was at once embroiled in and victimized by the tensions and conflicts of the Near East. However, it wished that he had placed that observation in its true context, which was Zionist racist aggression supported by the United States of America since 1948.

5. The reference in paragraph 13 of the foreword to the tension in the occupied territories and the fear that incidents involving UNRWA programmes and staff would

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(Mr. Abouchaer, Syrian Arab Republic)

continue was another positive element. There again, however, it would have been preferable for the Commissioner-General to specify that any attempt to prolong the Palestinian problem in the absence of an equitable and global solution in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the United Nations could only lead to disaster. The Commissioner-General should also have drawn a distinction between the aggressors and the victims of aggression.

6. Finally, his country was gratified by the reference in the report to the services provided by the Syrian Arab Republic, such as the construction of clinics, the implementation of water-supply projects, the improvement of sewerage systems in camps and the establishment of supplementary feeding centres. It was also pleased that the Commissioner-General had noted that Agency schools had operated satisfactorily throughout the year and had mentioned the enrolment in those schools of a number of students who had fled to the Syrian Arab Republic following the Israeli aggression against Lebanon.

7. However, there were a number of things in the report with which his country was not entirely satisfied. In the first place, it omitted to mention that the Palestinian problem was primarily the problem of a people which had been driven from its homeland and that it would continue until the refugees were enabled to return to their country or receive compensation, in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the United Nations. It was unfortunate that the Commissioner-General had not drawn attention to the failure to implement those resolutions and had also made no mention of the special fund for the receipt of income derived from the property of Palestinians in the occupied territories, to be established under the terms of General Assembly resolution 37/120 H.

8. In addition, the report played down the direct and indirect assistance provided to refugees by the host countries, while mentioning the much smaller assistance provided by a number of agencies and institutions. Nor did it mention the refugees who had been forced to flee the occupied territories as a result of the 1967 aggression and whose care had been taken on by Arab States, even though General Assembly resolution 37/120 G reaffirmed the right of those refugees to return and called upon Israel to take immediate steps for the return of all displaced persons.

9. The Commissioner-General mentioned the destruction which Israel had wrought in the camps as a punitive measure. What he did not say was that those operations were part of a vast plan being carried out by an Israeli ministerial commission to liquidate camps containing Palestinians from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and resettle those refugees, against their will, outside the camps. The wiping out of the camps was primarily a political operation, because the camps symbolized the tragedy of the Palestinian people and the Zionists' crimes against it.

10. The Commissioner-General stressed in his report the need to adhere to the priorities he had set for the provision of services to Palestinian refugees and he was using that as an excuse for discontinuing services considered to have lower

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(Mr. Abouchaer, Syrian Arab
Republic)

priority, such as the distribution of rations, except for refugees living in extreme hardship (which applied to only 2 per cent of the refugees). His country could not endorse such a decision, as it considered all the services provided by UNRWA to be priority services needed by the refugees.

11. Again, the General Assembly's decision, in its resolution 37/120, that identification cards should be issued to all Palestinian refugees, irrespective of whether they were recipients or not of assistance or services - a decision that was primarily political - must not be used to discriminate between categories of Palestinians. The identification cards must not serve as a pretext for the United Nations to evade its responsibilities to the refugees.

12. His country also wished to state that it was utterly opposed to the Commissioner-General's submitting his report to the Israeli occupation authorities, because of the political significance of that act. It reiterated its refusal to have Israel listed among the States providing direct assistance to Palestine refugees. Nor could it accept the statement in paragraph 5 of the Commissioner-General's foreword that a feeling of security had prevailed in the camps to the extent that there was a presence or proximity of patrols of the Israeli army. It could not agree that the Zionist forces of aggression, which had committed the Sabra and Shatila massacres, should be placed on an equal footing with the military observers of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization. That was an attempt to legitimize the Israeli occupation and whitewash the aggressors which his country could in no way accept.

13. Regarding the Agency's financial situation, the report did not devote sufficient attention to how the funds made available to the Agency could be increased so that it could resume the distribution of rations to the refugees. Moreover, paragraph 10 of the report of the Working Group on the Financing of UNRWA seemed to imply that the best way of reducing expenses was to eliminate the food ration distribution programme. The Commissioner-General should not allow himself to be influenced by political pressures aimed at liquidating the Palestinian problem.

14. His delegation considered that the educational services provided by the Agency to the children of refugees were totally inadequate. Furthermore, the quality of those services was steadily deteriorating. The Arab host countries were doing much more in that respect, in terms both of health services and of secondary and higher education.

15. His country reiterated its call for the establishment, under United Nations auspices, of an Arab university at Jerusalem, pursuant to the relevant General Assembly resolutions. In its view, the recommendations of the group of academics contained in the annex to document A/38/386 would not achieve the desired goal.

16. Where financial matters were concerned, the emphasis must be on the problem of the Agency's financial crisis and on finding a solution to it. First of all, the

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(Mr. Abouchaer, Syrian Arab
Republic)

Agency must be relocated in its area of operations, in the Middle East, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 37/120 K. The reasons given in paragraph 143 of the Commissioner-General's report and paragraph 155 of the report of the Joint Inspection Unit for the non-implementation of that resolution were not at all convincing. The second step that should be taken to improve the Agency's financial situation was reducing the number of international staff and changing at least some of the cost of local staff to the United Nations budget. It was hard to see why the Commissioner-General should recommend an increase in the number of international staff while at the same time commending the local staff for their dedication and the sacrifices they had made during the hostilities, when 10 of them had lost their lives. Thirdly, the Working Group on the Financing of UNRWA should be asked to find the best way of assuming permanent and steady financing for the Agency, and in that connection his country reiterated its proposal that the UNRWA budget should be included in the United Nations budget.

17. The refusal of the international community, and in particular of the colonialist countries which were responsible for the problem and for its perpetuation, to contribute to the financing of the Agency endangered not only the Palestinian refugees and the Arab host countries but also peace and security in the region and throughout the world. The international community in general and the colonialist countries in particular were responsible for the dispersal of the Palestinian people as a result of the partitioning of Palestine, for the admission of Israel to the United Nations and for the fact that no effective steps had been taken to prevent Israel from carrying out its colonialist and racist policies aimed at completing the settlement of Palestine and driving out all its inhabitants. The Israeli aggressors must pay compensation for all the damage and destruction they had wrought in the course of their aggression against Lebanon.

18. The international community had an obligation to compel Israel to respect international law and end its persecution of the Palestinian people. Any attempt by the international community to shirk its responsibility to the Palestinian refugees and shift that responsibility onto the Arab peoples would be tantamount to rewarding the Israeli aggressors and encouraging their expansionist ambitions. His delegation hoped that the Commissioner-General, when preparing his next report would take account of its comments and ensure the implementation of the relevant resolutions of the thirty-seventh session of the General Assembly, in particular those relating to resumption of the distribution of food rations, to the receipt of income derived from Palestine refugee properties and to the protection of refugees and the provision of services to them.

19. As to the conclusions and recommendations in paragraphs 164 to 168 of the report of the Joint Inspection Unit (A/38/143), his country regretted that the JIU report, like the report of the Commissioner-General, did not place the problem of refugees in its true context, namely, the tragedy of a people driven from its land. All the comments he had made on the Commissioner-General's report also applied to the JIU report. JIU, like UNRWA, should not forget that it was a United Nations body and was bound by the spirit and letter of the General Assembly

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(Mr. Abouchaer, Syrian Arab
Republic)

resolutions on the question of the Palestinian refugees. His country nevertheless agreed with the conclusions reached by the Joint Inspection Unit in paragraphs 166, 167 and 168 of its report.

20. His delegation supported, with some reservations, the recommendations of JIU, especially recommendations 1, 4 (in particular paragraphs (ii) and (v)), 8, 9, 10.

21. Finally, his country commended the efforts made by the Commissioner-General in his humanitarian mission and offered him its full co-operation and support. It joined in his appeal to the international community to give the Agency the means to pursue its humanitarian and political task until a solution was found to the Palestinian problem.

22. Mr. SHIHABI (Saudi Arabia) thanked the Commissioner-General for the information and observations in his report but noted that they were incomplete, the Commissioner-General having obviously wished to avoid antagonizing the Israeli authorities, which were already greatly hampering the Agency's operations. Reading between the lines, one could see what a catastrophe had befallen the Palestinian people, who had been cast into refugee camps, and what an intensive and deliberate campaign the Israeli authorities had been conducting for many years to annihilate the Palestinian people. He shared the deep concern expressed by the Chairman of the Advisory Commission in his letter of 25 August 1983 to the Commissioner-General and agreed with his comments.

23. Israel and international zionism let no opportunity pass without reminding the world of the tragedy experienced by the Jews in Europe and elsewhere during the Second World War. But the Palestinian and other Arab peoples had nothing to do with those events, and the Palestinian people did not understand why the vengeance and hatred of the Israelis had been unleashed against them. The Israeli authorities, not content with hounding those Palestinians inhabiting the areas occupied before 1967 and those in the territories occupied since then, had launched a murderous war against Palestinian refugees in camps outside Palestine as part of a plan which was actually aimed at annihilating the Palestinian people. Israel had wiped off the map hundreds of Arab villages scattered over the plains and mountains of Palestine before 1948; it was now launching attacks and campaigns to drive the Palestinians out of their country by resorting to terror.

24. Everyone recognized that the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982 had been a colonialist, terrorist expansionist infiltration notwithstanding the false pretexts Israel had used to explain its aggression. The report of the Commissioner-General confirmed that that ruthless aggression had caused the large-scale destruction in southern Lebanon and Beirut of thousands of homes of Palestinian refugees and of many of the Agency's clinics and health services, not to mention the medical services of the Palestine Red Crescent Society. Many UNRWA schools had also been destroyed or damaged. The destruction had occurred not only during Israel's invasion of Lebanon but afterwards as well. The Palestinians, having built their own durable homes since 1948, had once more found themselves in tents 34 years after their first exodus.

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(Mr. Shihabi, Saudi Arabia)

25. The report unfortunately attributed that destruction to the fighting. It was not the Commissioner-General's job to blame one side or the other, but the international community knew full well that the widespread destruction had not been accidental; it had been politically and militarily premeditated and planned. The Israeli invasion forces had used very sophisticated weapons. They had used phosphorus and cluster bombs, for example, and thousands of people had been killed, mutilated or burned, including women, children and old people.

26. His delegation appreciated the untiring efforts made by UNRWA to cope with the crises and catastrophes brought about by Israel which were paralysing its operations. His delegation also supported the Agency's efforts to secure the resources needed to maintain the emergency relief operation which it had mounted following the massive destruction caused by the Israeli aggression. His country urgently requested the Agency to restore the health and educational services which it provided for the refugees to their previous level. The educational services were particularly important and students should at least be allowed to complete their secondary schooling.

27. The Israeli authorities were detaining hundreds of UNRWA officials in camps with no official explanation. The majority of those individuals were international civil servants and their detention constituted a violation of the provisions of the Charter, of the 1946 Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations, and of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. His country was again asking the international community to condemn Israel for those flagrant violations, as well as for the detention of thousands of Palestinians and Lebanese captured during the invasion of Lebanon in the camp at Al Ansar. Those detentions also violated the Hague Convention of 1907 and the Geneva Convention on the Treatment of Prisoners of War of 12 August 1949, and further increased the burden on UNRWA and on the local government agencies which had to provide relief to thousands of prisoners being held in filthy huts.

28. He paid tribute to those UNRWA officials in Lebanon who, working in extremely difficult conditions, had maintained the Agency's services and restored some to their previous level. Many had been killed while on missions and a large number had been reported missing.

29. Israel was waging a war of extermination against the Palestinians in Lebanon in an attempt to strip them of any means of livelihood, training, and help from the Agency, and to force them to flee their native land to ease the way for establishment of Israeli settlements and the annexation of the occupied territories. Both on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip, the Israeli authorities were pursuing the same aim by resorting to arbitrary measures: prohibiting movement from one place to another, closing training centres and prohibiting the rebuilding or repair of those centres.

30. The report of the Commissioner-General indicated that despite the discontinuance of the general ration distribution, except in Lebanon, income would remain insufficient to meet needs in 1983 and the Working Group on Financing of

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(Mr. Shihabi, Saudi Arabia)

UNWRA stressed in its report that if income in 1984 did not exceed the 1983 level, the Agency would show a deficit of \$66 million. The Working Group doubted that the Agency would in future be able to finance its educational and medical and social care programmes at the current level with appreciable increases in the contributions of States to the Agency's budget.

31. The only means of ending that 35-year-old human tragedy, which was getting worse from year to year, was to find a solution to the Palestinian problem. Although his country appreciated fully UNRWA's efforts on behalf of the refugees it regarded them only as a palliative pending the Palestinians' return to their homes or receipt of compensation if they did not wish to return. Since the United Nations had thus far been unable to implement its resolutions, UNRWA had become an end in itself instead of being only a means to an end.

32. Like the other Arab countries, his own contributed to the Agency's budget to relieve the distress of the Palestinian people, but it thought that responsibility for the Agency's financial support rested with the big Powers, in particular with the permanent members of the Security Council, who used their right of veto to prevent the Council from adopting measures for implementing its decisions. The uprooting of the Palestinian people would not have happened without the unconditional support given by those Powers to Israel and to the international Zionist movement, and Israel's attempt to subjugate and exterminate the Palestinian people would only exacerbate an already explosive situation. Accordingly, his delegation, while requesting UNRWA to discharge its function as effectively as possible, urgently called upon the international community, in particular the permanent members of the Security Council, to assume the obligations which the Charter placed upon them and to force Israel fully to implement United Nations resolutions.

33. Mr. AL HASSANI (Kuwait) said that the barbaric Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982 had not only killed, wounded, uprooted or rendered homeless thousands of Palestinian refugees, but had also destroyed most of the health, medical and educational infrastructure of both the Palestine Red Crescent and UNRWA, thus disrupting the normal functioning of the Agency in Lebanon and in the occupied territories of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in contravention of the formal agreements governing the exercise by UNRWA in those territories of the mandate entrusted to it by the General Assembly. By way of example, only 46 out of 86 United Nations schools had reopened at the beginning of the 1983-1984 school year. It was encouraging, however, to see that most other UNRWA activities in Lebanon, including medical and relief services, were operating normally, thanks to the tireless efforts of the Agency under the energetic leadership of the Commissioner-General. His delegation also welcomed the comprehensive review of UNRWA's organization undertaken by the Joint Inspection Unit with a view to helping the Commissioner-General to make the most effective use of the Agency's funds, as well as the activities of the Working Group responsible for studying its financing.

34. His delegation concurred with the Chairman of the Advisory Commission that the services provided by UNRWA furthered peace and stability in the Middle East and should be continued until the question of Palestine had been settled. While UNRWA

(Mr. Al Hassani, Kuwait)

services were necessary to meet the urgent needs of the Palestinian refugees, it must be emphasized that, so long as the Palestinian people were denied the exercise of their inalienable rights, UNRWA could not stop such carnage as had been visited on Deir Yassin, Kibya, Sabra and Shatila and, above all, could not put an end to the mental anguish and physical torment which had been the plight of the Palestinian refugees through the years. Only a just and lasting settlement based on United Nations resolutions recognizing the inalienable rights of the Palestinians, including their rights to self-determination, to return to their homes, and to have their independent State on their national soil, could put an end to that situation.

35. The question might well be asked how 35 years could have elapsed since General Assembly resolutions 194 (III) and 302 (IV) without anything concrete having been accomplished and, as the Conciliation Commission had noted with regret in its report (A/38/397), without any progress having been made towards the implementation of paragraph 11 of resolution 194 (III), which had resolved that the refugees wishing to return to their homes should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date and that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return.

36. That unacceptable situation had resulted from two factors: the persistent refusal of Israel to recognize the inalienable rights of the Palestinians, even at the cost of bloody wars which had enabled the Israelis to consolidate their control over the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied since 1967; and the inability of the Security Council to take effective action to implement the resolutions relating to the repatriation of the Palestinian people.

37. The whole world was familiar with the Israeli version of the refugee tragedy; that theory exonerated Israel from any culpability and alleged that the Palestinians had fled at the instigation of the Arab leaders. The United Nations Mediator, Count Bernadotte, had made the following comment in his report, dated 16 September 1948 (A/648), on the situation which had led to the creation of the refugee problem: "The exodus of Palestinian Arabs resulted from panic created by fighting in their communities, by rumours concerning real or alleged acts of terrorism, or expulsion".

38. Moshe Menuhin's description of the Deir Yassin massacre in his book "The Decadence of Judaism in our Time" explained what Count Bernadotte might have meant by real or alleged acts of terrorism. According to the author, none of the inhabitants of Deir Yassin fled; they were supposed to have been an example of the possibility of amicable coexistence between Arabs and Palestinian Jews. The Irgun and the Stern Group, which had been assigned to look after Deir Yassin, perpetrated the most revolting atrocities: 254 Arab men, women and children were butchered in cold blood and their mutilated bodies were thrown into a well. Captured Arab men and women were brought in lorries to Jerusalem and paraded through the streets where they were spat at. The Arab villagers were struck with panic and a large exodus began. Those facts had been confirmed by Menachem Begin himself. In the circumstances, one could only wonder at the audacity of those who claimed that the Arab refugees had left at the bidding of the Arab leaders. Moreover, the words

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(Mr. Al Hassani, Kuwait)

"dislodged", "displaced" and "uprooted", used by Count Bernadotte in his report and included in relevant General Assembly resolutions to characterize the Palestinian refugees, left no doubt that they had not left voluntarily.

39. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights provided that everyone had a right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country. The Zionists adhered religiously to the first half of that right but denied the second half. They endeavoured to persuade international public opinion of the right of every national of every country to leave his country and join the Jews in Palestine, but they were deaf to the appeals of the international community that the Palestinians should be allowed to return to their homes. Apparently, the only right to return which the Israelis accepted was the law of return of 1950, which stipulated the right of every Jew to come to Israel as an immigrant.

40. Not only had the Israelis created the refugee problem, but the forced eviction of the refugees from their ancestral lands formed part of a three-part strategy: to force the Arab population of Palestine to flee; to deny the right of return to those who had been uprooted; and to grant the right of return to nationals of other countries of the Jewish faith.

41. On 11 May 1949, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Security Council, had admitted Israel to the United Nations by its resolution 273 (III). The discussion which had taken place in the Special Political Committee before that resolution was adopted had emphasized the link between the admission of Israel and the latter's co-operation in implementing the right of return of the Palestinian people. It was therefore incumbent upon the Security Council, not only to take a harder look at the outrageous lack of co-operation on the part of Israel, which had nothing but contempt for the Charter of the United Nations, for international law and for the prestige and integrity of the international community, but also to take immediate action to implement paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 194 (III). Unless the Council acted, the Israelis would regard the unacceptable situation in the occupied territories as a fait accompli.

42. Mr. KINGSMILL (Australia) said that, at a time when the General Assembly was being asked to extend the mandate of UNRWA once again, the report of the Joint Inspection Unit (A/38/143) had shed considerable light on the work of the Office and the effectiveness of its activities. The report had placed on record the very substantial achievements of UNRWA during the 35 years of its existence; that was a clear example of what international co-operation could do in pursuit of a humanitarian goal.

43. Australia had always given its fullest support to UNRWA in the performance of its important humanitarian work through direct financial contributions to the Agency's budget and in public comments on its work. Like the Joint Inspection Unit, Australia considered that the Agency had developed institutional functions and an expertise which, in the absence of the political settlement of the Palestinian question desired by the international community, needed to be utilized in ameliorating the severe humanitarian problems of the area. Australia would support the initiative to extend the Agency's mandate.

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(Mr. Kingsmill, Australia)

44. On the issue of the Agency's finances, he pointed out that UNRWA had always been short of the funds it needed to operate effectively. Although 1983 had been without a major financial crisis which might have jeopardized the continuation of priority programmes, that situation was quite fortuitous and would not recur in 1984. The Government of Australia had made substantial increases in its contributions to UNRWA in recent years and its latest pledge, in terms of United States dollars, was more than 275 per cent of its cash contribution five years earlier. For many years past, Australia had been making good on its pledges regularly and regretted that the uncertainty of sufficient and stable financing in recent years had become a major constraint on UNRWA operations.

45. Lack of adequate financing prevented the Agency from dealing with many problems, such as the deplorable state of many UNRWA installations and buildings. There was an urgent need for better school buildings, but the costs might well be beyond the capacity of the Agency's normal budget, even using self-help methods and carrying out the work gradually. It was remarkable that, using school buildings which were sometimes close to total inadequacy, the Agency had been able to educate children to a level comparable with that of more favoured countries.

46. Of particular concern to the Agency were the problems resulting directly from the invasion of Lebanon by Israel in 1982. His delegation was pleased to note that in March and May 1983, permission had finally been given for rebuilding refugee camps in south Lebanon and Beirut to the condition in which they had been before the June 1982 invasion and that the programme had been started. Nevertheless, many Palestinian families had not even the basic accommodation that the programme would provide.

47. Another matter of concern to his delegation was that UNRWA installations in Lebanon had not always been accorded the neutral respect that was essential for the Agency's free and impartial performance of the tasks given to it by the United Nations. UNRWA schools and training centres had been used for military purposes, property had been removed from some facilities, UNRWA personnel had been hampered in carrying out their duties or travelling freely, and on occasion their lives had been placed at risk. Representations by the Commissioner-General to those responsible had not always produced results. His Government therefore called upon all parties in the strongest terms to respect UNRWA's neutral status. Over the years, many of UNRWA's staff had been killed in the performance of their duties, and those who continued the work must be allowed to do so free from danger and with the full respect of all parties.

48. His delegation was confident that, despite UNRWA's present serious problems, its experienced and dedicated staff would continue their humanitarian task until a just settlement of the Palestinian question had been achieved. The Agency deserved the commendation and thanks of the whole international community.

49. Mr. LEVIN (Israel), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, expressed surprise that the Arab countries which had taken part in the debate had had the audacity to pose as defenders of the Palestinian cause at a time when fighting was still going on in northern Lebanon and Arab bombs were falling on Palestinian refugees and Lebanese civilians. Syria had not even expressed sympathy for the victims of those atrocities. Many States had expressed indignation at those events and had been supported by some Arab States, in spite of Arab solidarity. Only that morning, on a day of prayer, the Mufti of Jerusalem had declared that Assad's hands were red with blood. The prayers had been followed by a mass demonstration against Syria's actions in northern Lebanon.

50. The representative of Kuwait had also dwelt on the fate of the Palestinian refugees, but he must have known that his country had decided to suspend all financial aid to Syria for the same reason. On 3 November, Baghdad radio, announcing a new Syrian attack, had commented that it was aimed at liquidating the Palestinian revolution, and on 8 November, Amman radio had called for an end to the massacre of Palestinians by the Syrians.

51. All that was nothing new. Throughout their history, the Arab countries had shown no pity for the Palestinian refugees and had used them as pawns for their own political ambitions. It was not the first time that an Arab Government had attacked Palestinian refugees. There had already been similar attacks in Lebanon, Jordan and other parts of the Arab world. The representatives of the Arab countries kept their silence about such acts, in the name of inter-Arab solidarity, but what kind of solidarity was that and at what price?

52. Mr. HAMADNEH (Jordan), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that he was not at all impressed by the Israeli representative's crocodile tears over the fate of the Palestinians of northern Lebanon. If the representative of Israel had really been concerned about the fate of the Palestinians, he would have committed his Government to implement the resolutions of the United Nations; that would mean an immediate and conclusive solution of the Palestinian refugee problem.

53. Mr. ABOUCHAER (Syrian Arab Republic), endorsing the comments of the representative of Jordan, said that the policy of the representative of Israel in the Committee was perfectly clear. It was based on demagoguery and aimed at sowing dissension among the Arab States.

54. It must be borne in mind that the question the Committee was now dealing with was the activities of UNRWA, not the situation in northern Lebanon. No one was deceived by Israel and no one was going to forget Israel's policy of terrorism against the refugees and UNRWA in the occupied territories and in Lebanon.

55. Syria did wish, however, to remind the Committee that as far as Lebanon was concerned, not a single Syrian soldier was taking part in the battle between Arafat and his opponents. Syria had always pursued a policy of non-intervention in the internal affairs of the Palestinians, in particular the struggles between the different revolutionary elements of the Palestinian movement. It continued to pursue that policy today.

56. Mr. ZAHAWIE (Iraq) said that the tragic situation in Lebanon did not give Israel the right to speak on behalf of the Palestinian people. Israel was the last country to concern itself with the fate of the Palestinians, whose country it was occupying and whom it forbade to return to their homes, even in the territories occupied since 1967. The representative of Israel was in no position to lecture Arab countries.

57. In any case, the Zionists, who claimed to defend the Jews, were no better than anyone else when it came to political morality, since they had collaborated with fascist régimes, as recent writings on history showed.

AGENDA ITEM 70: INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION IN THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE
(continued)

- (a) REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE (continued)
(A/38/20);
- (b) IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SECOND UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE EXPLORATION AND PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/38/412)

58. Mrs. CARRASCO (Bolivia) said that the recommendations of the second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space had emphasized the need for careful analysis of the responsibilities of the major space Powers in the framework of international co-operation, bearing in mind the need of the developing countries to realize their ambition to acquire their own space technology. The United Nations should reinforce the guidelines adopted by the Conference.

59. The Vienna Programme of Action on Science and Technology for Development had emphasized that the deterioration in the situation of the developing countries, which was aggravated by the growing world economic crisis, had widened the gap between developing and developed countries. The developed countries continued to hold a predominant position in science and technology, being responsible for 95 per cent of all research and development, while the developing countries, which represented 70 per cent of the world's population, had only 5 per cent of world capacity. Intensive measures were needed, both nationally and internationally, to remedy that situation. Efforts for the establishment of the new international economic order should include the adoption of decisions and the formulation of specific action-oriented recommendations to ensure that science and technology were used to benefit the development of third-world countries, without adverse effects on the environment.

60. International co-operation was an important instrument in helping the developing countries make better use of the applications of space technology. The General Assembly, in its resolution 37/90, had requested the Secretary-General to strengthen the Outer Space Affairs Division of the Secretariat with an appropriate augmentation of technical personnel and had decided, upon the recommendation of the Conference, that all new or expanded activities would be funded mainly through voluntary contributions made by States in money or in kind. Accordingly, to assist

(Mrs. Carrasco, Bolivia)

the developing countries in that area, it would be useful if the developed countries would contribute to the United Nations a part of the sums allocated to the production of space weapons.

61. Since 1973, Bolivia had carried out a series of programmes and projects on the issues under study, including the use of remote sensing to draw up geological maps to help quantify Bolivia's natural resources, especially in the mining sector, its principal source of wealth. It also had an earth station, which enabled it to use earth satellites for transmitting television programmes and meteorological observations.

62. Bolivia supported all proposals aimed at elaborating an international instrument to govern the legal aspects of remote sensing in order to ensure respect for the sovereignty of States. High priority should be given to establishing a mechanism to facilitate the work of the Legal Sub-Committee in the preparation of norms to govern the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes.

63. The growing militarization of outer space and the danger of extending the arms race into space were of great concern to Bolivia. The activities of States in outer space, on the moon and on other celestial bodies should be governed by international law.

64. Bolivia attached great importance to research on the peaceful uses of outer space. It had participated in many regional meetings and seminars organized under the auspices of the United Nations dealing with the possibilities of co-operation among the members of ECLA in the area of space science and technology. It welcomed Argentina's offer to host a meeting of governmental experts in 1984 which would enable the countries represented to exchange views and to study the appropriate machinery for promoting co-operation.

65. Mr. BENCHEKROUN (Morocco) said it was not long ago that space issues had attracted only specialists and had been reserved to the two great Powers. Today, fortunately, international opinion recognized the importance of those issues and saw that the exploration of space constituted a reality which affected everyday life and the future. That change of outlook was largely due to UNISPACE-82, to the dedication of researchers and scientists and to the media's tireless efforts at publicity and dissemination of information.

66. If the awareness of the dimensions of space issues had been somewhat slow in coming, it was not surprising that international co-operation had also been slow in materializing. That delay was due to the complexity of the subject, the difficulty of the problems to be solved and, not least, to misunderstanding, suspicion and fear on the part of certain Governments. It was in that perspective that the work of all those who were dealing with the question must be judged. In that connection, the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space deserved praise for its exhaustive report. His delegation also appreciated the work of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee.

(Mr. Benchekroun, Morocco)

67. Although commendable progress had been made, especially concerning the liability for the damage caused by space objects and the principles governing the use by States of artificial earth satellites for international direct television broadcasting, much still remained to be done. The difficulties encountered in elaborating principles concerning remote sensing, the possibility of the use of the geostationary orbit by everyone and its current excessive exploitation by only a few countries, and the definition and delimitation of outer space, which should put an end to certain interminable quarrels, were just some examples of the problems for which no compromise had been found to date. Space transport and the introduction of nuclear energy with all its dangers were of considerable concern as well.

68. It was to be hoped that the current break would provide an opportunity for decisions which must take account of the sovereignty of States and their clearly understood interests, bearing in mind that the era of narrow nationalism was disappearing and was giving way to co-operation and collaboration on a reciprocal basis of equality and equity.

69. Morocco, which had participated in UNISPACE-82 with a high-level scientific team, welcomed its results. It was obvious, however, that the limited technical and financial resources were a handicap. Moreover, Morocco remained hopeful that its appeals for regional co-operation which was fruitful and beneficial to all would finally be heard; he also reaffirmed his delegation's concern about the often prohibitive costs of some technical equipment, which constituted a considerable obstacle, especially for the developing countries.

70. While welcoming the adoption in 1982 of resolution 37/92 on the principles governing the use by States of artificial earth satellites for international direct television broadcasting, Morocco could not help expressing the apprehension of some countries about the emerging trends and ambitions towards diverting that new technique from its goal of promoting greater understanding among peoples through dissemination of all cultures. Some countries were justifiably complaining of a tendency towards cultural hegemony using practical techniques of mass marketing and publicity. Such techniques destroyed the quality of culture and its identity and eventually led to the gradual disappearance of the elements responsible for the individuality of peoples. The world was witnessing the paradox of a technology being used to do away with the old cultures which it was capable of saving and perpetuating. Cultural domination was tending to replace and perpetuate the old colonial domination at least with respect to the formerly colonized countries, in a new form using television from outer space. Cultural hegemony had been denounced in 1982 by Mexico, and that denunciation had been echoed all over the world. But no one seemed to be paying attention to that, with respect, for example, to the Mediterranean basin, where distances were not of oceanic magnitude and where the clash of cultures had not yet completely recovered from the effects of the clash of arms.

71. Any new technology had both beneficial and detrimental aspects. That was why, in view of the accelerated militarization of outer space, the world could only tremble before the enormity of the disaster that was brewing. The positioning in

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(Mr. Benchekroun, Morocco)

space of anti-satellite satellites, the use of laser weapons, the installation of military-strategic platforms and the special military space technology still kept secret by both East and West paved the way for real destabilization of outer space.

72. Although it was appropriate to warn of the dark side of space technology, it must also be kept in mind that, as the Chairman of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space had said, co-operation in space technology could help to enrich life on earth.

73. Mr. IRUMBA (Uganda) said that UNISPACE-82 had illustrated the tremendous achievements made in space science and technology and their potential multifaceted use in daily life and had quite appropriately focused on the problems faced by developing countries in that field. Regrettably, the gap between the developing and developed countries, particularly in outer space activities, was continuing to widen. Developing countries must therefore be helped to train the manpower and obtain the equipment necessary for handling and interpreting space data. The application of remote sensing to numerous fields, including soils, land use, water resources, forestry, fisheries, livestock, etc., was of particular interest to them. Uganda, like many developing countries, had established its own remote-sensing centre in order to take advantage of space technology. He thanked the Outer Space Affairs Division for the assistance which had enabled Ugandan experts to participate in courses and seminars on remote sensing. His delegation also welcomed the offers made during the Committee's discussion for the training of nationals of developing countries. However, if the disparity was not to grow, the international community must provide more assistance. The United Nations Space Applications Programme was mainly dependent on voluntary contributions for the implementation of projects, which made planning difficult. In order to enable it to respond positively to requests from developing countries, the Outer Space Affairs Division should be granted more funds in the regular budget.

74. His delegation fully endorsed the recommendation of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space that the United Nations should carry out on a priority basis studies on the requirements of developing countries regarding remote sensing and the appropriate systems for meeting such needs. Those systems must be complementary and compatible in order not to become obsolete fairly quickly.

75. Remote sensing offered a good opportunity for productive co-operation between North and South. It was, accordingly, regrettable that the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space had not yet reached agreement on the legal régime applicable to it. Agreement must be based on respect for State sovereignty over natural resources, the need for prior consent from a State before remote sensing was used on it or data acquired through remote sensing was disseminated to third parties, and the right of the sensed State to complete and continuous access to the information gathered.

76. The development of space law had not kept pace with the development of space technology - the lack of progress in establishing principles to govern direct broadcasting by satellite was a vivid example of that disparity. After more than a

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(Mr. Irumba, Uganda)

decade, the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space had been unable to reach a consensus on the matter. He hoped that the Special Political Committee would recommend that the General Assembly request the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space to draw up an international convention on the subject which took everyone's concerns into account.

77. His delegation regretted the fact that the developed countries used the geostationary orbit unrestrictedly. The current system of "first come first served" worked to the disadvantage of the developing countries. It was therefore crucial to work out an international body of rules governing the use of the orbit which took into account the future needs of developing countries and the special interests of equatorial countries. Uganda fully subscribed to the Bogota and Quito Declarations of the equatorial countries. It was also imperative to reach agreement on the definition and delimitation of outer space; his delegation therefore supported the establishment of a working group to consider that issue.

78. Recently there had been an increased effort on the part of the space Powers to militarize outer space. The deployment of arms in space was contrary to the spirit of the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies. His delegation believed that the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space had a positive role to play in the prevention of the deployment of weapons in outer space. Its work would complement, rather than duplicate, the work of the Committee on Disarmament, which was already considering the question.

79. Mr. MAJORSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), in response to the request of certain delegations for more information on the Soviet Union's recent initiative, which supplemented the official proposal submitted by his country to the United Nations and considered by the First Committee, read out the proclamation of a moratorium on the launching of space weapons which had been made on 18 August by Mr. Andropov during a meeting with United States Senators. Under the moratorium, the Soviet Union undertook not to be the first to place in outer space any type of anti-satellite weapon. For that purpose, it established a unilateral moratorium on such launchings for all the time that other States, including the United States, would abstain from placing in outer space any anti-satellite weapon of any type.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.