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PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND THIRD MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 4 December 1985, at 3 p.m.

President:

Mr. DE PINIÉS

(Spain)

later:

Mr. HEPBURN (Vice-President)

(Bahamas)

- Question of Palestine: [33] (continued)

- (a) Report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People
- (b) Report of the Secretary-General
- (c) Draft resolutions

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The meeting was called to order at 3.30 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 33 (continued)

QUESTION OF PALESTINE

- (a) REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE EXERCISE OF THE INALIENABLE RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE (A/40/35)
- (b) REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/40/168-S/17014)
- (c) DRAFT RESOLUTIONS (A/40/L.23 TO A/40/L.25)

Mr. HUSSAIN (Maldives): In this fortieth year of our Organization a number of profound aspirations have been aroused and many hopes have been rekindled. The question of Palestine, which has been on the agenda of the General Assembly for several decades, is the subject of some of them. It can be said to be a problem of outstanding, major international concern that, frustratingly, still awaits a solution. Yet each additional year brings us further news of alarming acts of defiance by Israel through its stepped-up activities in the Palestine homeland and in the occupied Arab territories.

It is our fervent hope that the insistence on maintaining the question of Palestine on the agenda of the General Assembly almost from the inception of our Organization is testimony to the recognition by the international community that a just and lasting solution to the issue must be found. We are also fully aware of the fact that there can be no solution that does not seek to guarantee the inalienable rights Palestinian people. The question of Palestine is a source of dispute and unrest in the region in particular and throughout the world in general.

Here we have a question of the fundamental right of a people to establish a homeland, a people that inhabited the country named Palestine long before the 20th century. Until the First World War it was ruled by the Ottoman Empire. Our antecedent organization, the League of Nations, recognized the Palestinians as a people destined to live as an independent nation. This Organization of ours

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subsequently accorded the Palestinians de jure recognition of their status as a people with national rights under the provisions of the Palestine partition resolution, which gave them the right to establish the Arab State. However, it is sad to recall that from 1947, the year the pertinent resolution was adopted, until 1969 the United Nations emphasis was on the de facto role of Palestinians as refugees and war victims. The actions of our Organization were oriented to restoring to the Palestinians their individual right to return to their homes and enjoy their basic human rights.

In addition, the position of the international community has been aptly crystallized in the hundreds of resolutions adopted on this subject by the United Nations General Assembly, Security Council and specialized agencies. All those decisions are based on the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law, which have stressed that the Palestinians, like any other people in the world, have the right to enjoy freedom, independence and sovereignty in their own homeland.

Despite all the efforts made by all the peace-loving peoples in the world in their desire to enable the Palestinian people to achieve peace and to enjoy their inalienable rights, no progress has been made because of Israeli intransigence. Since Israel's creation we have witnessed its denial of the rights of the Palestinian people by its continual acts of aggression against them and by its flagrant violation of the principles enshrined in the Charter of our Organization.

How long can the wisdom of man allow the Palestinians to continue in their tragic plight? How long can we witness these sad consequences of this unsolved problem? The answers to those questions weigh heavily on morality. Their roots are connected in an important way to political reality. To speak rationally of the Palestinian question we must decide to stop speaking about war and turn our attention more seriously to the prevailing political facts. Israel is occupying

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the land that belongs to the Palestinian people. Several hundreds of thousands of Palestinians are under Israeli rule. On the other hand, a large Palestinian population is in exile. Against the background of those harsh realities the Palestinians have demonstrated great vigilance. They have grown politically and have earned recognition throughout the world, in spite of all kinds of repression and hardship. They have shown the world that they will continue to exist and that they will continue to exert their will in choosing who shall represent them, where they want to establish their home and how they want to forge their national and political identity, now or in the future.

We believe that the time has come for the Palestinians, represented by the legal representative of the Palestinian people themselves, to sit down with the Israeli Jews and discuss all the issues and differences that have stood in the way of a peaceful settlement. It is well recognized that the perceptions and formulation of those issues are based in the immediate locality but that they are issues that engulf two communities that were once considered to be in exile. The main objective of the Palestinians must most certainly be liberation - liberation from the state of exile and dispossession.

If people are given the hope of the exercise of their legitimate right to establish their own homeland, it is imperative that that hope be accompanied by confidence that that objective will ultimately be achieved. However, this has not been the case with regard to the Palestinians. Several decades have elapsed, and every additional year adds to the growing frustration. The Palestinians' hope to establish a homeland of their own is far from having been realized.

The gruesome fate that has befallen several million Palestinians, victims of homelessness, persecution, military occupation, economic deprivation and dispossession can hardly be condoned by mankind. What the future holds for that

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people must not put an unbearable load of guilt on the conscience of the civilized world. The world today is seeing a land that for thousands of years was indisputably the inalienable and God-given habitat of the Palestinians subjected to systematic annexation by an insatiable military occupier with absolutely no respect or regard for the decisions and resolutions of this international body. It is no accident that man's mind turns to the question of what makes our collective decisions and will so impotent, so ineffectual, such an exercise in futility.

After the several decades that have elapsed it appears crystal clear that today, unaffected by considerations of justice, equity and the resolutions of the United Nations, shameless power and might hold sway. Numerous bold diplomatic exercises are under way on nearly every front, but each has different strategies and approaches. The faith and patience of the Palestinians, who have for so many decades been the pawns and victims of those adventures, are nearly exhausted.

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My delegation therefore believes that this Assembly must spare no effort to restore their faith, which can only be done by producing concrete and tangible results that do not undermine their basic human right to live in dignity, normalcy and freedom in a homeland, a place which they can call their own, like all other nations of the world. Until that becomes a reality, it is our duty and responsibility as Member States of the United Nations to extend our unequivocal support to the Palestinians, who are subjected to unparalleled adversity.

Mr. NETANYAHU (Israel): Of all the words spoken here about the "Question of Palestine", none have addressed the true source of the conflict between Jews and Arabs. We have to ask why this conflict has been going on for so long. Why do the kinds of grievances which have been resolved long ago in other parts of the world persist here, with no end in sight? And why does a huge, a tremendous, wall continue to separate the parties, preventing them from making peace with one another? It is clear what most of the Arabs representatives claim. They usually pretend that the conflict with Israel is rooted in the Six-Day War in 1967, when Israel took over the territories of Judea, Samaria and Gaza. This is where the conflict was supposed to have begun. This is nonsense. The Arabs, after all, had these territories firmly in their possession on earlier occasions, before other wars had taken place, and held them on the eve of the Six-Day War. In fact, they were totally unabashed in announcing to the world what their intentions were.

Listen to Nasser of Egypt on 27 May: "Our basic objective will be the destruction of Israel." Or President Aref of Iraq on 31 May, a few days before the war: "Our goal is to wipe Israel off the map." Or President Boumediène of Algeria on 4 June, one day before the War: "This struggle must lead to the liquidation of Israel." Or, on the day the war broke out, Radio Damascus, very simply and concisely: "Throw them into the sea." No word about territories; no word about the 1967 aggression.

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When Arab spokesmen are presented with these facts, what they typically do is to fall back on the war of 1948. This war, again launched by the Arabs, was launched to destroy the State of Israel before it was born; and this is presented by the Arab spokesmen as the original Israeli aggression. What constituted this "aggression" was the very establishment of Israel. The Arabs rejected out of hand the partition resolution of November 1947 and thrust their armies, five Arab armies, into the Jewish heartland; they cut deep into the Jewish territories; they practically reached the suburbs of Tel-Aviv; and this was intended to be, according to the Secretary General of the League of Arab States, as he called it, a "war of extermination and a momentous massacre which will be spoken of like the Mongolian massacres and the Crusades."

What really caused the war between the new State of Israel and the Arabs was the total Arab rejection of the very existence of a Jewish State in the Middle East. But I believe that even that does not fully get at the root of the matter, because the war waged by Arab extremists against the Jewish community in Palestine predates the establishment of Israel by decades.

Throughout the 1920s and the 1930s Arab terrorists launched one murderous raid after another against the Jewish farms and villages; they assassinated Arab moderates; they rejected Jewish peace offerings, Jewish overtures and Jewish concessions; and they plunged the entire area into turmoil and into bloodshed.

This Arab violence and this Arab terrorism were the precursors of today's violence and terrorism against the Jews. You cannot understand one without understanding the other. The campaign of attacks against Israel in the last four decades is merely a continuation of the systematic campaign against the Jews which started much earlier. The Arab war against the Jews is in fact as old as this century. The enduring nature of this war has nothing to do with any specific grievance or event. It has nothing to do with refugees; there were none. It has

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nothing to do with disputed borders; there were none of those either. I will go a step further - in its essence it has nothing to do with the fact of Israeli sovereignty because, before 1948, such sovereignty did not exist and still the conflict had raged for decades. In fact, it did not have anything to do with the question of Arab sovereignty; there was none of that and the Arabs rejected it, as I said, in the partition resolution. So what did it have to do with? It was driven by a fundamental objection to, and a fundamental rejection of, a Jewish presence - any Jewish presence - in the area.

Those who pursued this blind obsession did not weigh the consequences of their actions. They simply trampled anything that stood in their way. They killed Arab and Jew indiscriminately. But I must say that they also killed discriminately and their favourite targets were typically Arabs who refused to acknowledge the "exclusive representation" of the "Arab Cause" which these extremists claimed for themselves. Above all, the extremists rejected the notion of compromise and the notion of coexistence, which are anathema to fanatics everywhere.

Who were these extremists? Who were their leaders and allies? What motivated them? And what is their precise relationship to today's conflict? I believe that answering these questions is essential to assessing the true nature of the obstacle to establishing peace between Arabs and Jews. It is especially appropriate to examine these questions on the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations, as this anniversary coincides with the historic defeat of nazism in Europe. But, as I will show, the legacy of hatred did not die there. Before and well after its collapse, nazism found its most ardent disciples in the Arab world.

Perhaps the most prominent leader of Arab rejectionism in this century was Haj-Amin al Hussein, who was appointed by the British as the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem in 1921. He was the pre-eminent agitator of the bloodiest Arab assaults and riots and massacres of Jews in the first half of this century and he is a

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central figure in the pantheon of the PLO. He is in fact considered the founding father, so to speak, of the PLO in both spirit and practice. Arafat has often referred to the Mufti as his mentor and guide. No other figure has had such an influence on him or on the rest of the PLO leadership. To give an example, on 24 April of this year, during the thirtieth commemoration of the Bandung Conference, Arafat extolled the Mufti with great reverence. He said that he took "immense pride" in being his student. And he emphasized that the PLO is "continuing in the path" set by the Mufti.

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What is that path? And what did the Mufti represent? For, if Arafat and the PLO claim to follow in his footsteps, then we can gain an important insight into their goals and into their methods by examining the Mufti's political career. Haj-Amin al Husseini was appointed Grand Mufti a year after he had fomented murderous anti-Jewish riots in the Old City of Jerusalem. But, as I said earlier, the Mufti's main targets were Arabs - not Jews. With his henchman, Emil Ghory, he organized the systematic murder of moderate Arab leaders, and he silenced the rest. This encompassed entire clans of Arabs who did not agree with the Mufti's policy. The Nashashibi clan is a well-known example. These clans were either wiped out - simply destroyed - or forced into exile by the Mufti. The result of this consistent policy was that by the end of the 1930s, moderate Arab public opinion - "moderate" as anyone here would define it - had simply disappeared from Palestine; it did not exist - at least publicly - because anyone who spoke about the idea of coexistence, about the idea of moderation, about the idea of peace between Arabs and Jews, was a dead man. The Mufti projected this same attitude, with great success, to the surrounding community of Arab States and Arab protectorates, which were all mobilized in the service of this Arab extremism.

But this was not enough for the Mufti. He had organized anti-Jewish riots, first in Jerusalem in 1920, then in Safed, and then the great massacre of Hebron in 1929, which wiped out the ancient Jewish community there, a community that had been there for millenia. This was not enough for the Mufti. He wanted to tie his campaign to a more powerful, global engine - something that would ensure the systematic and final annihilation of the Jews.

Well, there was only one such engine to be found at the time: it was made readily available by the rise of Nazi Germany in the 1930s. Right around the time of the rise of the Nazis, we see the Mufti beginning to draw parallels between Nazi Pan-Germanism and Pan-Arab nationalism. He was so successful in this campaign

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that by the time the Nazis introduced the Nuremburg racial laws - which was only two years after their rise; Hitler came to power in 1933 and the Nuremburg racial laws against the Jews were introduced in 1935 - Hitler received a tremendous flood of congratulatory telegrams and letters, all sorts of other salutations of praise, from all corners of the Arab world. Let me give the Assembly an example. The Palestinian Arab newspaper Al-Liwa took its slogan directly from the Nazis; it borrowed Hitler's slogan: "one country, one people, one leader". Another newspaper wrote this: "Hitlerism is truly symptomatic of a world which is sick to death of the subversive activities of Judaism, which has developed a stranglehold on international economics". On a religious holiday in May 1937, German flags and photographs of Hitler were prominently displayed by Arab demonstrators in Palestine, while Arab newspapers hailed the demonstration as a "significant gesture of sympathy and respect with the Nazis and Fascists".

This was just laying the ground for what was to come next. And it came. At the very beginning of the Second World War, in October 1939, the Mufti sent a personal letter to Hitler. He said: "On the occasion of your great political and military triumphs ... the Arab nation everywhere feels the greatest joy and deepest gratification on the occasion of these great successes ... The Arab people ... will be linked to your country by a treaty of friendship and collaboration". Very important words: friendship and collaboration. And indeed during the next two years the relationship between the Mufti and Hitler flourished into friendship and collaboration. In October 1941, the Nazi Government issued a formal communiqué in Berlin promising to help in the "elimination of the Jewish National Home in Palestine".

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Well, after such a signal, the Mufti was ready now for his grand entry. He flew to Berlin and met Hitler in person for the first time on 28 November 1941. Hussein, the Mufti, expressed his willingness to co-operate with Germany in every way - as he said - including the recruitment of an Arab legion. In return, Hitler assured Hussein that he would become the official spokesman for the Arab world. I suppose that in today's jargon this would most likely be transmitted as "the sole legitimate representative". Hitler told the Mufti that the two of them shared the common goal of the destruction of Palestinian Jewry.

In Berlin the Mufti worked very hard, energetically, on behalf of the Nazis. He made repeated broadcasts over Nazi Radio. He encouraged, he urged Moslems everywhere to rise up against the Allies. He helped instigate a successful uprising against the Allies in Iraq and fomented widespread unrest in Egypt. He visited Yugoslavia to recruit local Moslems. In fact he did recruit local Moslems, about 6,000 of which were dispatched to fight under German command.

Between 1943 and 1944, the Mufti concentrated his activities on the Jews of the Balkans, in Eastern Europe. He prevented the rescue of Jews from Hungary, from Romania, from Bulgaria, from Croatia; and he thwarted the immigration of Jewish orphans to Palestine. He protested to the Nazis that not enough resources were being devoted to preventing the escape of Jewish refugees from the Balkans. This has been widely testified to. Here is one example. Wilhelm Melchers, a Nazi official who testified at the Nuremberg Trials on 6 August 1947, said: "The Mufti was making protests everywhere - in the offices of the Foreign Minister, the Secretary of State and in other SS Headquarters". These protests had an immediate effect, as a rule. For example, on 13 May 1943, the Mufti personally delivered to Ribbentrop a letter protesting against the plan to arrange the emigration of 4,000 Jewish children from Bulgaria. Ribbentrop succumbed to the Mufti's pressure. He

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quickly arranged for a telegram to be sent to the German Ambassador in Sofia, by which he prevented the emigration from taking place. The tragic result, of course, was that 4,000 Jewish children were condemned to death.

But this idol of the PLO was still not satisfied. He had a larger objective - a much larger objective - in mind than merely preventing the escape of some Jews. He wanted, as Melchers and others pointed out at the Nuremberg Trials, to see "all of them liquidated". As in the case of the Balkan Jews, he worked feverishly towards the achievement of this goal. Adolph Eichmann's deputy, Dieter Wisliceny, testified that Hussein had "played a role in the decision to exterminate the European Jews. The importance of this role must not be disregarded ... the Mufti repeatedly suggested to the various authorities with whom he was maintaining contact, above all to Hitler, Ribbentrop and Himmler, the extermination of European Jewry. He considered this an appropriate solution to the Palestinian Problem".

Eichmann's deputy gave eyewitness testimony about Hussein's involvement. He said: "The Mufti was one of the initiators of the systematic extermination of European Jewry and had been a collaborator and adviser of Eichmann and Himmler in the execution of this plan. He was one of Eichmann's best friends and had constantly incited him to accelerate the extermination measures. I heard him say that, accompanied by Eichmann, he had visited incognito the gas chamber of Auschwitz". This is the man in "whose path" Yasser Arafat has vowed to continue. Those are Arafat's words: "whose path".

How did such a war criminal escape punishment? After all, after the Second World War, Nazi war criminals and collaborators were exposed, brought to trial and sentenced and punished. Not so in the Arab world. Nazi collaborators, Nazi war criminals were greeted as heroes. Hundreds of Nazis found refuge, and, beyond refuge, employment as advisers in murder, in many Arab capitals.

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I spoke there a few weeks ago about the latest such revelation, the long - and I regret to say happy - sojourn of the notorious SS killer Alois Brunner in Syria, working as the personal adviser of Hafez Assad's brother, who is in charge of the security forces.

So while nazism may have been defeated in Europe, it was very much alive in the Middle East and indeed, after the war, Husseini fled Europe and was reinstated as a leader in the highest Arab councils. From that position, he continued to spread the nazi poison throughout the Middle East. During the 1948 war, he issued an exhortation to the Arab armies that concisely summed up his life's ambition: "I declare a Holy War. Murder the Jews. Murder them all". It did not quite turn out in that way. When the Arab armies were defeated, a process began to emerge, at least between Israel and its eastern neighbour, and Abdullah of Jordan began showing some signs that were interpreted, at least by the Mufti, as a willingness to make peace with Israel. For that, Abdullah was murdered in 1951 by the Mufti's agents, and by the Mufti's inspiration. This was a crucial escalation of the earlier practice of assassination, because the targets by now were not merely prominent people, they were the leaders of entire countries. This ultimate system of intimidation, perfected by the Mufti and his disciples, is still very much with us.

But the nazi legacy was continued in even more direct ways, and by that I mean the recruitment and employment of nazis and neo-nazis. In 1969, for example, the PLO recruited two former nazi instructors, Erich Altern, a leader of the Gestapo's Jewish Affairs section, and Willi Berner, an SS officer in the Mauthausen extermination camp. Another former nazi, Johann Schuller, was found supplying arms to the Fatah and recruiting military instructors for it in Rome. The Belgian Jean Tireault, secretary of the neo-nazi La Nation Europeenne, which is an

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organization in Europe, also went on the Fatah payroll. Still another Belgian, the neo-nazi Karl van der Put, recruited volunteers for the PLO.

In 1976, the German neo-nazi Otto Albrecht was arrested in West Germany. He had PLO identity papers which the PLO had given him, together with \$1.2 million to buy weapons. In 1977, the Fatah agreed to train members of L'Oeuvre Francais, a neo-nazi French group, which in turn agreed to carry out operations for the PLO. In 1978, West Germany arrested four people who had used PLO facilities to smuggle arms from Arab countries into West Germany; three of the four were members of the "Adolf Hitler Free Corps".

Those and many other examples of PLO-nazi contacts became so well known that even the Arab press had to acknowledge them. On 11 April 1981, for example, the Saudi paper Majallah reported that neo-nazis from Europe and the United States were training in PLO camps in Lebanon. That is true; they did train there. The results of that training were revealed in many operations, including some recent ones - for example, the PLO "Force 17" attack in Larnaca a few months ago. One of the three killers turned out to be not an Arab but a British neo-nazi. The French newspaper, the Nouvel Observateur, reported that in January 1984 the notorious German neo-nazi terrorist, Odfried Hepp - one of the two leaders of the Hepp-Axel group, one of the principal terrorist organizations in West Germany - joined Abul Abbas in the PLO headquarters in Tunis, before Abbas himself also became personally notorious by masterminding the Achille Lauro outrage.

Beyond this unbroken chain of practical collaboration and reciprocity between nazis and Arab rejectionists, there is even deeper affinity that links the two. In the first half of this century, Arab extremists led by the Mufti signed a blood pact - those are the only words I can use, a blood pact - with nazi totalitarianism to exterminate the Jews. In the second half of the century, the PLO under Arafat

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has sought the aid of Soviet totalitarianism to achieve the continuation of that aim in its new form: the extermination of Israel. Underlying both initiatives is the spirit of the Mufti's fervent hatred. It is a hatred that has killed the chances for peace time and again. It is a hatred that moved Arafat to dance in the streets when Sadat, the first Arab peace-maker - so far the only Arab peace-maker with Israel - was murdered. It is a hatred that is annually reaffirmed in the PLO charter that states plainly its intention to destroy the State of Israel. It is a hatred that, however thinly disguised by the PLO's ambiguous rhetoric, bursts forth with fiendish glee whenever its killers get the opportunity to murder Jews - whether they be a crippled pensioner on a Mediterranean cruise, a defenceless middle-aged woman in Lanarca, or a baby in Nahariyah.

But as in earlier periods, these attacks are not limited to Jews alone, because the PLO, like the Mufti, has commanded the political process. Like the Mufti, it murders any of its opponents who dare to speak of even the idea of the coexistence of Arabs and Jews - from people like Sartawi in Portugal, himself a dissident member of the PLO, to Imam Khossander in Gaza, a respected religious leader gunned down by the PLO, to Aziz Shehadeh in Ramallah, who was murdered two days ago for the same crime. In fact, from June 1967 to January 1982 alone, the PLO specifically made targets of and murdered 346 Palestinian Arabs, often including their women and children. These are all people who dared to speak out against the PLO, the group which "democratically" claims to speak on their behalf.

There are many Palestinian Arabs who, free from the threat of assassination, would speak out for Jewish-Arab coexistence. The tragedy is that since the 1920s, since Haj Amin Al Hussein, the Palestinian Arabs have been under the tyranny of a small and violent band that has been bent not on coexistence or on peace with the Jews, but on their annihilation; and any Arab voicing dissent has been simply gunned down.

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If the peace process depends in any way on these followers of the Mufti, there will never be any peace. Just as the Mufti dashed any hope for peace in his time, the PLO remains committed - and I say this despite its hollow professions of peace - to a goal diametrically opposed to peace.

Much has been made, in this forum also, of the PLO's supposed turn towards moderation in recent months. We are told it intends to limit terrorist attacks to "occupied territories". Two things come to mind immediately. First, the obvious one: nothing justifies terrorism, not even its geographical limitation. The slaughter of innocents, the butchering of children and the murder of the elderly are evils wherever they take place. But there is a second, less obvious point. How does the PLO define "occupied territory"? While many rushed to define Arafat's recent statement on this matter as referring to Judea, Samaria and Gaza, what does the PLO say?

In an interview with the BBC on 10 November 1985, Abu Iyad, a very senior PLO leader, said:

"When we say occupied Palestine ... we consider all Palestine as occupied ... Our resistance will be everywhere inside the territory and that is not defined in terms of the West Bank and the Gaza alone."

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Another PLO leader, Farouk Kaddoumi, told the French daily Quotidien de Paris that:

"Israel is occupied territory ... whether it was conquered in 1967 or earlier in 1948 ... We speak of all the territory that is Palestine."

By the PLO's own admission, then, its aim remains the liquidation of all of Israel, considered "occupied territory" in its entirety. The PLO's brutal method, terrorism, is therefore applicable throughout Israel. There are some who refuse to acknowledge this reality head on - although they are aware of it, they refuse to acknowledge it - and tend to fall on vague PLO formulations which they claim show the PLO's readiness to exchange territory for peace - "land for peace" is the way it is put. For example, Jordan's Foreign Minister, Mr. Taher Masri, in a speech to the American Enterprise Institute on 19 March this year, said:

"The importance of the Jordanian-Palestinian agreement is that it publicly obligates the PLO for the first time to accept the principle of 'land in exchange for peace'."

Again, let us take a look at what the PLO itself says. It does not read the "land for peace" formula as a call for the establishment of a permanent peace with Israel in return for Israel's withdrawal from certain territories claimed by the Arabs; rather it views this formula within the context of its "policy of stages" - that is the programme formulated in 1974 to establish a Palestinian State on the territory from which Israel would withdraw, as a step towards the subsequent destruction of Israel.

Of course, in this context the words "land" and "peace" take on an entirely different meaning. What meaning? Listen to what Khaled al-Hassan, Head of Fatah's Information Department said recently:

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"Everyone who accepted the decisions of the Palestinian National Council and the policy of stages ... cannot oppose the sentence 'land in exchange for peace' since at its starting point is the policy of stages."

And what, precisely, is the policy of stages? As recently as May this year a PLO leader, Abu Nazir, said:

"When we demand the establishment of a Palestinian State, or even a Jordan-PLO confederation, this is a strategy leading to the establishment of a State over all of Palestine. The 'phased policy' provides us with a springboard towards further goals."

Khaled al-Hassan elaborates:

"While the 'phased policy' prescribes accepting anything possible during the first phase, we are determined to carry on the battle until the final goal is attained. The struggle will be long and will be decided only when Zionism is annihilated."

So what do we see here? We see that the PLO has not altered its goal one iota. It continues to deny Israel's right to exist. It continues actively to seek its destruction. It continues to practise a deliberate campaign of terror against children, women, commuters, shoppers, travellers. This campaign developed by the Fatah is now the staple of all PLO factions, whether they be pro- or anti-Arafat, as can be plainly seen in the recent murders on the Achille Lauro, in Larnaca, Barcelona and Malta. Just as in the days of the Nazis, Jews are selectively singled out for extermination.

Of course, after each outrage the PLO issues its customary double talk, lies and denials. It relies on the gullibility and credulity of civilized societies, which it hopes will believe a lie if it is repeated often enough or if it allows them to avoid facing unpleasant truths. In this, the PLO faithfully follows Goebbels, another of Hussein's mentors.

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There is apparently no limit to this lying. I am told that a few hours ago - in fact, an hour and a half ago - in this building a senior PLO representative, Farouk Kaddoumi, said that Mrs. Klinghoffer had pushed her husband off the Achille Lauro to collect the insurance money. I do not think Goebbels could have thought that one up.

Lies and deceptions. Outrageous lies and deception. That is the technique. You say one thing in Arabic; you say another thing in English, French or whatever other language. When Arafat talks in English he talks of peace, or vague formulations of peace - the peace of the grave that I mentioned - but when he talks in Arabic he talks of war. On "The Voice of Palestine" from Algiers just the other day, 1 December, he said:

"The Palestinian people will fight the Zionist foe to the last baby in its mother's womb."

I do not know if he meant a Palestinian baby or a Zionist baby. I do not think it really matters. What matters is the cruel, uninhibited commitment to total war, a war to the last baby, a war of extermination, and the cavalier, wilful disregard of the terrible suffering that such a war will inflict on Arab and Jew alike. Once again, Arafat unswervingly follows the "path set by the Mufti".

I am glad this Assembly had the wisdom to recognize that even excess has its limits when it chose not to invite such a man, who represents such an organization, who represents such a legacy, to its fortieth anniversary celebrations.

But if we are speaking on the subject of hypocrisy and double talk regarding the question of Palestine we cannot leave this matter in the hands of the PLO alone. It is not only the PLO that murders Jews and Palestinian Arabs in its vaunted "quest for peace". There are many others who do the same. In fact, several representatives of such countries have spoken during this debate. They have shed crocodile tears for the fate of the Palestinians, whom they have been

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happily killing, just like the PLO, and whom they have prevented from reaching a peaceful solution with Israel. All the bilge that those representatives have poured out here does not merit a response, but I want to focus on one example which I believe is the quintessential example of what we are talking about: Syria. Syria has massacred droves of Palestinian Arabs, not only in Lebanon but, as the PLO itself acknowledges - acknowledges? It accuses Assad of this - in the camps of Yarmuk, Haled and Darah in Syria itself. One could give other examples, but the main point is this: the Palestinian question is a code word, it has become nothing more than an empty slogan used by extremists throughout the Arab world in their war for power and prominence. I think one can see what unites them. Not much, but by their rejection of Camp David they established a common front known as the rejectionist front. One can see that what unites these extremists from Tripoli to Aden, to Damascus, to Baghdad, is their determination to destroy any initiative that truly seeks to bring the parties together.

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There is a clash going on in the Middle East, a clash between a stuttering, hesitant, weak and fearful moderation, or a desire for moderation, and extremism. In that clash there can be no substitute for courage. The moderates must decide; they must make a stand; they must refuse to submit to the rejectionists; they must defy the stranglehold of terror and intimidation; they must publicly disown and discard the Mufti's descendants; they must disown the kind of statements I have quoted today, that chain of venom and hate. I assure the Assembly that the minute they do so they will find in Israel a most enthusiastic partner for peace.

Israel's leaders have expressed time and again here and in other forums our desire to initiate direct negotiations. I believe that such negotiations, conducted in good faith by parties genuinely seeking a peaceful solution, could startle the world. The problems that seemed insoluble could quickly be solved, and the prospect of a new beginning between Jews and Arabs that has so long eluded us will no longer elude us.

Mr. VELAZCO SAN JOSE (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): Year after year we meet here to debate the question of Palestine and time and again we hear repeated, as in previous years, that there can be no solution to the Middle East crisis without a solution to the problem of Palestine, which is at its very core. Time and again it is reiterated that there must be recognition of, and respect for, the right of the Palestinian people once and for all to establish themselves in their own homeland and that there must also be acceptance, once and for all, of the fact that the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) is the sole legitimate representative of that people.

However, despite that strong call by the international community, the Palestinian people continue to live a wandering existence, submitted to all kinds of outrage and discrimination in their own land, where they were born, deprived of their most elementary rights, abused, persecuted, slandered and murdered by the

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bullets and bombs of those who claim to represent a people that once suffered similar outrages at the hands of Nazi Germany.

That is the terrible paradox of the situation. The Zionist leaders of Israel are today using against the Palestinian people the same methods, the same cruelty, the same ruthlessness, as the Jewish people once suffered under Hitler's hordes.

For there is nothing more like the pogroms of yesterday than the expulsion of entire villages, the dynamiting of houses, the razing of communities with bulldozers until not a vestige of life is left on the land there. What differences are there between the concentration camps and the gas chambers of yesterday and the Dantesque pictures of men, women and children murdered in the refugee camps of Sabra and Shatila? How much longer will the international community permit the continuation of that tragedy, which has gone on day after day, month after month, year after year? How long will the international community put up with the excesses of the Zionist régime and its systematic rejection of the agreements and resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly? Or is it impossible for the overwhelming majority of nations represented at the United Nations to secure respect for the Charter and end once and for all Israel's genocidal policy?

As for those who demagogically raise the flag of human rights and hypocritically profess dismay over alleged violations of those rights in certain parts of the world, we must remind them that the Palestinian people's rights are not being violated because, they plainly and simply do not have any rights; because the Zionists plainly and simply do not consider the Palestinians as human beings.

Every year at this time the press and television in this city devote considerable coverage to the plight of citizens of this country who lack housing and have to find refuge in special centres equipped for the purpose so that they will not freeze to death. Has any representative ever seen in the press or

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television coverage anything about the cold being suffered by Palestinian families in the refugee camps?

The logic of the Zionists and their imperialist partners is that the Palestinians, not being human beings, possess no rights.

It is no secret to anyone that only the political, economic, military and diplomatic support of the United States for Israel enables the Zionists to continue their arrogant policy in the Middle East, and that without the substantial assistance they receive in every sphere it would not be possible for them to continue to deny the Palestinian people their most elementary rights, to occupy the Golan Heights or Lebanese territory or to launch their bombers against PLO facilities in Tunisia.

The policy of State terrorism being applied by Israel against its Arab neighbours is the same State terrorism being applied by the South African racists against Angola and the front-line States, and it is the same State terrorism being applied by the United States against Nicaragua. That is the trilogy of State terrorism; it is banditry taken into the international arena. It is a philosophy of utter contempt for peoples and is the policy of force and oppression.

It is that policy of Israel and the United States that has so far prevented the convening of an international peace conference on the Middle East, under United Nations auspices and with the participation of all the parties concerned, including the Palestine Liberation Organization, in accordance with paragraph 6 of the Declaration of the International Conference on the Question on Palestine, held in Geneva in 1983, and General Assembly resolution 38/58, of 13 December that year.

Despite the efforts of the Secretary-General and the overwhelming support given to that peace initiative, it has still not been possible to make progress in preparing for the convening of that Conference, owing to the intransigence of Israel and the United States, which persist in preventing it.

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The Non-Aligned Movement, which has always given the people of Palestine its support and solidarity, again reiterated at its Ministerial Conference in Luanda its firm support for the cause of that people and its condemnation of Israeli practices against the Palestinians and other Arabs living under Zionist occupation.

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The Ministers likewise stated once again that achievement of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East depended upon Israel's withdrawal from all Palestinian territories, and the territories of other Arab countries that it has occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem, and the exercise by the Palestinian people of all their legitimate and inalienable rights, including the right to return to their homes, the right to self-determination, without external influences, and the right to national independence, as well as the right to establish a sovereign independent State in Palestine, in conformity with the principles of the United Nations Charter and the relevant resolutions.

The Cuban people, heirs to a long and rich history of struggle for freedom and justice, will continue to express their militant solidarity with the Palestinian people and will not cease to denounce the Zionists and their imperialist allies who are today depriving the Palestinian people of their most elementary rights.

Mr. ZARIF (Afghanistan): The question of Palestine constitutes one of the oldest issues on the agenda of the United Nations General Assembly.

This question, which arose as a result of the machinations by world imperialism and its illegitimate brainchild, Zionism, is centred in the arrogant denial to the Palestinian people of their inalienable national rights. It lies at the crux of the whole Arab-Israeli conflict in the Middle East and has occupied the minds of many nations and international organizations in their search for a just solution. Thousands of hours have been spent considering this issue in hundreds of international and regional conferences and gatherings and dozens of declarations, decisions, communiqués, resolutions and plans of action have been adopted with the sole purpose of achieving a lasting and comprehensive solution and thus putting an end to the prolonged tragedy of millions of Palestinians. None of these efforts,

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however, have brought closer the attainment of a settlement, or the establishment of peace for that matter. Palestinian territories, together with other Arab lands, still remain in the firm grip of Israeli occupation. Acts of violence and repression against Palestinians and other Arab populations of the occupied territories are affecting ever larger segments of those peoples, and there seems to be no end to the Israeli policy of acquisition of territory by force.

Continuation of the plight of the Palestinians can in no way be attributed to a lack of endeavour on the part of the international community. Nor can it be based on the pretext that there exists no realistic and just basis on which a permanent solution could be built.

The United Nations inherited the problem of Palestine when it had already acquired dangerous dimensions. The developments that have occurred since then greatly added to the tension which have plunged the region, more than once, into all-out armed confrontations resulting in enormous loss of life and property.

Conscious of its direct responsibility for maintaining international peace and security, the United Nations has remained seized of the situation and has exerted every effort in order to bring about a comprehensive and durable peace in the Middle East through a just solution of the Palestinian problem. In the resolutions of its most important and authoritative organs, the Security Council and the General Assembly, the United Nations has given a clear definition of the nature and scope of the problem.

These resolutions not only reflected the verdict of the international community towards the Palestinian issue, but also drew the basic guidelines for achieving an acceptable solution to it.

It is highly disquieting for peace-loving humanity to note that none of their repeated demands for the restoration of peace in this war-stricken region of

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the world, through the implementation of the United Nations resolutions, have been complied with by the Zionist régime of Israel and its imperialist mentors.

In gross and repeated breaches of the Charter and in violation of Security Council and General Assembly resolutions, Israel stubbornly refuses to withdraw its forces and administration from the Palestinian and other Arab territories it has occupied since 1967. In line with their cynical ambition for establishing the so-called "greater Israel", the Zionist rulers have embarked on the path of absorbing the territories of others. Despite the strong warnings of the international community, the Zionist régime promulgated the so-called "Basic Law", declared the Holy City of Jerusalem as the "eternal" capital of Israel. In the same vein, Israel not only refuses to return the vast territories of the Syrian Arab Republic in the Golan Heights to Syria's sovereignty, but has enacted legislation purported to permanently annex them to Israel.

Clear reflection of the same illegal practice can be observed in the occupied territories of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Israel has persistently continued with its policy of proliferating Jewish colonial settlements in those areas. As in the past, further thousands of the indigenous inhabitants were forcefully evacuated last year from their homes and towns, or had to abandon them due to enormous pressure and intimidation by the occupying authorities and the Zionist settlers. Land and properties thus confiscated are usually used for establishing new settlements and expanding the old ones, or for constructing new military facilities for the occupying forces.

Other laws and regulations enforced by the Israeli authorities, in complete violation of the 1949 Geneva Conventions, have extended their ominous effects to every aspect of life in the occupied territories. Local administrations, such as city, town and village councils, are dismantled and their elected officials are

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dismissed and replaced by military or civilian administrations of the the occupying Power. Academic and social institutions, such as schools, universities and trade unions are repeatedly closed down. Moslem mosques and holy shrines are vandalized and peaceful citizens remained targets of constant harassment by the terrorist groups of settler vigilantes or the police of the occupying Power.

These and many other similar practices have remained permanent causes of alarm for the population of the occupied territories and for concerned humanity. The bitter memories of the massacre of innocent Palestinian refugees in the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps and the piratical Israeli air raid of Tunis, resulting in the murder of over 160 people, are still fresh in our minds. If we are to prevent the recurrence of those bestial and abhorrent actions, we must take serious steps towards defusing the tension which is increasing as a result of atrocities committed by the Zionist régime.

Suffice it to say that Zionist arrogance could not have prevailed over the repeatedly expressed wishes of the overwhelming majority of mankind had it not been defended and encouraged by its imperialist allies, first and foremost, United States imperialism. The United States, which has forged a so-called "strategic alliance" with the Zionist régime, has been rendering it enormous unconditional political, economic and military support which has enabled it to perpetrate acts of aggression against sovereign Arab countries of the area, notably Syria and Lebanon.

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It is United States imperialism that has effectively paralysed the Security Council by using its veto power and preventing the adoption of measures that would call to order the outlawed régime of Israel.

The United States perpetual conspiracies against the international peace and security have been once again manifested by its continued negative response to the repeated calls of the General Assembly for the convening of an international conference on peace in the Middle East. We strongly condemn such an irresponsible attitude towards one of the burning issues of our time. In this connection, we hail the constructive position of the Soviet Union and voice our support for their timely and realistic proposals of 30 July 1984.

While expressing appreciation to the Secretary-General for his endeavours aimed at preparing the ground for the holding of the proposed conference, we urge him to redouble his efforts in that direction.

It is, of course, necessary that the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the sole and legitimate representative of the people of Palestine, participates on an equal footing in such a conference. We reject any attempt to isolate the question of Palestine from the rest of the Middle East problem and consider all collusive and partial agreements to have no moral or legal validity. Past experience has shown that only a just and comprehensive settlement can bring lasting peace to the Middle East, the sine qua non of which is the attainment by the Palestinian people of their inalienable legitimate rights.

In their struggle to recover their territories and to exercise their national sovereign rights, the heroic people of Palestine and the valiant patriots of Syria and Lebanon have the full solidarity and support of the Afghan people and Government.

I wish to conclude my statement with the following quotation from the message of Babrak Karmal, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the People's

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Democratic Party of Afghanistan and President of the Revolutionary Council of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan on the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian people:

"The people and Government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan vigorously condemn Israel for its continuing occupation of Palestinian and Arab territories, and the United States for its all round support of Israel's expansionist, aggressive and colonialist policies.

"While the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan supports the continued efforts of the United Nations to find a just and comprehensive solution to the Middle East problem, it believes that the early convening of an international peace conference on the Middle East, with the participation of all interested parties, including the PLO, as is the demand of the overwhelming majority of nations, would be able to bring a durable peace to the long suffering Palestinians and other Arab people living under the occupationist rule of Israel.

"I would like once again to reiterate our firm support for and solidarity with the Palestinian and other Arab people struggling against the inhuman policies of Zionism and imperialism."

Mr. SAIGNAWONG (Lao People's Democratic Republic) (interpretation from French): With each year that passes the question of Palestine, which has already been with us for nearly 40 years, is exacerbated and becomes more complex. Pursuing its expansionist policy, Israel not only refuses to withdraw from the Palestinian and Arab territories occupied since 1967 but, on the contrary, has made every effort to annex those territories, specifically by continuing its policy of Jewish settlements, forcible displacement or deportation of the Arab population and the confiscation of Arab lands. To facilitate the annexation of these lands, the

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military occupation authorities have not hesitated to incite armed Jewish colonists to acts of provocation, intimidation and violence against the Palestinians to compel them to abandon their ancestral homes. To all this are added almost daily acts of repression against Palestinians in the refugee camps.

An examination of these facts demonstrates that Israel seeks not only the annexation of Palestinian lands but the physical elimination of the Palestinian people. Israel's ruthless action against those people is not limited to Palestine but extends to neighbouring and even distant Arab countries. To give but a few examples, the aggression against Lebanon, the seige of Beirut and the Sabra and Shatila massacres are still fresh in our memories. And we have recently seen the bombardment of an area of Tunis, which is thousands of kilometres from the Israeli borders, by Israeli military aircraft, claiming many innocent Palestinian civilian victims. These acts have been vigorously condemned by the international community in general, with the exception of the protector of Israel with which that country is linked by a strategic alliance. Without the unconditional support of that protector, Israel would not have been able to continue with impunity to violate the provisions of the Charter, the resolutions of the United Nations and the norms of international law and arrogantly defy the international community.

In this connection, one cannot but ask how a great Power, a permanent member of the Security Council, which, furthermore, claims to be the champion of human rights and democracy, can endorse acts which are a flagrant violations of the fundamental rights of a people, the Palestinian Arab people, or the policy of apartheid, which the international community has declared to be a crime against humanity. However, in view of the way that Power behaves in Central America, especially Nicaragua, we are not particularly surprised. Furthermore, Zionism and apartheid, with which it has, respectively, "strategic co-operation" and a "constructive engagement", serve the interests of its imperialist policy.

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It goes without saying that this policy and these barbarous practices by Israel against the Palestinian people, by giving rise to an endless chain of violence, have only exacerbated the tension in the region, thus increasing the threat to international peace and security.

The international community has frequently reaffirmed that the question of Palestine is the core of the problem of the Middle East and the origin of the Arab-Israeli conflict. This question demands a rapid solution since it has persisted for far too long, but what sort of solution should it be?

All that the Palestinian people, which is carrying on a heroic struggle under the guidance of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), its sole, legitimate representative, asks is recognition and the exercise of its fundamental national rights, including the right to establish its own independent State in Palestine.

In the Geneva Declaration adopted by acclamation in 1983 by the International Conference on the Question of Palestine and endorsed by the General Assembly, the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people were reaffirmed. That Declaration also called for the convening of an international conference on peace in the Middle East in which all parties to the conflict, including the PLO, would participate on an equal footing, as well as the United States, the Soviet Union and other interested countries, and to this end established a certain number of guiding principles.

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For its part, my delegation reaffirms its support for such a conference, which would provide the most realistic possibility of establishing a just and lasting peace in the region, ensuring recognition of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people guaranteeing of the existence and security of all the States in the region. The Arab peace plan adopted by the Arab Summit in Fez and the initiative put forward by the Soviet Union in 1984 could form the basis for the work of the Conference.

The General Assembly, in endorsing the recommendations of the Conference on the Question of Palestine invited the Secretary-General, at its thirty-eighth and thirty-ninth sessions, to continue his efforts to contribute to the rapid convening of a conference on peace in the Middle East.

In this connection, my delegation expresses its deep appreciation of the unceasing efforts of the Secretary-General to that end and pays a tribute to the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People for the devotion with which it has discharged its noble task.

However, my delegation regrets that the convening of such a conference should at present be blocked by the categorical opposition of two countries which obstinately persist in their plan for a "separate peace" and "direction negotiations" and their desire to exclude the main interested party, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). The basic aim of that plan is to serve their expansionist, imperialist policy in that region as in the rest of the world.

Whatever the case, we feel that, with the unity and cohesion of the Palestinian people and the unswerving solidarity of the Arab world, the obstacles still in the way of the establishment of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East are not insurmountable. Whatever difficulties the Palestinian people may encounter in its just struggle, it will always have the support of the Lao people and Government.

Mr. AZZAROUK (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (interpretation from Arabic): Once more we are considering the question of Palestine, that question which has been a constant item on the agenda of the General Assembly for the past four decades - more precisely, since the British delegation requested in a message dated 2 April 1947 addressed to the Secretary-General, the inclusion of the question of Palestine in the agenda of the second session of the General Assembly.

Despite the fact that our debates were not destined to contribute to the solution of the question of Palestine, they have not been without some usefulness. Suffice it to say that every year they remind us and the world that there is an agenda item entitled "Question of Palestine". It is a sad and bewildering paradox that we are happy to keep this question under consideration because if we did not continue to discuss this matter it could be forgotten among the current Arab options to the extent that this annual exposé has become an integral part of those options.

The question of Palestine, its causes and developments are well known to all. There is no need to talk of its political, national, regional and international dimensions. Do we need at every session to affirm that nothing in the world has been so subjected to uncertainties, obfuscation and the forgetfulness and indifference of the international community as the question, the people, the territory and the struggle of Palestine? Is there really any need to reiterate at every session that the question of Palestine is the question of a people displaced by terrorism and violence, whose territory has been usurped by force and aggression and whose rights have been wrested from it by deception? Must we constantly repeat that the policies of genocide, repression, exile and displacement are still being practised against that people in the occupied Palestinian territories and the areas to which Palestinians have been dispersed? Do we need to reiterate every year that any just and lasting solution to what has become known as the question of the

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Middle East must necessarily be achieved through a solution of the question of Palestine, which is the core of the problem of the Middle East and the focal point of the tragedy to which the peoples of that region have for so long been subjected?

The answers are well known by all, but we are destined to repeat them every year and at every session, as if deep down we are afraid that our cause will really be forgotten and that the international community will disregard our rights because of the Arab options we have adopted and are putting into practice, putting us and the people of Palestine at the beginning of a long, dark tunnel at the end of which we see no glimmer of light.

During this session we have commemorated the fortieth anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations, but the question of Palestine and the tragedy of the Palestinian people remains unsolved. The explosive situation in the Arab region resulting from the usurpation of Palestine, the displacement of its people and the denial of its basic rights, in particular the right to return, to self-determination, and to establish an independent State of its own on its entire national soil, continues to be a cause of concern to the international community.

The usurping Zionist enemy has not confined itself to usurpation of the land and the displacement of the Palestinian people but has harassed Palestine refugees in their camps, where from time to time they have suffered the most terrible tragedies and deliberate attempts to eliminate them as the symbol of a cause and their name as the name of a land.

Despite those tragedies and the passing of four decades, the international community as represented in this Organization has still not been able to set the record straight and enable the Palestinian people to exercise its fundamental, legitimate, inalienable right to return and to self-determination in accordance

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with the United Nations Charter, the principles of international law and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The continuance of the tragedy of the Palestinian people is a stern test of this Organization's credibility, and particularly its usefulness, after 40 years of existence and 40 years after the beginning of the tragedy of the Palestinian people. Today we see the Zionist entity unabashedly and unashamedly wreaking havoc in the region, violating frontiers, kidnapping citizens, demolishing houses, burning farms, confiscating lands, violating international conventions, and flouting the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council. This does indeed cast doubt on the credibility and even the usefulness of the Organization.

The Zionist entity has refused for four decades to implement paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 194 (III), adopted on 11 December 1948, which explicitly establishes the right of the Palestinian people to return to their homes.

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The problem of the Palestinian refugees has continued to defy solution, and today it is one of the oldest of the world's problems. Host Arab countries are now harbouring the third and fourth generations of Palestinian refugees born in exile. Indeed, the refugee problem has grown so massive that there are some in the world who believe that the question of Palestine involves only refugees.

Although the problem of Palestinian refugees is the most important aspect of the Palestinian question from the humanitarian point of view, it is only one element in that question, which is, as ever, the question of an entire people who have been displaced from their homeland and whose territory has been usurped, the question of a people, of a homeland, and of sovereignty. Any attempt to depict the question of Palestine as exclusively a refugee problem is foredoomed to failure. We all know of the failures that have resulted from faulty concepts, wrong analysis and inability to understand a situation. Any move that ignores any of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people will meet with the same fate, in whatever guise it is presented and whatever its underlying intent.

In light of the Zionist entity's flouting of the resolutions and recommendations of the United Nations, it is high time for the General Assembly to reconsider its position concerning the Zionist entity and that entity's non-peace-loving nature within the context of the resolution adopted at the ninth special session.

The United States, following upon its strategic accord with the Zionist entity, has become a direct partner with -

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): I call upon the representative of Israel, who has asked to speak on a point of order.

Mr. BEIN (Israel): The representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya has just made several references to my country, Israel, as "the Zionist entity". I wish to stress that I do not in any way oppose being called "Zionist". On the contrary, I am very proud of it. As you all know, Zionism is the national

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liberation movement of the Jewish people. It is a positive movement striving only for constructive development. It is the legitimate national movement of my people and is not directed against any other people or individual.

What I do oppose, however, is that a State, a Member of the United Nations, is being called "entity". We too could resort to calling the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya a military, dictatorial, aggressor, terrorist and racist entity, but we would rather not. We would prefer the General Assembly to refrain from these repetitious name-callings.

I repeat: Member States of the United Nations have names. I would suggest, Mr. President, that you ask representatives to use these, and only these, names, even when criticized or criticizing, and that we all refrain from name-calling and dedicate ourselves to constructive deliberations only.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): I thank the representative of Israel for his intervention. I request the speaker to be kind enough to use the usual nomenclature of the United Nations in referring to a given State. I invite the speaker to continue.

Mr. AZZAROUK (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (interpretation from Arabic): I find it strange, Mr. President, to be interrupted by the representative of the defiant Zionist entity. The procedures followed in this forum are very well known to all. He can exercise his right -

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): I would be grateful if representatives would be kind enough, for the sake of the good order of the work of the Assembly, to refer to countries by the name by which they have been officially registered in the United Nations. It will not get us anywhere to become involved in a lengthy and time-consuming reciprocal procedure because States take to referring to each other in ways that should not prevail in this room.

(The President)

I would also like to point out to the representative of Israel that his speech could hardly be described as mild in tone. Of course, it is understandable that in dealing with such an inflammatory issue as that now before us, it can occasionally happen that an extempore remark may be couched in the sort of language that should not be used here. I thank you all for your collaboration. I invite the representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to continue.

Mr. AZZAROUK (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (interpretation from Arabic): The United States, following its strategic accord with the Zionist entity, has become a direct partner with a large share in the responsibility for all the expansionist, aggressive wars that that entity has waged to achieve expansion and to bring about the establishment of the so-called greater Israel. The United States is also responsible for all the Israeli practices carried out in the occupied Arab territories in violation of all the relevant international conventions, rules and laws.

Some in the General Assembly and in the Security Council, and even in committees, are fond of speaking of history and of law. History and law have never been more falsified than by those speakers. The attempt to disguise this falsification by trying to gain the sympathy of the international community for the persecution to which the Jews have been subjected throughout the ages, in order to justify the resurgence of a Jewish State from the ashes under which it has lain buried for 2000 years. That Jewish State lasted for only 78 years, a very short moment in history. Words of truth are spoken in service of what is wrong.

Of course, there is no one who does not condemn the massacres of the Jews at the hands of the Nazis. But those massacres, however horrendous, do not in any way justify rewriting history and recodifying the law. Those massacres do not justify the new massacres being perpetrated by Zionism against the Palestinian people, like those at Deir Yassin, Kafr Kassem, Kibia, Sabra and Shatila. They do not justify

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Zionist raids, against refugee camps which turned them all into rubble, like the camps of Sabra and Shatila. And such attacks have grown in scope. They are no longer confined to Lebanon, Jordan or Syria; they now reach as far as Baghdad and Tunis, in implementation of the policy of the long arm and the iron fist.

The massacres of the Jews do not justify the genocide of an entire people, the displacement of their children and the confiscation of their territory and property on the basis of some mythical arguments with no foundation in history or law. What is the historical basis for the attempt by the Emperor Cyrus - the first recorded in history - to establish a Jewish State in Palestine, other than that he dreamt that Jehovah ordered him to free the prisoners of Babylon and allow them to return to Palestine to rebuild their sanctuary and re-establish their State. Whether the vision of Cyrus was a true one or whether his dream was only an expression of political ambitions, the result is the same: the only historical or legal basis for that State is a "midsummer-night's dream" of 539 B.C. And what is the historical basis for the Napoleonic promise of 1799 to the Jews that he would establish a State for them in the land of Palestine as the price for their participation in his wars? What is the historical basis for the idea of Palmerston, Foreign Minister of Great Britain, had in 1840 for the establishment of a Jewish State in Palestine, other than his hope that that State might constitute a bulwark against any sinister scheme by Muhammad Ali or his successors?

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What is the historic basis of the plan put forward by Disraeli, the British diplomat, to pave the way for the establishment of a Jewish State in Palestine? Abba Eban, the former Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Zionist entity and the Chairman of the Committee on External Affairs in the so-called Israeli Knesset, was explicit when he said: "The motives of Disraeli were, first and foremost, the interests of Britain." The motives of Napoleon, Disraeli, Palmerston and Balfour were exactly the same, in that they had nothing to do with history or law and aimed only at serving special political interests.

Therefore, if it is necessary to resort to the concept of historical rights, the Arabs alone are entitled to enjoy these rights, because an objective analysis of historical facts and the lessons to be drawn from them confirm unequivocally that Palestine is an Arab territory inhabited by a people who speak the same language, have the same cultural aspirations and hopes, and are united by common interests. Palestine, which has been Arab for 4,000 years, has kept its identity despite the fact that a number of communities or States have invaded it over the years. The Holy Bible itself affirms that the Semitic Canaanite tribes had settled in Palestine; these tribes were Arab by virtue of their geographical origin. The Hebrew tribes under Joshua did not invade parts of Palestine until the thirteenth or fourteenth centuries B.C. These invading tribes found a prosperous civilization that was mentioned in the Bible. The Canaanites had settled in Palestine as early as the late Stone Age, and they can be traced back to the Semitic tribes that emigrated from their original homeland, the Arabian peninsula, according to all theories now recognized in scientific circles.

Thus, we see that, historically, the ancient Hebrew tribes did not originate in Palestine, and even when they occupied it for a very short period - no longer than 78 years - they occupied only a very small part of Palestine and a larger part

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remained the property of the Palestinians who gave the land their name. If the ancient Hebrews were not born in Palestine, we all know where the new Hebrews originated and where they came from to the land of Palestine.

All this confirms the historical fact that the land of Canaan, which was inhabited by the Semitic Canaanites, namely, Arabs, was then invaded by alien Hebrew tribes. It is noteworthy that the Hebrew entity survived for only a short time - a period so short that history does not even take account of it because that entity survived for only 78 years as compared to over 4,000 years during which the Arabs lived in Palestine. The Hebrew entity was divided into two antagonistic Kingdoms: the Kingdom of Israel and the Kingdom of Judaea. In the seventeenth century B.C. this dual entity disappeared and the region was invaded by the Persians, the Macedonians, the Assyrians, the Babylonians and the Romans, who came in 64 B.C. and occupied Jerusalem and imposed their domination over Palestine, which was then inhabited by Arabs and some other tribes. Since 120 B.C. Palestine can be considered as having again become an Arab province. Is it the right of all those who have occupied Palestine to return to it after 2,000 years, considering it the "Promised Land"? Do the Arabs have the right to return to Spain simply because they ruled it for eight centuries? Do these claims have any basis in international law? Historical rights are linked to the actual exercise of sovereignty. Accordingly, the Jews, just like the Arabs, do not have the right to claim to return to a land that they had ruled for a period of time because these claims have no basis in history or law.

The ancient and modern rights of the Palestinian people have the support of the strongest principles of international law, in particular the right of self-determination. We can see this right in its clearest form when Palestine was no longer a part of the Ottoman Empire. This takes us from the remote past to the

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recent past, when the Austrian journalist, Theodor Herzl, at the Conference in Basle, Switzerland, on 29 August 1897, put forward the idea of the establishment of a Jewish National Homeland in Palestine.

History always repeats itself in the light of political colonialist interests. Despite the fact that a large number of Jewish communities opposed the idea, the Conference adopted the concept of a Zionist programme aimed at establishing a Jewish homeland in Palestine which would bring together all the Jews who for 20 centuries had lived dispersed in various countries without having a common language or common history or a common origin or roots. Indeed, the only link they had in common was purely a religious link, not a national link. Non-Zionist Jews accept this fact and recognize it.

Herman Adler, Grand Rabbi of Great Britain said in 1878:

"Since the Roman invasion of Palestine, the Jews have not constituted a political community. We, the Jews, belong politically to the countries in which we live: we are British, or French, or German. Of course, we have our own beliefs, but that does not make us different from citizens who have another religion. With them we contribute to the prosperity of the homeland that adopted us and we have the same rights and duties as the other citizens."

American Rabbi Weiss affirmed the same concept in 1883, and it was also adopted by the Jewish clergy in the resolution adopted by the Jewish Conference held in Pittsburgh:

"We, the Jews, do not consider ourselves to be a nation; we are only a religious community. Therefore, we do not aim to return to Palestine. We do not wish to resurrect any of the laws of the Jewish State. If at the same time as the Zionist movement was born, the Jewish clergy rejects the idea of the existence of a Jewish State, this objection continues with the non-Zionist Jewish quarters."

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Joseph Reinach in the magazine Journal des Debats of 30 March 1919 said:

"As there is no Jewish race and no Jewish nation, and as the only factor is the Jewish religion, zionism is a stupidity and a triple error: historical, archaeological and ethnical."

Theodor Herzl realized the importance of the lack of a territorial base. He said:

"We constitute one people, but the theoretical difficulty that is faced by the Zionist movement proceeds basically from the conciliation between those who advocate nationalism and the lack of territory."

For that reason, we find that Herzl gives the territorial element great importance in the introduction to his book The Jewish State. He mentioned Argentina or the Holy Land to be the "container" of the State; and some people even proposed British East Africa as the place for that State. At the Sixth Conference in 1903 he was asked to make a choice between Uganda and Palestine, and at the Seventh Conference the advocates of the establishment of the Jewish state in Palestine won, as if all the regions of the world were the oyster of zionism, which could establish a State wherever it wished. Then it would look for historic roots, spiritual links and inherited rights, and later on we could come here to discuss them in this Hall for four decades or more.

When it was decided to choose Palestine as the Promised Land, Ben-Gurion produced a new theory which contradicted all the Jewish Rabbis who had spoken about this subject. Ben-Gurion, a Polish citizen from the city of Polensk, who pretended to love that city and his small house on its outskirts, said something very different. He expressed a religious opinion which we are not entitled to discuss except in the light of what Grand Rabbi Herman Adler stated in Britain in 1878.*

*Mr. Hepburn (Bahamas), Vice-President, took the Chair.

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But what did David Ben-Gurion - the founder of the MAPAI and the leader of the RAFI, and the Prime Minister of the occupation Government 10 times - say? He said - or, rather, laid down as a doctrine - that "Since the birth of the Jewish State, and since Israel opened its doors to all Jews, any Jew - even if he is areligious - breaks the rules of the Jewish faith and of the Bible every day by remaining in the diaspora." Why did Ben-Gurion take himself for a rabbi? Why did he accuse the Jews living in the diaspora of a lack of religion and piety? We find the answer to that question in a letter he sent in reply to one he had received from his son Amos, in which his son explained the conflict he felt between his logic and his feelings about the establishment of the Jewish State. This is what the father said to his son in the letter he wrote on 5 October 1937: "I am an enthusiastic advocate of the Jewish State, even if that means the partitioning of Palestine. For I proceed from the logic that a Jewish State of limited size will not be the end but the beginning. If we obtain 1,000 or 10,000 hectares, we will be happy. What is important is not the amount of land but the fact that through it we become stronger, and every increase in our strength will help us to seize the rest of the country. The establishment of the State, even though it is a small State, will be the most that can increase our strength now, but it will be an axis and a strong mainstay for our historical struggle to regain the whole of the country."

David Ben-Gurion wanted all Jews to immigrate to Palestine in order to replace the Palestinian citizens that he would expel from their country and disperse. Therefore, he accused the Jews who were living outside Israel of not being religious and of lacking piety.

No one yet knows the boundaries of that entity which was imposed by force and deception. But Ariel Sharon, the current Minister of Trade of Israel and the

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infamous hero of the Sabra and Shatila massacres, said explicitly that the borders of this new entity are found where the last Israeli tank can reach.

That, very briefly, is the story of the question of Palestine which we are considering today, and which we will meet tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow - to use Shakespeare's words - to discuss. We do not know where the boundaries are going to be. We do not know where the last Israeli tank is going to be. But all that is not important. The most important thing is that our debates at the following sessions will, as I said at the beginning of this statement, remind us and the world with us that there is an agenda item entitled "The Question of Palestine". We should not - indeed we must not - aspire to more than the present Arab options, which we have chosen with determination and now preach with enthusiasm.

Mr. SALEH (Democratic Yemen) (interpretation from Arabic): The Palestinian problem has been at the forefront of the debates at the United Nations practically since it was founded. We take satisfaction in the fact that the Organization has defended its principles by repeatedly reaffirming the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and to the establishment of an independent State on its homeland, and by condemning the Zionist entity created in Palestine for its repeated violations of human rights and its terrorist and repressive practices against the Palestinian people.

The Palestinian problem that we are discussing today would not have existed without the imperialist and Zionist conspiracy, which was hatched at the beginning of this century and of which the Palestinian people continues to be the victim. Indeed, the Zionist entity was implanted on Palestinian soil on the basis of racial exclusivity and colonial occupation, which deprived the Palestinian people of their land and dispersed them. That imperialist and Zionist conspiracy continues today. Its main aim is not only to dehumanize the Palestinian people but to liquidate the

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Palestinian presence wherever it is found, thereby ensuring the total domination of the Arab peoples by Zionist and imperialist forces.

Contemporary history reveals more clearly each day the nature and scope of that conspiracy. It is a secret to no one in the international community that the State of Israel, which has become synonymous with terrorism and brutality, is a springboard for aggression and expansion and a threat to international peace and security.

Israel's record throughout the past 37 years has been one of repeated bloody episodes. It has constantly engaged in terrorism, repression, the deportation of Palestinians, the replacing of Palestinian inhabitants by its own settlers on ethnic or racial bases, the implanting of settlements in order to eliminate the Arab culture. All this has been done without the slightest regard for the Holy Places and spiritual and human values.

Not satisfied with these repressive and terrorist practices on Palestinian territory, Israel has started pursuing the Palestinian people outside its territory. It has used the most detestable kinds of weapons, internationally banned weapons, against Lebanese and Palestinians - particularly in 1982, when it carried out its attack on Lebanon. Israel also attacked the Sabra and Shatila camps, leaving thousands of victims among the Palestinian refugees - for the most part women and children. The most recent episode in this sad list of terrorist actions by Israel was the brutal raid on the headquarters of the Palestine Liberation Organization in Tunis, in violation of the sovereignty and independence of a State Member of the United Nations.

The Palestinian people, under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization, have constantly demonstrated that they can stand up to these repressive and terrorist acts and that they are determined to continue their just and legitimate struggle against Israel's occupation of their territory, by all the means at their disposal.

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The Zionist entity would not have been able to pursue its terrorist actions against the Palestinian people, to deny that people its legitimate and inalienable rights, to continue the aggression against the Arab States, to defy the international community's resolutions, without the unlimited assistance given it by the United States of America in all spheres, including political, military and economic. The strategic alliance between the Zionist entity and the United States reaffirms the community of interests between them and the determination to continue an expansionist aggressive policy and block the international community's efforts to establish a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

My delegation expresses again the complete solidarity of Democratic Yemen with the Palestinian people in the struggle it is waging against the imperialist and Zionist machinations designed to impose partial solutions, solutions that amount to capitulation. That is the approach taken by Camp David, the Reagan plan and other separatist agreements.

We attach the greatest importance to the efforts exerted by the United Nations to ensure the victory of the just cause of the Palestinian people, which is at the very core of the problem of the Middle East. We reaffirm our agreement with the thrust of the United Nations resolutions - that is, that there cannot be any just and comprehensive peace if Israel does not withdraw from all the occupied Arab territories and if the Palestinian people is not allowed to exercise its national legitimate and inalienable rights, including its right of return, its right to self-determination and its right to establish an independent State on its national soil, under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

That is why the Arab peace plan adopted at Fez and the Soviet initiative have a great importance, in our view. They constitute a functional and realistic framework for the establishment of peace in the region by providing for the

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convening of a conference of all the parties to the conflict, including the Palestine Liberation Organization.

We are convinced that the victory of the Palestinian people and its just cause is inevitable, because they enjoy the solidarity of all the peoples that cherish peace, freedom and justice.

Mr. BAGBENI ADEITO NZENGEYA (Zaire) (interpretation from French): On 29 November 1947, at its 128th plenary meeting, the United Nations General Assembly recommended to the United Kingdom, as the mandatory Power for Palestine, and to all other Members of the United Nations the adoption and implementation, with regard to the future Government of Palestine, of the Plan of Partition, providing for a Jewish State on the one hand and an Arab State on the other. The General Assembly also requested the Security Council to take the necessary measures as provided for in the Plan for its implementation and the Assembly elected the five members of the United Nations Commission for Palestine, that is, Bolivia, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Panama and Philippines.

Under the terms of the Plan of Partition with Economic Union in resolution 181 (II), the armed forces of the mandatory Power had to be withdrawn from Palestine not later than 1 August 1948 to ensure an area situated in the territory of the Jewish State, including a seaport and hinterland adequate to provide facilities for a substantial immigration.

It was accepted that independent Arab and Jewish States would come into existence in Palestine two months after the evacuation of the armed forces of the mandatory Power had been completed but in any case not later than 1 October 1948.

In the framework of the preparatory measures for the independence of these States, it was understood that as the mandatory Power withdrew its armed forces, the administration of Palestine would be progressively turned over to the United Nations Commission for Palestine, which would act in conformity with the recommendations of the General Assembly under the guidance of the Security Council.

That resolution 181 (II) was very specific. It invited the United Nations Commission for Palestine, on its arrival in Palestine, to proceed to carry out measures for the establishment of the frontiers of the Arab and Jewish States in accordance with the general lines of the recommendations of the General Assembly on the partition of Palestine.

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To mark the separation between the two States, resolution 181 (II) indicated that during the transitional period no Jew would be permitted to establish residence in the area of the proposed Arab State and no Arab would be permitted to establish residence in the area of the proposed Jewish State, except by special leave of the Commission.

It was further requested of each State concerned in this partition to accept the obligation to refrain in its international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations.

In Chapter 4 F, the resolution provides that when independence for either the Arab or the Jewish State as envisaged in this Plan became effective and the Declaration and undertaking as envisaged in this Plan had been signed by either of them, sympathetic consideration should be given to its application for admission to membership in the United Nations in accordance with Article 4 of the Charter of the United Nations.

How then can we approach the question of Palestine without first of all referring to the resolution that gave birth to this issue? How can we envisage a sectorial approach to the question of Palestine without considering a just, lasting and comprehensive view of the question, including all of the elements of the problem, that is: first, the need to abide by resolution 181 (II) calling for the creation of a Palestinian-Arab State, since the Jewish State was established and was admitted on 11 May 1949 as a Member of the United Nations, in accordance with that resolution; secondly, the obligation to recognize and respect the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of each State of the region and its right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries in accordance with the provisions of General Assembly resolutions 181 (II) and 194 (III), Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 476 (1980) and 478 (1980),

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as well as resolution ES-7/2 of the Seventh Special Session of the General Assembly devoted to the question of Palestine.

Justice and equity require that the Arab people of Palestine, like the people of Israel, should be entitled to a homeland and that both sides must recognize the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force or by war, and the guarantee of a just settlement of the problem of the Palestinian refugees, because under resolution 3236 (XXIX), the General Assembly reaffirmed the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and independence.

Thus it is incumbent upon both the United Nations General Assembly and the Security Council to ensure the triumph of right and justice for the Palestinian people, it being understood that their mission is to replace the spirit of war and confrontation by constructive dialogue and agreement. It is in that spirit that the United Nations organized the International Conference on the Question of Palestine held in Geneva from 29 August to 7 September 1983, during which the Geneva Declaration on Palestine and the Programme of Action for the Achievement of Palestinian Rights were adopted.

In that Declaration, the Conference took the view that the United Nations had a central and primary role to play in the establishment of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace, while recognizing that the question of Palestine, which was debated by the General Assembly from its very first session, constituted one of the most delicate and complex issues of our time.

It is also in that spirit that the United Nations envisages the convening of an international peace conference on the Middle East, with the participation of all the parties concerned in this question.

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The Zairian delegation believes that a full international effort must be made under the auspices of the United Nations, which gave the Jews a State and decided on a Palestinian State. Today it must succeed in establishing a State for the Palestinians. The work of the United Nations in drafting international law is part of its international heritage and it must ensure the triumph of right and justice for the Palestinian people.

The United Nations remains the catalyst for the people's aspirations to self-determination and therefore it must provide all the necessary assistance for setting up the Palestinian entity and promoting its economic and social development.

Haji OMAR (Brunei Darussalam): The question of Palestine has engaged the attention of the General Assembly almost from the time of the establishment of the United Nations. We are here this year commemorating the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations and we are still discussing the agenda item "Question of Palestine". This indicates full recognition by the international community of the necessity of finding a just and lasting solution to the problem, but it also illustrates how difficult and elusive that solution is. It also means that the international community rejects Israel's occupation of Arab lands and its continued policy of force and oppression against the Palestinian people.

Throughout all these years the General Assembly has repeatedly reaffirmed the inalienable right of the people of Palestine to self-determination, without external interference, to national independence and sovereignty in Palestine and to establish its own State in Palestine. It has also reaffirmed the inalienable right of the Palestinians to return to the homes from which they have been uprooted and dispersed. The international community has come to recognize that the Palestinian question is the core of the Middle East conflict and that the restoration of the inalienable rights of the people of Palestine is indispensable to any solution of the problem. We believe that without the active participation of representatives of the Palestinian people no negotiation or solution can lead to a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. Despite all the many resolutions that have been adopted, Palestine is still denied its existence, the majority of its people are displaced and have become refugees, their properties have been expropriated and they are being subjected to a series of persecutions and harassments.

By using force and naked acts of terror the Israelis have been stepping up their policy of entrenchment in the land they have occupied. The aim behind the intensified terror is to intimidate the Palestinian population, to destroy their communal and social institutions and finally to expel them from their lands. New settlements have been established in the occupied territories notwithstanding the

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outrage of the international community. The Security Council has strongly deplored these policies and practices and called upon the Government and people of Israel to rescind those measures, to dismantle the existing settlements and, in particular, to desist from establishing more settlements in the Arab territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem. Both the General Assembly and the Security Council have repeatedly condemned measures taken by Israel to change the physical character, demographic composition, institutional structure and status of the occupied territories.

We cannot continue to delay serious and effective efforts to find a solution to the Palestinian question. The international community cannot and should not stand idly by any longer. It must take positive steps to force Israel to respect the various United Nations resolutions. Israel must be made to see that its actions in contravention of those resolutions can only lead to prolonged confrontation in the region.

The situation in the Middle East will continue to be tense and explosive as long as the people of Palestine continue to live in refugee camps. Any just and lasting solution to the situation in this region should include, first and foremost, a solution to the question of Palestine, the core of the conflict in the Middle East region. Such a solution must take into account the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to an independent homeland in Palestine. The acceptable framework for such a solution is the United Nations and its resolutions pertaining to the question of Palestine.

We congratulate the Secretary-General on his tireless efforts in seeking a lasting solution to the Palestinian problem and we urge him to continue those efforts, despite the obstacles in his path. We also wish to commend the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, Ambassador Massad Baró, who has worked untiringly and with such distinction.

Mr. RAJAIE-KHORASSANI: (Islamic Republic of Iran): The present Arab-Israeli conflict - which often comes under the heading of "Question of Palestine" - has persisted for the past four decades. Many thousands of intelligent, knowledgeable people have addressed themselves to this problem during those painfully slow decades, and this number covers only the statesmen, politicians and professional diplomats. Many more have been studying, researching and writing on this issue. Thousands of tons of paper have been used during the past 40 years in order to propagate information on the tragedy of Palestine to the rest of mankind in the hope that if many more millions know about it we may come closer to a solution. Consequently, many people, speaking many different languages, have learned much about the situation in Palestine.

Every year almost all the nations of the world have voted in support of the Palestinian people. Yet, sadly, today the people of Palestine are as homeless as ever before and the land of Palestine remains as much under occupation by lowly Zionist usurpers as ever before. Yet the professional diplomats and politicians, the learned, the knowledgeable and the erudite are still repeating and chewing over the same stuff again and again, every year, not realizing that resolutions and verbal support have had no result other than pacification of the victim. Had resolutions been of any avail the flag of Palestine would have been hoisted again, the land of Namibia would have been liberated and the victimized black majority of South Africa would have been emancipated from the sanguinary claws of the apartheid régime and saved from the beast of global arrogance along time ago.

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So many years of fruitless and inconclusive repetition of statements, interventions, resolutions, amendments and so on should have awakened the sleeping international conscience to the question why the problem of Palestine is buried every year under tons of most sympathetic statements, victorious resolutions and supportive documents. Why is it that at every session of the General Assembly the problem of Palestine is further from being solved, despite all the support and all the sympathetic resolutions?

Is the problem of Palestine, a problem at whose creation the United Nations presided, if it did not totally create it, capable of being solved at all by this body? Were not those criminals that handed over the colonized Palestine to the intruding, unwanted, migrant Ashkenazi Jews in the region the early founders of this international body? Did not the same ill-omened, sinister agents offer military and political support to those Zionist migrants in order to displace the Moslem nation of Palestine and send it to refugee camps all over the place? And did not the same polite and courteous criminals develop a scenario in order to forge an identity card for their illegitimate Zionist base, which they had just promoted to the level of statehood, purely artificially and illegally? Is it not true that the Palestinians, all through these long decades of suffering and victimization, have been innocently presenting their case to the court of the culprit?

The United Nations, with all due respect, is not much older than the problem of the Palestinians, and, thanks to the permanent presence of Western imperialist forces in it, the United Nations was involved in the actual creation and official registration of the problem of the Zionist occupation of Palestine and hence is even partially responsible for the victimization of the Palestinian people. Therefore, it is single-mindedness and over-optimism to expect the same

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international body to contradict its own raison d'être and simply return the so-called inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to them. Those rights are definitely not returnable here. The solution to the problem is to be sought, and indeed will be sought, outside this building. It is true that the composition of forces in today's General Assembly is, quantitatively at least, different from that of 40 years ago, but it is also true that many of these so-called different forces are irrelevant, or are totally assimilated by or, by and large, remain under the influence of the global arrogance.

The quality of the governing forces here is kept more or less in such a balance - such a sinister balance - that when the entire world votes in favour of, say, granting independence to colonial Territories the decision is not mandatory because it is made by the General Assembly; and when such a decision can be really mandatory it is only the chosen few that make the decision, not the General Assembly.

The United Nations, therefore, is simply not the right place for solving the problem of the Palestinians, the problem of the Zionist occupation of Palestine. Moreover, United Nations language and style are such that the nature of the Palestinian problem has been wrongly defined in order to enable the international body to look like an appropriate forum to deal with the problem. The tragedy is so grave that the foal of imperialism has long ago been brought within the ranks of the genuine human societies represented in this Assembly, whereas Palestine has been kept on the other side of the fence as a spectator, with observer status; and we have all remained callously indifferent, as if nothing has been wrong all these years, the fortieth of which we have just celebrated. What a shame! There must be a limit to audacity.

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The problem of the occupation of Palestine is essentially misconceived, misdefined, misunderstood and therefore misrepresented. It is not an international problem of a secular political nature that can be allocated to one of the categories suggested for the classification of so-called international problems. Palestine is not simply a piece of land; it is not a newly-built country with no, or little, culture or historical background; it is not a country; it is Palestine - an inseparable part of the Islamic territory, whose defence is a great unforgettable obligation for every individual Moslem. It is one of our most holy places. It is the platform of the Meraj of our Holy Prophet, and it envelopes a sanctuary about which the Holy Koran says:

"Glory to Almighty God who sent His Servant for a journey by night from
Ka'ba to the mosque of Al-Aqsa" -

which is now in the occupied territory -

"... in order that we might show Him our signs: for He is all-hearing and
all-knowing." (The Holy Koran, XVII; 1)

Palestine is an Islamic territory, an Islamic property, an Islamic heritage, an Islamic identity, an Islamic entity and, indeed, an Islamic reality. Only those who wish to make a fool of themselves try to secularize it, to nationalize it and hence to de-Islamicize it in order to be able to Zionize it; and then they can conceive of turning it into a Zionist base of terror. Only the blindfolded, obedient myrmidons of imperialism recognize such an occupation. Palestine is something more than any one of those Member States that have been legitimately offered a seat in this dome of secularism. By virtue of the accommodation it has humbly offered to the Al-Aqsa Mosque, Palestine is automatically the ultranational Islamic divine forum.

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Historically, geographically, culturally, spiritually and, indeed, meritoriously it is far superior to this very august Assembly and to the United Nations itself. The Moslems of the world will never sleep comfortably until they have ensured that the charter of Palestine, which is the Surah of Isra, will prevail over the Charter of the United Nations. The divine promise is this:

"It is He Who hath sent His Apostle with guidance and the religion of truth, to proclaim it over all religion," - including that of the United Nations - "even though the pagans may detest (it)." (IX: 33)

The problem of Palestine must be put in its right perspective once and for all. The solution of the problem of the occupation of Palestine must therefore be considered with reference to the appropriate cultural, spiritual, Islamic traits of Palestine, because there is always a qualitative resemblance, a congeniality, between every problem and its solution, and the purgation of the Holy Land of Palestine of the lowly presence of zionism is not an exception. Besides, such purgation is imperatively a spiritual act, an act of worship which must be conducted according to Islamic norms and never according to the norms of the Charter. Of course the international body may, if it so decides, liberate our Palestine by forcing the Ashkenazi Jews to go back peacefully to their homes in London, Paris and even Brooklyn in a spirit of accommodation. This would definitely be a lasting solution and a just solution to the problem of the Zionist base. But if the international body, if representatives, do not send them back, we will do so in our own way as a religious imperative and according to Islamic norms.

I would like to recite at this juncture some of the Islamic norms associated with the obligation of the purgation of Palestine of the Zionist usurpers.

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"O ye who believe! When ye meet a force," - an enemy force - "be firm,
and call God in remembrance much; that ye may prosper" (VIII: 45)

I ask representatives to decide for themselves who is the force of our today's
enemy against whom all Moslem nations have to stand firm.

We have to recite the name of Allah when we launch an operation against the
enemy forces: Allah-u-Akbar. Then the verse says "And obey God and His Apostle".
This means that the liberation of Palestine must be carried out according to the
Book of Allah, The Holy Koran, and to the tradition of the Prophet. When he says
"Obey God and His Apostle", this means conduct yourself according to the book and
to the tradition of the Holy Prophet. The verse says:

"And obey God and His Apostle; and fall into no disputes, lest ye lose
heart and your power depart; and be patient and persevere for God is with
those who patiently persevere." (VIII: 45, 46)

This is the model for the liberation of Palestine; this is definitely the right
resolution.

I would like to cite another Koranic norm. This particular verse is very
appropriate; it explains beautifully the inalienable right of the Palestinian
people. The verse is so expressive of the Palestinian situation, it is really
amazing. It says that sanction is given to those who fight because they have been
wronged and Allah is indeed able to give them victory. Those who have been driven
from their homes unjustly - that is, the Palestinians - only because they said "Our
Lord is Allah", for had it not been for Allah's repelling some men by means of
others - the Zionist forces, by means of the Palestinians and other Moslems -
cloisters and churches and oratories and mosques wherein the name of Allah is often

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mentioned would assuredly have been pulled down. Verily Allah helps one who helps them. So Allah is all strong, all mighty.

Representatives know the situation of the sanctuary in the occupied territory. It is exactly as declared in the divine resolution here. It is the Palestinians who have been driven from their homes and it is our sanctuaries which are now being infiltrated by the interventions, distraction and unnecessary involvement of all kinds of the Zionist subjects. It is the Palestinians who have every right to fight and defend their homeland. Indeed, it is not only the right of the Palestinians but the duty of all Moslems to do so.

Many in the General Assembly are not familiar with these verses I am quoting and these values must be aware that they are known to millions of Moslems, even those who are illiterate, and they are all committed to the cause. The issue must be taken more seriously than it has been.

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The Holy Koran says:

"Fight in the cause of God those who fight you." (II: 190)

In another verse it says:

"If then any one transgresses the prohibition against you, transgress ye likewise against him." (II: 194)

This means that when they are attacked in Sabra and Shatila they shall not rely on Security Council or General Assembly resolutions but prepared for a counter-attack as effectively as possible. That is the meaning. Attack them on the spot and let them come to the Security Council and the General Assembly. Do not give up; do not fear death and retaliate in kind. The verse I have just recited is our mandate for retaliation. So there is no need to work on a document in this regard; we have it. Regarding its implementation or modification, we follow the decrees of the Faqih. That is where Velayat-al-Faqih comes into practice. We therefore wait for two years, and take account of all the attacks on civilians, and only after a sanction is granted by the religious authorities do we retaliate, only in a limited, restricted, previously announced time and place. We are going to retaliate very soon against the Zionists, all of us.

In another Koranic norm we are ordered to mobilize all our resources against the enemy in order to purge our dear Palestine. The relevant verse is as follows:

"Against them make ready your strength to the utmost of your power, including steeds of war, to strike terror into (the hearts of) the enemies of God and your enemies, and others besides, whom God doth know. Whatever ye shall spend in the cause of God, shall be repaid unto you, and ye shall not be treated unjustly." (VIII: 60)

This total mobilization is inclusive of all the resources which belong to the Islamic society - manpower, economic resources, industry, real estate, cash,

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markets, consumption power, oil, manual work, and all the resources at the disposal of the Islamic States at this very moment.

However, this total mobilization is conditioned by the establishment of a United Islamic front. The Moslem Ummah needs to go back to the fraternal unity that, by the grace of God, it enjoyed in the early days of Islam, and it is not very difficult to go back. The ideological foundations for such a fraternal united front are overwhelming, both in The Holy Koran and in the prophetic tradition.

One piece of evidence may suffice. One piece of evidence is particularly relevant to the present day situation of the Moslem Ummah, namely verses 98 to 103 of the Surah-al-Imran, which were revealed in relation to a particular incident which occurred at the time of the Holy Prophet. This historical incident is very important. It is a lesson not only for Moslems but for all. It is reported by Suyuti, a great Moslem scholar, who has quoted someone called Zaid Ibn Aslam, who said this.

Once a Jew, whose name was Shash Ibn Qays, and another young Jew were passing by a group of Moslems belonging to the famous tribes of Ows and Khazraj. These two tribes, prior to Islam, were bitter enemies, but after entering Islam they developed close fraternal relations. The two Jews, who happened to be enemies of Islam, saw that these historically conflicting tribes were such intimate friends, they saw how kindly and affectionately they treated one another, as if they had always been blood brothers. Shash felt very disappointed at the kind and brotherly relations that Islam had created among the two tribes. He decided that his friend should approach the members of one tribe and himself the members of the other in order to provoke the two against each other by reminding each of them of the glories of the past and the victories that each had scored against the other. The

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conspiracy worked well and a dispute - which may have been similar to the Sunni-Shia arguments which nowadays appear more in Western European and American papers and journals - started between the two tribes and gradually led to preparations by both for a fully-fledged combat. The Prophet, who had been informed of the incipient conflict, intervened and resolved it and advised both parties not to play into the hands of the enemies of Islam. On that occasion the following verses were also revealed:

"O ye who believe, if ye listen to a faction among the People of the Book, they would (indeed) render you apostates after ye have believed!"

(III: 100)

I have omitted several verses, but the other verse I wish to recite is the following:

"And hold fast, all together, by the rope which God (stretches out for you), and be not divided among yourselves; and remember with gratitude God's favour on you; for ye were enemies and He joined your hearts in love, so that by His grace, ye became brethren." (III: 103)

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That is the destiny of all Muslim nations: very soon they will stand together as brothers.

Now let us see what happened to Mr. Shash. The Shash ibn Qays of today - every day we have a Shash ibn Qays - is the Zionist press and other media in which one reads comments and predictions regarding the Shia-Sunni and other differences among the Moslems. They count so much on those differences. Today Shash ibn Qays is institutionalized and is sowing discord among the Moslems in order to prevent the realization of the united Islamic front. But representatives may rest assured that Moslems will soon stand united and meet the challenge of the emancipation of Palestine from the occupation of the Zionist usurpers.

In our own lifetime we shall witness the same Moslems, the same peoples of Jordan, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, Egypt, Libya, Syria, Algeria and the rest of the Arab world; the same peoples of Pakistan, Malaysia, Indonesia and so on, shoulder to shoulder with their Moslem brothers in the countries I have not named and, of course, accompanied by their humble brothers from the Islamic Republic of Iran, march towards the occupied land of Palestine. That is because we have all learned that the return to Islam is our only way towards real independence. We are all counting the moments until our congregation prays in Palestine. It is in such a decisive confrontation that all Moslem lands, including the Golan Heights, the Gaza Strip, the West Bank and all the others, will be liberated. And I assure the Assembly that they will be liberated.

Therefore the General Assembly can either continue to grant membership to the Zionist usurpers and keep our Palestinian brothers on the other side of the fence, at a distance, as Observers, or it can exchange the seat of the illegitimate for that of the legitimate. If the Assembly has recourse to wisdom and justice, that historic incipient confrontation in Palestine will be prevented and peace will

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prevail. If it does not, we shall meet the enemy in the occupied territory soon. That is our programme, not simply our position.

I should like to make a brief observation on the United States attitude towards this old issue that has been misidentified as the Arab-Israeli conflict. As a matter of principle, we of course condemn the strategic alliance between the United States and the Zionist base occupying Palestine. The United States Administration might as well know that it is not an Arab-Israeli conflict; it is a confrontation between Islam and kufr. Today the entirety of Islam and the totality of kufr have faced each other more seriously than ever before in a very decisive confrontation. The Government of the United States has so far chosen to take the side of infidelity and has granted unreserved support to the Zionist infidels. Owing to that unwise policy, the innocent people of the United States have paid a heavy price in life, property and security, as well as in terms of international humiliation. All that has been absolutely unnecessary.

United States citizens of 25 years ago could walk in safety and without any escort, regardless of their position and social status, in all parts of the Moslem world without ever looking over their shoulders. But nowadays no American - no American at all regardless of his position and social status - can feel safe anywhere in North Africa, the entire Middle East or any other Moslem or partially Moslem country. That must be the case also in many non-Moslem Asian, African and Latin American countries. In those good old days American officials and tourists did not need any escort. Today the United States is in need of an army far better equipped than its regular army of 25 years ago only for the protection of its citizens and properties. Despite that protective force, there is always ample evidence of its failure to give such protection. This is because the United States Administration has decided to leave the entire Moslem world and all the third world countries and peoples to stick stubbornly to the tail of the Israeli enemy.

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The Zionist enemy has been crafty enough to manipulate American policy, elections and public opinion. It has been able wrongly to convince the United States that Israeli interests and United States interests are always synonymous. At the same time, and in spite of the undue support it has been receiving from the United States, it has been ungrateful enough to spy even on its own supporter. But of course the United States media is trying to hush up the scandal by frequently broadcasting the apology extended by the Zionist base in order probably to control the inevitable upsurge of anti-Israeli feelings in the American public. I am not sure how far the media will succeed, but the United States Administration must finally reconsider its position towards the Zionist base. Is that base of terror and crime really worthy of so much United States sacrifice and defeat? I hope that the American people will have a chance to answer this question.

My final comment is addressed to some Moslem and many non-Moslem countries which, under United States pressure or for whatever good reason, usually remain aloof spectators of the Zionist occupation of Palestine. They pay face-saving, lip-service sometimes, but that is not enough. They should remember that if they keep on acquiescing in this imperialist hegemony they will pay a very heavy price, because imperialism does not recognize friends, it has only victims. I appeal to them, then, to stand firm against it and not leave Palestine on its own, or they will be left on their own sooner or later.

Here I wish to end the substance of my statement. It remains only for me to request all representatives to stand firm against the Zionist base every time this issue is brought up. They should hit it in the face as soon as they see it in front of Palestine, Africa or Namibia or at the side of its sister Zionist, South Africa. It is their enemy and the enemy of all mankind. It is the enemy of the entire oppressed people and the base of imperialism in the Middle East, occupying our beloved Palestine.

Mr. WIJewardane (Sri Lanka): The well-known historian Arnold Toynbee once said the following with regard to the question of Palestine:

"The Middle East will continue to be in conflict until the Palestine question is settled."

Developments in the Middle East region since the General Assembly last considered the question of Palestine have merely strengthened Toynbee's observation. The Middle East region is bereft of peace and more than one of the disputes occurring there has led to armed conflict, but there is little doubt that the central question, the key to peace and stability, is the question of Palestine. So long as this issue remains unsettled there is little prospect of an enduring or just peace in the region. In a message on the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People the President of Sri Lanka, His Excellency J.R. Jayewardene, stated:

"My Government continues to support the cause of the Palestinian people and endorses very firmly the view we share with the rest of the international community that unless these conditions are met there cannot be a prospect of establishing a just, stable and lasting peace in the Middle East."

Flashpoints of tension in the Middle East threaten to engulf and provoke larger conflicts with repercussions extending far beyond the region, thus threatening international peace and security.

There are two basic prerequisites for a settlement of the Palestinian question: the withdrawal by Israel from all occupied Arab and Palestinian territories, in conformity with the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, and the recognition and restoration of the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people. Such rights include that people's right to return to their homeland, the right to self-determination without external interference and the right to a national State. Those basic conditions for

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a settlement of the question of Palestine have been echoed time and again in this and other forums and have been part of declarations by the countries members of the Non-Aligned Movement, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the Commonwealth, as well as of the Arab League. At their twelfth summit meeting at Fez, Morocco, and more recently at Casablanca, the Arab States clearly spelt out those conditions. The fulfilment of those conditions is essential if all the States of the region, including the Palestinian State, are to exist in peace and security.

While considering the question of Palestine in the over-all context of the broader issue of the Middle East situation, one must not lose sight of the vast human aspect of this question, namely, the condition of the Palestinian people. As a people, they have suffered more than any other in the Middle East during the past few decades. They have been denied the right, one that is theirs by birth, to their own home and have been scattered throughout the world. Many of them have been compelled to live in refugee camps. Highly politicized efforts have been made to describe the question of Palestine as a mere refugee question. This is part of a calculated - but eventually vain - attempt to deny their identity and essential integrity as a people with inalienable national rights.

As a member of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories, Sri Lanka has been especially conscious, at first hand, of the suffering of the Palestinian people. The report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People presented to this Assembly by the Rapporteur of that Committee earlier this week gives further details about the position of the Palestinians. We thank the Committee for its continued endeavours to keep international attention focused on this question and express our appreciation for the work of that Committee's Chairman, its Rapporteur and its members.

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The illegitimate establishment of Israeli settlements in occupied territories poses further hardships for the Palestinian people that render the eventual settlement of the Palestine question ever more difficult. The political, religious, cultural and demographic modifications being attempted in the occupied territories are illegal. The Geneva Convention of 1949, particularly Convention No. 4 concerning the protection of civilians in time of war, and Protocols 1 and 2 of the Convention of 1977 are applicable to the occupied territories.

The struggle of the Palestinian people to regain their territory and to exercise their inalienable rights manifests itself in diverse ways. For Sri Lanka, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) constitutes the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people without whose participation no settlement of the question of Palestine is feasible, let alone just. The PLO, which has been accorded full diplomatic status in Sri Lanka, needs to be represented as a full and equal partner in any international conference or peace process that seeks to settle the question of Palestine and thereby bring stability to the Middle East region. Sri Lanka supports any initiative of the United Nations to reach a negotiated settlement of the question of Palestine based on the restoration of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and the withdrawal of Israel from occupied territory.

Finally, let me recall the words of Albert Einstein, who said:

"Peace in Palestine cannot be achieved by force, but only through understanding."

Mr. NGENDANGANYA (Burundi) (interpretation from French): Allow me to begin my statement by expressing my delegation's sincere appreciation for the work of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and its Chairman, Ambassador Massamba Sarre of Senegal, for his praiseworthy

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efforts to establish conditions favourable to the implementation of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian peoples. My delegation supports the Committee's report and urges the international community to adopt its relevant recommendations.

For 38 years now the General Assembly has been adopting resolutions on the question of Palestine, and for all those years initiatives have been taken, in vain, by the international community to restore a lasting and just peace to the Middle East, the key to which is the restoration of the full and inalienable right to the martyred people of Palestine, a right that is recognised as belonging to all peoples and that is inscribed in the Charter of our Organization, namely, the right to a homeland.

How many initiatives have been taken, both within this forum and by the countries members of the Non-Aligned Movement, to achieve that ultimate objective, only to come up each time against the rejection of Israel, whose aggressive policy both in the occupied Arab territories and towards all the Arab States has always aroused the fear and revulsion of the international community.

In this connection, mankind will remember with sorrow Israel's ill treatment of the Palestinian refugees in the camps in Lebanon, the occupation and dismantling of that country by the Israeli occupying forces and, more recently, Israel's frenzied and shameless pursuit of Palestinian refugees in their distant land of asylum, Tunisia.

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The antithesis of the Israeli attitude is the good will of the Arab countries, which has always been reflected in their actions, as is attested to by the various proposals made by outstanding Arab figures to cite only one example the Fez peace plan contains appropriate proposals that demonstrate the good will of the persons involved and their desire to live in peace with the Hebrew State.

Burundi will support all proposals designed to ensure that all the peoples of the region have, in accordance with our Charter, the same rights and obligations, which will create the conditions for peaceful coexistence in the Middle East. In this context, my country is convinced that, as reaffirmed at the last Ministerial Meeting of the Non-Aligned Countries held in Luanda in September 1985, the convening of an international conference on the Middle East, already recommended by the Geneva International Conference of 1983 and approved by General Assembly resolution 39/49 D, is the ideal framework for settling the question of the Middle East.

My delegation therefore associates itself with all the preceding speakers in asking the international community to do all it can to remove all the obstacles to the convening of that conference. To this end the allies of Israel, and in particular those which have always provided it with material, military and moral support, must put pressure on it to give it the political will to negotiate with all parties to the conflict, including the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

It must be admitted that the path to that goal is still strewn with dangers, as clearly shown by the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (A/40/35) and the Secretary-General's report in document A/40/166 of 11 March 1985, as well as by the most recent events in the region. Israel must acknowledge that it is by ensuring conditions favourable to a resumption of a dialogue with the Arab countries and the PLO that it will be

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contributing to a strengthening of its own security. To do so, this country must put an end to its policy of annexation of occupied Arab territories, to changes in the status and the structure of these territories and to its continued policy of settlement and strengthening of the settlement colonies in those territories, which are accompanied by violations of human rights, such as the right to freedom of movement, speech or association, practices which violate the Fourth Geneva Convention as well as the relevant resolutions of our Organization.

As stated by H.E. Colonel Jean Baptiste Bagaza, the President of the Republic of Burundi, in his message read by his Special Envoy, H.E. Laurent Nzeyimana, Minister for External Relations and Co-operation, on 23 October 1985 during the ceremonies commemorating the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations, Israel should realize that force has never governed the principles of morality and international law. Therefore it must understand that its security, and the ending of its international isolation, can be ensured only if it is reconciled with our brothers, the Arab peoples, and in particular with the Palestinian people, with which it has a single shared destiny.

This realization by Israel would be an important step towards the establishment of conditions for a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the region, which would lead to a new era of good-neighbourly relations and of mutually advantageous co-operation between Israel and the Arab countries, including the sovereign Palestinian nation which Burundi ardently hopes to see. That would be Israel's best contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security, so cherished by this Organization, to which Israel owes its existence.

Mr. TAHINDRO (Madagascar, (interpretation from French): We are gathered here again today to consider the question of Palestine. For nearly 40 years now the basic facts of the problem have remained essentially unchanged. On the one hand, we have the Palestinian people, deprived of all its rights and all its

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lands; and on the other, we have Israel, enjoying each and every right and confiscating all the lands. Furthermore, the situation has worsened considerably because of Israel's occupation, not merely of Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, but also that of neighbouring Arab countries. Suffice it to mention Israel's occupation of the Golan Heights and territory in Southern Lebanon.

Needless to say, when a situation is so sharply polarized an explosion of violence is inevitable; it is hard to foresee what desperate acts individuals or groups of individuals will commit in order to draw the international community's attention to the injustice and denial of rights from which they are suffering. In such conditions the passage of time, far from lessening tension, only increases it, and inevitably brings us closer to revolt and violence.

On the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations the Palestinian people is once again appealing to the international community about the disregard of their most basic rights, namely their right to return to their homes in dignity and security and their right to self-determination, independence and national sovereignty. The Palestinian people know that these rights have been recognized by the entire international community and consequently they want to know why they have been deprived of these rights up to the present day.

Recent events in the Middle East lead us to think that, unless clear answers are given to the Palestinian people by the international community, particularly by the Security Council, which is the body with primary responsibility for ensuring the maintenance of international peace and security, it would not be alarmist to envisage a general worsening of the situation in the region in the near future.

What can the Security Council do within its normal powers to remedy this state of affairs?

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It is true that, following the 1967 war, the Security Council sought to draw up an overall framework for the settlement of the Middle East conflict. Resolution 242 (1967), adopted on that occasion, emphasized the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war and the need to work for a just and lasting peace in which every State in the area could live in security. Moreover, it affirmed that the fulfilment of the Charter principles required the establishment of a just and lasting peace which should include the application of both the following principles: withdrawal of Israel's armed forces from the territories occupied in the recent conflict, and termination of all states of belligerency and respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every State in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries. In addition, resolution 242 (1967) affirmed the necessity for achieving a just settlement of the refugee problem.

How long is the international community going to continue describing the Palestinian people as simple "refugees"? How long can the international community make do with payments of contributions - inadequate contributions at that - to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), as a sop to its conscience? How long can it forget, or pretend to forget, that the Palestinian people, like all other peoples, aspire to a State, to a country, and that they cannot agree indefinitely to be treated like refugees? The Jewish people should be the first to understand that. Everybody is aware that no human being is born a refugee, but that special circumstances compel individuals or even entire groups of individuals to become refugees. Furthermore, it seems obvious to us that even a refugee people is not something which comes about by spontaneous generation. Clearly, before its present status as refugees, it had another status which enabled it to have a homeland and territory.

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In that sense, resolution 242 (1967) simply served to endorse a de facto situation - that is, it provided legal and political recognition of Israel's military superiority, to the detriment of the national rights of the Palestinian people.

We feel that resolution 242 (1967) should have required that Israel withdraw its forces from the occupied Arab and Palestinian territories and return to the de facto borders predating 1967. When the Security Council orders a cease-fire it is customary for it to call explicitly, at the same time, for the withdrawal of the belligerent forces and the return to the pre-hostility borders. That was the case in resolutions 47 (1948), 82 (1950) and 209 (1965). However, the effect of resolution 242 (1967) was to endorse the maxim of uti possidetis, to the detriment of the established principle of ex iniuria non oritur jus - the principle that aggression confers no rights upon the aggressor.

In a word, resolution 242 (1967) endorsed the law of force to the detriment of the force of law.

In this context, it is hard to consider resolution 242 (1967) as the sole basis for any negotiated solution to the Middle East problem so long as that resolution is unable to provide a clear response to the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. So long as people continue to seek to apply that resolution comprehensively to any settlement of the question, the international community will be merely dealing with symptoms rather than seeking to treat the underlying cause.

But there are some who feel that this resolution is the sole basis for the settlement of the conflict. Hence, one is entitled to ask: why are we seeing a proliferation of plans for settling the Palestinian question? As examples, we need mention only the plan produced by the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, that produced by the Arab Summit Conference in Fez, that produced by the Soviet Government on 15 September 1982, that contained in

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the Jordanian-Palestinian agreement of 23 February 1985 and, lastly, that produced by the United States Government on 1 September 1982.

It is clear from the foregoing that there is growing dissatisfaction with respect to the position followed by the Security Council on this question and that the time has come for the Council to complete, if not to revise, resolution 242 (1967) by taking into account the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people within the framework of a comprehensive settlement, given the fact that the Palestinian question is the core of the problem of the Middle East.

In that context, in order to facilitate the exercise of the right to national self-determination, independence and sovereignty by the Palestinian people in Palestine, the Security Council should, in particular, begin by taking the following steps: first, establishing a timetable for the complete withdrawal by Israeli forces from the areas occupied in 1967; secondly, establishing temporary peace-keeping forces in order to facilitate the withdrawal process; thirdly, ordering Israel to desist from the establishment of further settlements and to dismantle those that have already been established; and, fourthly, calling on Israel to respect the provisions of the Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949.

Furthermore, in order to implement the guidelines for the settlement of the question, the Security Council should facilitate the convening of an International Peace Conference on the Middle East, pursuant to the Programme of Action adopted by the International Conference on the Question of Palestine held at Geneva in 1983. It goes without saying that the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people, would take part on an equal footing with all the parties to the Arab-Israeli conflict, in keeping with General Assembly resolution 38/56 C of 13 December 1983.

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We are convinced that from such a Conference could emerge an overall plan permitting the Palestinians to exercise their inalienable, legitimate rights, including the right of return, the right to self-determination and the right to establish their own independent State in Palestine.

Mr. FARAH DIRIR (Djibouti): The fortieth session of the General Assembly is an occasion to commemorate the anniversary of the founding of the United Nations. It is also a time for retrospection, to take stock of the Organization's activities in various fields during the last 40 years. The area that requires serious reflection is the Palestinian problem, which has so far defied all the attempts of the international community to reach a just and lasting solution. The United Nations responsibility in this respect is twofold. First, as an Organization whose primary responsibility is to maintain international peace and security, it is duty-bound to find a solution without delay to any situation that is potentially dangerous to peace. Secondly, the Palestinian problem was created when the United Nations General Assembly adopted resolution 181 (II), entitled "Future government of Palestine". The thrust of that resolution was to establish two States in Palestine, one of which was supposed to be a Palestinian Arab State.

Unfortunately, only an expansionist Zionist State emerged as a result of the adoption of that resolution, and the Palestinian tragedy, that followed has haunted the United Nations for almost 40 years.

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The moment Israel proclaimed itself a State, it embarked upon its aggressive expansionist policy and introduced terrorism in the region as a means to political ends. The massacre of the unarmed civilian population, including women and children, at Deir Yassin was intended to terrorize peaceful populations into a mass exodus from their ancestral home. That was the beginning of the Palestinian Diaspora which has continued until this day.

Certainly it was not the intention of the United Nations to inflict such a tragedy on the Palestinian people. It expressed its concern by adopting resolution 194 (III), which stipulated, in its operative paragraph 11:

"that the refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbours 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 and for loss of or damage to property which, under principles of international law or in equity, should be made good by the Governments or authorities responsible."

Unfortunately, that resolution, as in the case of the previous one and of subsequent United Nations resolutions, was arrogantly flouted by the Zionist entity, which responded by increasing its destruction of Palestinian properties to the extent that hundreds of Palestinian villages and towns were destroyed and more people were forced into exile.

Another mass exodus was provoked by the 1967 Israeli war of aggression during which the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and the Syrian Golan Heights were occupied. The new wave of Palestinian refugees joined their brothers in squalid refugee camps. The living conditions of the Palestinian people are well documented and I need not elaborate on them. But it is worth mentioning that the aim of all Israeli policies and practices affecting every aspect of Palestinian life in the occupied territories is to eradicate the Palestinian national and cultural ideals. Even

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those who are in exile are objects to be eliminated, as exemplified by the unwarranted aggression in 1982 against Lebanon, which has given shelter to Palestinian refugees, and the more recent aggression against the Palestine Liberation Organization's offices in Tunis.

Over four decades Israel has tried relentlessly to destroy Palestinian resistance, but this resistance has remained undaunted; it is even growing in the occupied territories.

Since the primary responsibility of the United Nations is to maintain international peace and security, it is appropriate that it should take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to peace and security. The cycle of violence which ravages the Middle East region as a result of Israeli transgression of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people represents a potential threat to peace not only in the region but in the world at large. At present the world is fraught with many problems and the international community exerts tremendous efforts to resolve them. It is logical therefore to begin to tackle those problems that lend themselves to practical solutions. My delegation believes that the first step towards a just and lasting solution of the Palestinian question, since it is the cause of the Middle East conflict, is the recognition of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination, national independence and the establishment of its independent sovereign State in Palestine.

Today there is a universal desire to come to grips with this crucial question and to find a just and lasting solution of the problem. That desire was expressed by the Arab peace plan adopted unanimously at the Twelfth Summit Conference held at Fez in September 1982 and it was reaffirmed by the extraordinary Summit Conference of Arab States held at Casablanca in October 1985. That was followed by the Geneva

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Declaration which endorsed the convening of an international conference on the question of Palestine, and by General Assembly resolution 38/58 C.

As we have indicated earlier, the Palestinian question is the responsibility of the international community and the most appropriate step towards a just and lasting settlement would be the convening of an international conference under the auspices of the United Nations, in which all parties concerned would participate on an equal footing, including the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. The peace process must be indivisible and comprehensive, based on the relevant United Nations resolutions, which ensures the complete and unconditional withdrawal of Israel from Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem.

In conclusion, I should like to express our appreciation and gratitude to Ambassador Massamba Sarre and to the members of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People for their untiring and selfless efforts in mobilizing and sensitizing world public opinion in support of the Palestinian cause and for the valuable report with which they have provided us in that regard.

Mr. BASENDWAH (Yemen) (interpretation from Arabic): As is our custom every year, we are here once again taking up the question of Palestine. No other question has been bound to the United Nations by such a lifetime of companionship and close association as the question of Palestine. For almost four decades this question has been a perennial item on the agenda of the General Assembly, session after session and year after year, to the point that we no longer know whether the fact that it remains unresolved is due to the United Nations, from a sense of loyalty, not wanting to part with this question, its lifetime companion, or whether it is because that is the destiny of the fraternal Palestinian people. If it is a question of destiny, our consolation will be that every destiny runs its course and

(Mr. Basendwah, Yemen)

that destiny is bound to reflect sooner or later the will of peoples, because it flows from the will of God.

If the United Nations is entitled to be proud of its great achievements and the many positive aspects which no fair-minded person can deny, it behoves it to feel ashamed, not merely embarrassed, because since 1947, for over 38 years, it has failed to resolve the question of Palestine.

While the United Nations feels that it can take pride in the numerous fair and just solutions relevant to this question that it adopted, the fact that these resolutions, just and numerous though they may be, despite the passage of years and their repetition from time to time, year in and year out, remain to be implemented and are a dead letter is evidence of its impotence and failure; it is not evidence of its efficiency and success.

It is not unfair to this international Organization to say that this question, which despite its transparent justice has not been resolved, despite its long history and the fact that the persistence of the problem constitutes an affront to human conscience, will remain one of the most outstanding failures of the United Nations throughout its lifetime.

(Mr. Basendwah, Yemen)

If there is an aggressor and a victim in every case, can the aggressor in the case before us be the people of Palestine? No; a thousand times no. The aggressor, as is emphasized by the United Nations in all its resolutions, is Israel, and Israel alone. Israel usurped the land of the Palestinian people and imposed upon them by force of arms and various means of oppression and terrorism the dominion of its brutal colonialism, displacing hundreds of thousands of Palestinians, some to live in camps where they suffer deprivation and humiliation while others wander aimlessly in the Diaspora, reaping the bitterness of alienation with feelings of yearning for the homeland from which they have been parted, either because they have been exiled or out of fear of the oppression of the occupying Zionist authorities, who have confiscated homes, expropriated properties, filled the prisons with thousands and transformed towns and villages into a vast prison without bars or an open concentration camp without walls.

Who is responsible for preventing the implementation of United Nations resolutions and thwarting a solution of the question of Palestine? No two fair-minded people can differ on answering that question - who but Israel, and Israel alone. Israel refuses to restore the land to its owners, along with their rights.

Did the people of Palestine take any land from the rulers of Israel, or any of Israel's rights to be called upon to return such land or rights? Did not Israel wrest from the Palestinian their entire homeland and does not Israel now refuse to return even part of it? Yes, it is refusing to return the land it occupied as a result of the aggression of June 1967, denying the Palestinians their right to an independent national State so that they remain without a homeland or an identity.

The great woes inflicted on the people of Palestine and the great horrors they suffer within their occupied homeland or outside it in the Diaspora, or in the camps, will always be held against our era and will remain a stigma on its history.

(Mr. Bassem Wah, Yemen)

As long as colonialism or the vestiges of colonialism exist in our world, as long as the peoples of Palestine, Namibia and South Africa are deprived of the right to self-determination and self-rule, it is no wonder that the international community suffers a crisis of conscience.

I take this opportunity of the debate on the question of Palestine to call on the United States to review its position and to end its complete alignment with Israel. The United States as a major Power should, in view of its role and its responsibility for the peace and security of the world, at least observe neutrality, if not stand on the side of justice, since it is no secret that Israel could not have persisted in its intransigence, and disregard for United Nations resolutions and defiance of the international community had it not been for the fact that the United States stands behind it with its full weight, providing it with all means of political and material support and attempting to thwart all attempts of the international community to put pressure on Israel to give up its arrogance, and its persistent aggressive policies and withdraw from the occupied Arab and Palestinian territories it occupies illegally.

Perhaps Israel still harbours the hope that it can contain the struggle of the heroic Palestinian people through the imposition of bogus, token solutions, by enlisting the aid of handpicked Palestinians, while not recognizing the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and accepting the convening of an international conference under the auspices of the United Nations and with the participation of permanent members of the Security Council. If that is so, Israel is harbouring an idle dream, even an impossible dream.

If Israel is serious in recognizing the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including the rights to return, to self-determination and to the establishment of an independent State, why does it disregard the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, the PLO? The people of Palestine seek

(Mr. Basendwah, Yemen)

only to live on their land in peace and, like other peoples of the world, to have their own national independent State. Does that constitute aggression against anyone or a threat to the security of anyone? The United Nations is called upon to seek the settlement of this question through hastening to convene an international peace conference in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 38/56. Such a conference would be held with the participation of all parties to the dispute in the Middle East, the very crux of which is the question of Palestine, including the PLO.

Israel's dependence on the logic of force borrowed from others will only lead eventually to ignominious defeat. It is indulging in self-delusion if it thinks it can annihilate the Palestinian people, weaken their continuous struggle or refuse their legitimate cause and their rights. Force might get the upper hand for a while but not forever; but justice, even if those who champion it suffer weakness for a while, will soon overpower any force.

Mr. FOUM (United Republic of Tanzania): Although our Organization has addressed a number of grave issues and conflict situations, the question of Palestine remains an issue that generates a deep sense of outrage, frustration and concern. It is an issue that has its origin in the early actions of this Organization. It is a question that illustrates clearly how appeasement has contributed to continuing aggression and expansionism. More importantly, it is a question involving the suppression of a whole people who, like the black people under apartheid South Africa, are denied their humanity, made refugees in their own land and denied accession to their own homeland. It is a question that remains at the core of the wider problem of the Middle East and the destabilization of that whole region. By its very nature, therefore, the question of Palestine bears directly on the issues of human freedom and international peace and security, and as such it is a question of direct and immediate concern to the whole of the international community.

(Mr. Fom, United Republic of
Tanzania)

For over 37 years the international community, conscious of its responsibility, has exerted considerable efforts with a view to seeking a just and peaceful solution to the problem. Towards that end numerous resolutions have been adopted by this Organization, as well as by other concerned institutions, calling for the restoration of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and, by that act, a solution of the wider problem of the Middle East. That those efforts for freedom and peace have so far been unsuccessful and have come to naught reflects only the intransigence of Israel.

From its very inception, Israel has deliberately and systematically violated every undertaking and conditionality agreed to at the partition of Palestine by resolution 181 (II) of 1947. The impact of these policies bears greatly on the situation which resulted in the war launched by Israel against a number of Arab States in 1967. Following that war and the occupation of more Palestinian and Arab land there have been increased measures to change the demographic and physical characteristics of those territories.

(Mr. Fom, United Republic
of Tanzania)

The central feature of those Israeli policies has been an effort to liquidate the Palestinian people, large numbers of whom have been forced to live in exile - refugees scattered in various countries of the world and on their own soil. The historical progression of events thus indicates only increased aggressiveness and escalating tension.

Despite the aggressive and intransigent attitude exhibited by Israel, peace- and freedom-loving nations have spared no efforts in seeking a just and lasting solution. The adoption of resolution 3236 (XXIX) by the General Assembly in 1974 was a landmark in those efforts. By that resolution, the Assembly reaffirmed the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to self-determination, their right to national independence and their right to return to their homes and property. In the face of that positive step, Israel responded only with increased suppression of the Palestinian people, punctuated by its destruction of civilian Palestinian property and increased efforts to eliminate the people's legitimate movement, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).

The Assembly, however, in 1975 adopted resolution 3375 (XXX), inviting participation by the PLO on an equal footing in all peace efforts, under the auspices of this Organization. Since then the invasion and occupation of Lebanon by Israel has reflected the further rapid deterioration of the overall situation. What that invasion has most emphatically shown, however, is the determination of the Palestinian people to persist in their legitimate struggle for their emancipation.

My delegation fully shares the international concern over the dangerous situation obtaining in the Middle East, as a result of the continued denial of the Palestinian people's rights and the need for heightened efforts to resolve the problem.

(Mr. Foun, United Republic
of Tanzania)

The responsibilities that we assume on joining the United Nations enjoin us to respect the principles of the Charter, promote the cause of freedom and contribute to the climate of peace and security. Israeli practices in the region and within Palestine run counter to all those cardinal tenets. Through expulsion, deportation and other repressive measures, the Palestinians are being forced from their lands. By the end of 1982, the systematic infusion of settlers had reached 140,000, with a projected target of almost 1.5 million by the end of the century. The annexation of Jerusalem and the continued occupation of the Golan Heights and other Arab territories are obviously a direct impediment to any solution. Clearly, those are not acts or aims leading to a peaceful resolution of the problem of the Palestinians. They are, in fact, its central feature. The Palestinian people lost their basic rights through an act of this Organization. It remains the basic responsibility of this Organization, therefore, to seek to right that monstrous wrong. This Assembly must not allow protestations to the contrary to sway it from a proper course of action.

The convening in Geneva of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine two years ago was regarded by my delegation as a valuable contribution by the international community in its efforts to achieve a settlement of the problem. That Conference increased public awareness of the plight of the Palestinians and corrected perceptions regarding their just cause.

In the past there have been varied attempts in many quarters to try to contribute to a solution. However, many of those attempts were marred by wrong perceptions or wilful prejudices, bias and reluctance to accept the realities as lived by the Palestinian people and suffered by their legitimate representative, the PLO.

(Mr. Foun, United Republic
of Tanzania)

My delegation has always maintained that there are some basic elements that must be applied if a lasting settlement of the problem is to be achieved. Those basic elements are Israel's withdrawal from occupied Arab territories, the right of refugees to return to their homelands, and the enjoyment by the Palestinian people of their right to a homeland of their own. Since, however, the question involves aspects that also touch on wider issues, my delegation has supported the guidelines adopted by the twelfth Summit Conference of Arab States, held at Fez, Morocco, and endorsed by the Geneva Conference, for concerted international action. Those guidelines essentially demand: first, strong opposition to, and categorical rejection of, Israeli policies and practices in the occupied territories, particularly the establishment of settlements; secondly, an end to Israeli occupation of Arab territories, in accordance with the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force; thirdly, the nullification and voiding of all legislative and administrative measures adopted by the occupying Power which have modified, or attempted to modify, the character and status of the city of Jerusalem; fourthly, recognition of the right of the PLO, the sole and authentic representative of the Palestinian people, to participate on an equal footing with other parties in all efforts to bring about peace in the region; fifthly, the realization by the Palestinian people of their inalienable right to self-determination, including the right to an independent homeland; and, lastly, the recognition of the right of all States in the region to an independent existence, within secure and internationally recognized borders.

Until these goals are achieved, there can be no solution, let alone a lasting solution, to the problem which involves human freedom and dignity and the security of nations and threatens international peace and security. This Assembly must

(Mr. Poun, United Republic
of Tanzania)

therefore act decisively, and we believe it is the duty of all States to act firmly and to refrain from delusions that the question of Palestine can be wished away.

I cannot complete my statement without expressing our earnest gratitude to Mr. Farouk Kaddoumi, Head of the Political Department and Member of the Executive Committee of the PLO, who clearly and in measured tones, presented the case of the Palestinian people to the current session. His statement has once again shown the statesmanship and responsibility of an organization determined not only to win back the usurped right of its people, but to contribute to solutions so necessary to the preservation of a climate of freedom, peace and security.

Mr. SINCLAIR (Guyana): Apart from the Middle East question, of which it is the centre-piece, there is perhaps no other issue on the agenda of the General Assembly that is as subject to influence by external factors and distortions as is the question of Palestine. In this regard I am not referring to a recent phenomenon. Some of its manifestations in our day may be new, but the phenomenon itself is not.

In the first place the Palestinians belong to a geographical area that is noted throughout history as an arena of ancient and sharply contending cultures and interests. Also, it is an area which produces almost all the petroleum needed by the industrialized countries of the West. Access to these resources, and control of the communication routes out of that area, are therefore enduring preoccupations on the part of some States outside the region. The perceived strategic importance of the area has led to the spawning of elaborate defence theories around it and for it, involving, of course the heavy commitment of sophisticated weaponry. Inevitably, the dynamics of an East-West confrontation have been superimposed. These are some of the more obvious encrustations which have operated in the past to obscure what is really the heart and the essence of the matter: the dispossession of the Palestinians and the need for them to return to their homeland as quickly as possible.

In addition to these considerations, there are certain very prevalent attitudes of mind toward Palestinians and the question of Palestine which impede movement toward a solution. Edward Said, a distinguished Palestinian scholar, describing the results of the actions of Zionism and of Israel from the beginning, in relation to the Palestinians, referred to what he called the refusal even to admit the existence of Palestinian Arabs. Said concluded that: "The Question of Palestine is therefore the contest between an affirmation and a denial".

Of course, with such an attitude toward Palestinians it is not surprising that there are efforts to redefine the Palestinian problem and to give a different

(Mr. Sinclair, Guyana)

character to what is the fundamental issue in this question. The representative organization of the Palestinian people, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), has been given a label, and a mind-set has developed. The PLO was the first to respond to the Secretary-General indicating support for the holding of an international peace conference on the Middle East. The PLO continues to demonstrate an active and an undaunted faith that the General Assembly and the Security Council will bring about a solution to the Palestinian problem. The PLO participates actively and constructively in the work of the Palestine rights Committee. It is respected and supported by a preponderant majority of the international community as the representative of the interests of the Palestinian people. Yet, the mind-set about the PLO persists and the entire question of Palestine is clothed with other dimensions.

In addition to these mental obstacles, there is of course Israel and its intransigent attitude toward the United Nations, an intransigence buttressed by powerful external forces. At times it is difficult to discern clearly whether Israel is the tool of those external forces or whether it is the other way around. But whatever the case, Israeli intransigence is a major factor in the equation.

The result of the combination of all these factors is that the proud Palestinian people continue to be dispossessed, a nation without a State, bearing the indignity of living in refugee camps.

The struggle which the Palestinian people are waging for the establishment of their independent State is an integral part of the world-wide struggle against foreign domination, a struggle which is being waged not only in the Middle East but also in southern Africa, Asia and Latin America, and especially in Central America. We would do well to comprehend and to bear always in mind the true dimensions and implications of the Palestinian struggle.

(Mr. Sinclair, Guyana)

Guyana identifies with and reiterates its support for the Palestinian people in that struggle. It is more than simply a question of a homeland for a dispossessed people. We see at stake in the question of Palestine a number of principles which are of a universal nature and which are cardinal to the national policy of many States, including Guyana. Among them is the right of peoples to self-determination and independence. No less important are principles such as respect for independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, the non-use of force in the settlement of disputes and the non-acquisition of territory by force. All these principles are being trampled underfoot in respect of the Palestinian people. Their widespread violation can create a situation which would pose even greater dangers for global peace and security.

The prospects for lasting peace in the Middle East begin and end with the satisfaction of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. This Organization has, since 1947, provided for the establishment of a Palestinian State side by side with its Jewish counterpart. It was certainly not the intention of the United Nations that the creation of the Jewish State should have the effect of permanently dispossessing the Palestinian people or of abrogating their inalienable rights.

The Palestinians will not simply go away, nor will the question of Palestine fade as an issue of international concern. The Special Political Committee only recently concluded consideration of Israeli practices affecting the human rights of the population of the occupied territories and of the report of the Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugee in the Near East. In the course of the consideration of these two items we have learnt, yet again, of the attempts being made to terrorize Palestinians into coming to terms with occupation and to obliterate all traces of Palestinian identity from the occupied territories. It is a tribute to the strength of Palestinian national identity that they remain

(Mr. Sinclair, Guyana)

unbowed even in the face of these attempts. In fact, dispersion and degradation, occupation and oppression, have served to reinforce the determination of the Palestinians to intensify their struggle for their right to lead lives as dignified citizens in their own independent State.

The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People has been playing an active and valuable supportive role in the Palestinian struggle. That Committee has articulated a structured programme of action for the achievement of the objectives which inspired its creation. And my delegation would like to pay a well-deserved tribute to that Committee under the brilliant and dedicated chairmanship of Ambassador Massamba Sarré of Senegal for the important work that it is doing.

The stalemate with regard to the question of Palestine cannot be allowed to continue much longer. There is a pressing need for positive action to shake off the paralysis which has been imposed by attitudes adopted towards the Palestinians. Those attitudes are causing the international community to lose valuable opportunities for settling this question. My delegation regrets, for example, that the holding of an international peace conference on the Middle East is being opposed and its realization frustrated by obstacles of one kind or another. A forum such as the international peace conference which is proposed, providing for the participation of permanent members of the Security Council, Israel, the Palestinian Liberation Organization on behalf of the Palestinian people, and other concerned parties, would offer a unique opportunity for breaking out of the current stagnation in Middle East peace efforts and for a comprehensive discussion of the interests of all the parties concerned. We find it lamentable that the implementation of such a constructive proposal, conceived to bring about a peaceful settlement of differences through dialogue, in a region as volatile as the Middle East, is being frustrated.

(Mr. Sinclair, Guyana)

Whatever label one may give to the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), at the end of the day there is no alternative to relating with that body. In dealing with the PLO we are dealing with more than an organization; to talk of the PLO is to talk of the will and determination of an entire people. The PLO symbolizes the undying nationalist aspirations of the entire Palestinian nation; and there is no other way to peace in the Middle East but to come to terms with those aspirations and to relate with the chosen representatives of the Palestinian people. At any rate, how useful could a dialogue be between two sides if one side is going to decide who will speak for the other? Not even force can turn the Palestinians away from their ambition to establish themselves in their own independent homeland. The use of force as a policy for dealing with Palestinian nationalism has already proved to be ineffective, even counter-productive in this regard.

There are clear limits to what can be achieved by the use of military force against strong nationalist sentiment. Lebanon should be instructive in this regard. Anti-heroics, such as the recent operation in Tunisia, do nothing to temper Palestinian determination.

In fact, by seeking to impose its will in the Middle East through the use of its superior force Israel has created greater insecurity for itself as well as for the region. Security in the Middle East, as in any other region, has to be mutual. Israel's security cannot be founded on the insecurity of its neighbours nor can that security be based on the permanent dispossession of an entire people, nor on the illegal retention of land seized from neighbours. The occupied territories are symbols of injustice; they cause offence to the nationalist feeling of Palestinians and of the people of other occupied neighbouring States. Their retention is a guarantee of instability in the region. But what is even worse than their simple retention is Israel's settlement policy which exacerbates and perpetuates original injustice.

(Mr. Sinclair, Guyana)

Israel must withdraw from the territories occupied since 1967, including East Jerusalem. Guyana cannot accept that the advantages gained from the unlawful use of force are non-negotiable or that territorial aggrandisement is international virtue. Time is certainly not on our side in the Middle East. My delegation sincerely hopes that this debate will serve to stimulate a fresh awareness of the urgency of finding a solution to this question.

Let us have always in mind that our debate on the question of Palestine is about much more than the Palestinians or their need to recover their inalienable rights - as fundamental as that may be. This debate is also about the strength and capacity of the United Nations to have its decisions respected and implemented; it is about the extent to which States are prepared to make the Charter of the United Nations a living force in the conduct of their relations with other States. It is also about peace - a secure and durable peace so that all States and people of the Middle East region - including Israel - can live within mutually recognized boundaries, so that the Palestinians can at last devote their energies and talents to the happiness and prosperity of their independent homeland.

The PRESIDENT: In accordance with resolution 477 (V), of 1 November 1950, I now call on the Observer of the League of Arab States.

Mr. EL-FARRA (League of Arab States) (interpretation from Arabic): I should like to begin my statement on behalf of the League of Arab States by offering my congratulations to Mr. de Piniés on his election as President of this session of the General Assembly and on the world-wide confidence he has so deservedly won. During the long years we have worked together in the international arena I have come to recognize and admire his outstanding abilities, his quiet diplomacy and objectivity in dealing with issues, and his efforts to bolster international relations and the principles of peace based on justice. These are

(Mr. El-Farra, League of Arab States)

the values we also associate with his great country, Spain, with which we Arabs share bonds of friendship and common heritage.

The people of Spain and the Arab nation shared more than seven centuries of history, during which they intertwined their civilizations and drew sustenance from the wellsprings of the same culture and heritage. That is reflected today in the number of Spanish universities teaching the language, literature and history of the Arabs, and in the numerous Spanish libraries preserving the treasures of Arab culture. This common heritage also left its mark on the great monuments - the palaces, mosques and gardens - of Andalusia and North Africa, the products of a civilization that once made Andalusia a cultural centre fully the equal of Athens and Alexandria in their prime. The genius of that civilization was represented by many, among them Ibn Zahr, who excelled in medicine; Al-Maqqarri and Ibn al-Khatib, in literature, geography and history; and others who pioneered in the fields of astronomy, chemistry, algebra and philosophy, such as Ibn Hazm, Ibn Arabi, Ibn Tufail and Ibn Rushd.

The nomination of Spain to this high office is proof of Spain's great respect for this international Organization, which remains the repository of the hopes of nations and of future generations.

I wish to record on behalf of the League of Arab States our appreciation and gratitude to Ambassador Massamba Sarré, Chairman of the Special Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, for his constructive efforts, guidance and stewardship which is distinguished by knowledge and wisdom.

We have come to the conclusion of the General Assembly's debate on the Palestine question which, despite its importance, was accorded only three days of the General Assembly's time. Nevertheless, the debate has reflected the increasing concern of the international community about this problem.

(Mr. El-Farra, League of Arab States)

It is difficult, while so many dangers beset the question of Palestine, to discuss the issue without feelings of pain and alarm. The problem has been before the United Nations for nearly 40 years - that is, since its inception. And the mass media have made us so accustomed to its events that the use of force, violence and crimes seem, through repetition, to have become natural means of international conduct. This prompts us to question the seriousness of the commitment to the bases on which our international community was founded, and to the noble ideals of our international Organization.

(Mr. El-Farra, League
of Arab States)

The General Assembly has more than once condemned the policy of aggression and terrorism practised by Israel both within and outside the occupied Arab territories and its resolutions have affirmed the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. Yet, in practice, the people of Palestine continue to suffer not only exile, dispersal and dispossession outside Palestine but also Israeli repression, arbitrary arrests, and terrorism within Palestine. Israel's shameless arrogance and the policy of escalating the terrorism that it practises against the Arab States and people are, of course, encouraged by the unlimited support it receives from outside.

Despite the pressures that this Organization faces from States with special responsibilities in the Security Council and regardless of the attempts to undermine the people of Palestine, the Arab States and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the sole authentic representative of the Palestinian people, continue to abide by international legitimacy, the principles of the United Nations and ethical values. They come to the United Nations year after year to remind it of that legitimacy and those principles. It was on that basis that the Arab States and the Palestine Liberation Organization adopted a peace plan which the Arab States have strenuously sought to push towards an acceptable solution to achieve peace in our region and stability and security in the area. Without that peace the area will never rejoice in security.

The resolutions and principles of the 1982 Arab Summit Conference at Fez, confirmed anew by the Extraordinary Arab Summit Conference held at Casablanca, Morocco, this year, are proof of the aims that motivate the Arabs and prompt them to call for the convening of an international conference within the United Nations framework, to include the two super-Powers and the other permanent members of the

(Mr. El-Farra, League
of Arab States)

Security Council, with the participation of the Palestine Liberation Organization and the other parties concerned. That is in addition to the individual and bilateral actions undertaken by the Arab States as part of their effort to achieve peace and end the crisis in a manner that would guarantee the rights of all the peoples of the region.

But what was the response to that courageous Fes Arab peace initiative - an initiative that could be killed by being ignored for a long period? The answer came recently on the wings of Israel's warplanes, which flew thousands of miles to destroy peaceful homes and bury their inhabitants - old men, women and children - in an Arab country which is a Member of the United Nations. That is how Israel responds to all peace efforts in the region - an answer characterized by hysterical behaviour. Israel strikes north and south, east and west, inside and outside Palestine, until even those who still had lingering doubts now understand that Israel not only rejects peace but intends to destroy the peace process as well.

Following Israel's barbarous act of aggression against Tunisia - its bombing of the homes of Tunisian citizens and the headquarters of the Palestine Liberation Organization - regrettable incidents took place that resulted in the death of a passenger aboard the Italian cruise ship Achille Lauro, and a United States citizen, Alex Odeh, was assassinated simply because he wanted to exercise his right to refute the accusations of the Zionist movement against the Palestine Liberation Organization. He wanted to reply to those charges in the so-called land of the free, but was murdered for his effort. At that time we did not hear American

(Mr. El-Farra, League
of Arab States)

voices raised in denunciation of Zionist terrorism; on the contrary, the United States Government and news media persisted in encouraging anti-Arab feelings until the American public began to view attacks against Arabs as almost acceptable and justified.

The attempts to institutionalize racist practices in Israel and the occupied Arab territories against the Arab inhabitants have entered a new phase. Meir Kahane recently submitted two proposed laws to the Knesset; one would exclude non-Jews from the right of citizenship in Israel and the other would prevent any integration between Jews and non-Jews. The fact that the Chairman of the Knesset refused to accept the proposed laws does not alter the situation, especially since the attempt is far from being abandoned. Kahane has asked the Israeli Supreme Court for a ruling, to force the Knesset leadership to receive the proposed two racist laws. But even if the Supreme Court rejects Kahane's request that does not mean the Zionist racists will give up. That is a first attempt which will certainly be followed by others. The question now is: Does that sort of mentality not support the same racist ideas that constituted the major reason for the persecution of the Jews throughout history? Is it not time for Israeli leaders to adhere to the spirit of the Charter of this Organization concerning the rights of man, the equality of man, and the brotherhood of man?

It is that kind of sick mentality that prompts many in Israel to commit various crimes, acting on the urge to erase all vestiges of the Gentiles, destroying their mosques and churches and attacking their heritage in preparation for their ultimate expulsion, so that the State would remain Jewish with no place for non-Jews in it. An example of that racism is the case of Shimon Barza, leader of the gang that tried to blow up the Aqsa Mosque and other places of worship in Jerusalem. He was convicted and sentenced to gaol by the courts and is now appealing his sentence. All that reaffirms that sick mentality.

(Mr. El-Farra, League
of Arab States)

We denounce from this international rostrum all forms of terrorism and at the same time support all the legitimate liberation movements. We differentiate between terrorism and the right of peoples to fight, by all available means, for their freedom and dignity - the type of struggle which has been supported by the General Assembly in many resolutions. We say to those who seek to hide the facts: You cannot cover up your crimes, your terrorism and your aggression by accusing others and creating thick smokecreens to hide those crimes.

We referred to Kahane's positions only because he represents an extremist trend which is gaining ground in Israel, so much so that the advocate of those terrorist and racist ideas was elected to the Knesset. It is time for the extremist leaders in Israel to realize that terrorism does not lead to peace and that bullets do not kill ideas and convictions but, instead, increase the determination of people to fight even harder in defence of their heritage and ideals. Thus, the repressive measures and terrorist operations carried out against the Arab inhabitants and against the unrelenting, heroic struggle of the Palestinian people inside the occupied Arab territories will not weaken them or their leadership - no matter how hard the Israelis try.

This new factor in the region reflects a new Israeli attitude, one full of anxiety and impulsiveness, which is gaining the upper hand in Israel and is exhibited in the spread of Zionist extremism and tension in the occupied Arab territories. The reasons for that dangerous trend are many and varied, but it is important to understand its repercussions, some of which are already evident in Israel's behaviour.

(Mr. El-Farra, League
of Arab States)

The raid on Tunisia was the latest manifestation of Israel's desire to convince public opinion at home and abroad that, despite its defeat by Arab resistance in the south of Lebanon and in the occupied territories, and although it is retreating on the economic and social fronts, it remains the region's primary military Power on which the West, and especially the United States, can still rely. It is feared that such thinking could encourage Israeli leaders to repeat their military attacks against the Arab States under flimsy excuses. This explains the desperate Israeli insistence on the use of force and on the rejection of peace. We had believed that the resistance of south Lebanon had proved to Israel the futility of trying to impose permanent solutions by force and that occupation would never be a solution, no matter how fierce repression and terrorism became.

Mr. Shimon Peres recently said the following from this rostrum:

"I call upon the Palestinian people to put an end to rejectionism, to belligerency. Let us talk. Come forth and recognize the reality of the State of Israel, our wish to live in peace and our need for security. Let us face each other as free men and women across the negotiating table." (A/40/PV.42, p. 58)

I say from this same rostrum that the evasive peace initiated by Peres during this international Organization's celebration of its fortieth anniversary was meant for internal consumption in Israel to prop up the Labour Party, but it was also aimed at the rest of the world, tailored as it was for radio and television stations.

I challenge Shimon Peres to declare now, from Tel Aviv, that he recognizes the existence of the Palestinian people, who have already been recognized by the whole world, and that he concedes to the Palestinians their right to self-determination in their own homeland and their right to an independent State. Such recognition would indicate that Peres had abandoned the policy of violence and given up the

(Mr. El-Farra, League
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practice of human massacres, which have claimed the lives of hundreds of thousands of Palestinian victims. Peace is a two-way street. It calls for a change in the policies of hatred, death and terrorism. He who calls for coexistence must recognize the immediate party with which he wants to coexist.

If Israel's intentions are truly those announced by Peres, then why did the Israeli occupation authorities recently impose inhumane and brutal measures, beefing up their military presence, increasing patrols, blocking all the roads with checkpoints, searching people indiscriminately, aiding and abetting Jewish settler terrorist groups, intensifying the covert terrorism of the intelligence services and blindly applying the policy of expulsion, exile and administrative detention?

What purpose underlies those acts of harassment so reminiscent of the security measures imposed by the Nazi occupation authorities during the Second World War? Although the Israeli Government does not always reveal its true intentions, the right-wing parties in that country, whether partners in the Government or not, and especially the Likud bloc, clearly answer our question with their slogan, which they proclaim today more than ever before: "One Torah and one land for one people only." Yes, their ultimate aim is the liquidation of the Palestinian people.

How similar that slogan is to the Nazi slogan, no matter how they try to conceal it. Is such a slogan in keeping with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights? In this connection, I would like to say the following to those who demonstrated on 10 November 1985 demanding that our Organization reconsider its resolution describing Zionism as a form of racism and to those who supported that demonstration for obvious electoral purposes: the Zionist movement will be judged by its actions and practices, and until Zionist leaders change their hearts, minds and behaviour our Organization, mindful of its Charter, its message and its principles, cannot but condemn those actions and practices, demand that they cease

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and denounce the Zionist movement that gave them birth. Indeed, how is our Organization expected to respond otherwise when the slogan of the Israeli right is "One Torah and one land for one people only"?

We are certain that our States and this international Organization and its Charter, which begins with the words "We the peoples of the United Nations", will not spare any effort to halt the attempt to annihilate one of its peoples.

It is necessary, however, to emphasize the historic responsibility of the United States for the current situation in the Middle East, which is largely due to the unquestioning support the United States gives Israel, even after the recent Israeli acts of international terrorism, which violate America's own principles and values.

While the Arab States condemned the take-over of the Italian ship, the Achille Lauro, the United States, in its total backing for Israel, did not hesitate to indulge in international terrorism for the sake of the Zionist authorities. What else can we call the air piracy carried out by American military aircraft in forcing down an Egyptian civilian airliner? Where is international law and what happened to ethical values? What, indeed, is left of United States credibility and its intention to achieve peace in the Middle East? The hijacking of an Egyptian airliner - its flimsy pretexts and primitive, vengeful motives aside - symbolized America's participation with Israel in the persecution of the Palestinian people, whose anger and disappointment have undermined their faith in the principles of peace at a time dominated by the logic of force, a time when terrorism has been elevated to the status of national policy of a major Power.

In conclusion, let me say that my greatest fear is that the attitudes now being adopted by the Zionist movement and its friends may result in a new anti-Semitic wave whose victims this time will be the Arab people. We must all

(Mr. El-Farra, League
of Arab States)

think of the consequences of such a development, none of which would serve neither understanding among peoples nor the causes of peace and justice.

I must now reply briefly to a number of points raised by the representative of Israel this afternoon.

(spoke in English)

What we heard this afternoon carried nothing new. It has become an old record. We heard time and again the Israeli representative cite the Nazi slogan, "One country, one people, one leader". That today is a Zionist slogan, as I pointed out earlier. The Israeli representative spoke at length about nazism and then emphasized in his statement that

"... while nazism may have been defeated in Europe, it was very much alive in the Middle East ..." (supra, p. 16)

With that, I am in full agreement. Nazism may have been defeated in Europe, but it is indeed very much alive in the Middle East. We have Zionism practised in part of the Middle East, and Zionism has everything in common with nazism.

(Mr. El-Farra, League
of Arab States)

Both nazism and Zionism hold to the concept of race; both Zionism and nazism hold to the concept of Nazi supremacy and the Zionist "chosen people"; both nazism and Zionism hold to the concept of Lebensraum; the Zionists want a space to be made for the ingathering of the exiles from all over the world into Palestine; both nazism and Zionism hold to the concept of the fifth column. The Zionists in the United States have pressure groups; they have a city within every city, a town within every town; they have a pressure group within every single branch of the United States Government.

The Pollard spy case is a case in point. It can be argued that this case is an internal matter, that it reflects differences between two strategic partners, that it is nothing but family differences. However, when we have officials saying openly that Rafael Eitan's spies wanted also to collect classified information about the military capability of neighbouring Arab States, this great family of nations is entitled to know what the Israeli-American family is planning towards our region and its security.

The Israeli representative spoke about our rejection of the notion of "compromise and coexistence" - these are his words. I think the former Prime Minister of Israel has the answer to this allegation. He said, when visiting Ariel settlement - one of the biggest in the occupied territories - the following oath:

"I, Menachem, the son of Zev and Achiza Begin, do solemnly swear that, as long as I serve the nation as Prime Minister, we will not leave any part of Judea, Samaria, the Gaza Strip and the Golan Heights."

This statement was made on 9 May 1981. So when you call for coexistence, you want the refugees to exist in the camps outside Palestine and you stay on the land and both should coexist.

(Mr. El-Farra, League
of Arab States)

He then referred to the Saudi daily Magella. This is a big lie. I don't know of any daily Magella in Saudi Arabia. This so-called Saudi daily Magella simply does not exist. I need not cite the many Israeli distortions and fabrications; the President and the members of the Assembly are familiar with Israeli campaigns of falsehoods and distortions.

I think it is about time that Zionism should change its ugly behaviour. The Zionists should accept the advice of Chaim Weizmann, the champion of Zionism, who, on his deathbed, had the following advice to give to all Zionists in the world:

"We are a small people, but a great people; an ugly, and yet a beautiful people; a creative, and yet a destructive, people; a people in whom genius and folly are equally commingled. We are an ambitious people who have time and again repudiated and wrecked what our ancestors built. For God's sake, let us not allow the breach in the wall to swallow us."

This was his last advice before his death.

To conclude, I have one remaining quotation, from James Reston, an able journalist of The New York Times. He said, after interviewing Mrs. Golda Meir:

"Israel appeals to justice, but is not just to the Arab refugees. It asks for mercy and is merciless in attack. It cries for peace and order in the world and for principles among nations; but it scorns and even villifies the United Nations which, despite obvious weaknesses, is the only instrument of international order and justice we have." He concluded: "In this sense, not only geography and history but logic are against Israel over the long run, and the Israelis know it."

The PRESIDENT: One observer has requested to be allowed to make a statement in reply. May I remind members that, in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, statements in the exercise of the right of reply are limited to

(The President)

10 minutes for the first intervention and to five minutes for the second intervention, and should be made by the delegations from their seats.

The Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization has requested to make a statement of reply. I give him the floor in accordance with General Assembly resolution 3237 (XXIX) of 22 November 1974.

Mr. RAMLAWI (Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO)) (interpretation from Arabic): This evening, the representative of Israel stood here to debate on the question of Palestine. He insisted on speaking on the roots of this cause. But he did not change his normal behaviour. Whenever the representative of Israel takes the floor before the General Assembly or any other organ of the United Nations he persists in the fabrications and the lies which are far removed from reality and objectivity. In reality, the truth is that there has been a genuine condemnation of Israel and its racist, aggressive and expansionist policies. He tried to divert the attention of the General Assembly from the true and real objective in discussing the question of Palestine. He wanted to divert it to discuss other issues of minor importance, which have no relation to the topics and realities addressed by the General Assembly. If the representative of Israel wanted to address root causes, in order to be objective, he really should have announced before the General Assembly here the true objective of the creation of Israel in the Middle East area and the methods that have been adopted by the European colonialist Powers and the Zionist, racist movement since the beginning of this century to achieve their common objective. He really should have reminded the General Assembly of the report of the British Prime Minister, in 1907, who described the objective of creating Israel in Palestine as a colonial project to ensure the continued interests of the colonial Powers for decades to come in the Middle East region.

(Mr. Ramlawi, PLO)

Then the representative of Israel did not address the methods, including murder and terrorism, that have been adopted by the Zionist movement and supported by those colonial Powers against the Palestinian people. He did not cite the examples before 1948 and before the establishment of Israel as a despicable project of imperialism.

One of the clearest examples is the well-known massacre which took place in April 1948 at the town of Deir Yassin and which was led by Menachem Begin and Itzhak Shamir, the current Deputy Prime Minister of Israel. The victims of this massacre were hundreds of civilians, children, women and elderly people. He also did not refer to the statements of Menachem Begin at the time that, had it not been for the Deir Yassin massacre, Israel would not have been able to exist.

(Mr. Ramlawi, FLO)

The representative of Israel spoke about the roots of the problem and the events that preceded the establishment of Israel and he referred to the terrorism that he said had taken place then. If he is really so concerned, why did he not make any reference to the terrorism practised by the Zionist gangs against the United Nations itself, when they committed the crime of assassinating Count Bernadotte, the Special Envoy of the United Nations to Palestine?

Instead of giving the Assembly fabrications, the representative of Israel should have objectively replied to the contents of the reports of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories. He should have made clear the Zionist Israeli position concerning the will of the international community as reflected in the provisions of the United Nations Charter and of the General Assembly resolutions adopted repeatedly, year after year. In all those resolutions the international community has recognized the inalienable national right of the Palestinian people to return to its homeland, its right to self-determination without foreign intervention and to the establishment of its independent State.

The fact that Israel flouts the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the fact that it is not complying with the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 are nothing new to the General Assembly, the United Nations as a whole or the international community.

Israel's history since its creation in 1948 is replete with acts of defiance of General Assembly resolutions and total disregard for the Assembly itself. I would remind the Assembly of the position taken in 1975 by Chaim Herzog, now President of Israel, when he was representative of Israel to the United Nations. He stood at the rostrum of the Assembly and said that he was a Zionist; he tore up a resolution that the Assembly had just adopted; and he told the Assembly

(Mr. Ramlawi, PLO)

that the fate of the resolution in Israel would be the wastepaper basket. The General Assembly resolution in question was the one condemning Zionism as a form of racism and racial discrimination.

That is the way Israel treats United Nations resolutions and the Charter and its principles. Therefore we find nothing strange in the fact that the representative of Israel today comes to the rostrum and indulges in misleading tactics and distortions of facts. He does that simply because he cannot face reality; he cannot face the accusing finger pointed at him and his Government.

With regard to the statement by the representative of Israel on the death of Mr. Klinghoffer, the Palestine Liberation Organization states once again that it had nothing whatsoever to do with the events that took place aboard the Achille Lauro. The Palestine Liberation Organization has condemned that operation. Statements have been made here today in the context of the allegations made by Mrs. Klinghoffer against the PLO. It is very wrong to attempt to blame the Palestine Liberation Organization for the operation that took place on that vessel and the death of Mr. Klinghoffer.

Israel's claim that it aspires to peace is unfounded. The statement made by the representative of Israel today that Israel wishes direct negotiations is nothing but an attempt to sidestep the General Assembly resolutions dealing with the question of Palestine - resolutions that Israel rejects and disregards. But our Palestinian people, through the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization, has reaffirmed its strong adherence to the principles of the United Nations Charter and the Organization's resolutions on the question of Palestine designed to achieve a peace based on justice and to ensure the exercise by the Palestinian people of their inalienable national rights.

The PRESIDENT: Representatives will recall that the Assembly has before it three draft resolutions circulated as documents A/40/L.23 to A/40/L.25. I understand that a fourth draft resolution will be submitted under this item.

Inasmuch as some of those draft resolutions have programme budget implications, the Assembly will take decisions on them at a subsequent meeting, the date of which will be announced in the Journal.

The meeting rose at 8.30 p.m.