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### PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,  
on Friday, 6 December 1985, at 10.30 a.m.

President: Mr. DE PINIES (Spain)

later: Mr. MARINESCU (Vice-President) (Romania)

- Tribute to the memory of Mr. Frederick Boland, President of the fifteenth session of the General Assembly
- The situation in the Middle East: reports of the Secretary-General [38] (continued)

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

TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF MR. FREDERICK BOLAND, PRESIDENT OF THE FIFTEENTH SESSION  
OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): It is my sad duty to draw the attention of members of the Assembly to the news of the death of Mr. Frederick Boland of Ireland, which occurred yesterday.

Frederick Boland was President of the fifteenth session of the General Assembly, in 1960, a former Secretary-General of the Foreign Ministry of Ireland and the first Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations. He played a prominent role in this Organization and made a major contribution towards the attainment of the objectives set out in the Charter.

On behalf of the General Assembly I should like to express to the members of the family of Frederick Boland and to the Government and people of Ireland our deepest and most sincere condolences.

I invite representatives to stand and observe a minute of silence in tribute to the memory of Frederick Boland.

The members of the General Assembly observed a minute of silence.

Mr. McDONAGH (Ireland): I wish to thank you, Mr. President, for the warm tribute which you have paid to the memory of the late Ambassador Boland. My delegation is grateful also for the sympathy shown here today by all delegations.

I think it is particularly appropriate that you, Sir, should convey this tribute since I know that you sat in this Assembly under Ambassador Boland's presidency, as a member of your country's delegation. It is perhaps also fitting that I should now be replying to your tribute, since I was here at that time as a junior member of the Irish delegation.

(Mr. McDonagh, Ireland)

Ambassador Boland was one of the outstanding public servants of the young Irish State. He played a most important role in the development of the Irish Foreign Service and contributed greatly to the profile of Ireland in this Organization and in the international arena generally. His dedication to the purposes of the United Nations and his application to its practical work were an indication to all of Ireland's firm commitment to the United Nations.

Freddy, as he was known to his contemporaries and, I am afraid, as he was sometimes referred to by irreverent juniors, will long be remembered.

I know that Ambassador Boland's family, to whom I will convey your tribute, Mr. President, would wish me to thank you most warmly, and my Government would also want me to express its deep appreciation to you.

AGENDA ITEM 38 (continued)

THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST: REPORTS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/40/168, A/40/668 and Add. 1, A/40/799 and Corr.1)

Mr. EL-FATTAL (Syrian Arab Republic) (interpretation from Arabic):

Before making my statement, may I be permitted to extend to the Ambassador of Ireland our most sincere condolences on the death of Mr. Boland, whom we knew as a great statesman. His work will always be appreciated internationally. We request the Ambassador of Ireland, through you, Mr. President, to convey our condolences to the bereaved family of Mr. Boland.

The crisis of the Middle East, the crux of which is the question of Palestine, is one of the first crises that came about after the founding of the United Nations. One of the constant factors of this crisis is the continued Israeli escalation of its policy of aggression against the Arab people and expansion of its scope to threaten the security and peace of all Arab countries.

(Mr. El-Fattal, Syrian  
Arab Republic)

While consolidating its aggression against the people of Palestine, an aggression which started in 1948, Israel is escalating its "long-arm" policy against the Arab countries. One of the most recent manifestations of this policy was its attack against the Tunisian capital, which demonstrates the qualitative and geographic extension of Israeli aggression, since Israel believes that through its "nailed fist" policy, on the one hand, and its "long-arm" policy on the other, it can reduce on our Arab nation to despair and make it submit.

Israel's increasingly aggressive policy has been carried out simultaneously with the adoption by the United States administration of its current policy of force to achieve its universal and regional objectives. One of these objectives is to extend its hegemony over all parts of the Middle East , which contains the most important strategic air, land and water routes. It is also situated at the crossroads of three continents and is endowed with most of the world's oil reserves.

The latest United States threats against the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, revealed by the Washington Post of 3 November 1985, which are accompanied by military preparations to commit aggression against the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, are but a qualitative escalation that falls within the context of extending imperialist hegemony to realize the objectives of United States foreign policy through the use of force, violation of the sovereignty of States, and intervention in their internal affairs.

We in Syria have decided to stand up to and confront this conspiracy against the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya with all the means necessitated by the confrontation process. The conspiracy against the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya is not simply directed against this Arab country; rather, it is aimed at achieving the acquiescence and capitulation of the entire Arab nation. In implementing its "long-arm" policy, the Israeli air force has been violating the air space of several Arab countries and breaching their inviolability in a blatant and provocative manner.

(Mr. El-Fattal, Syrian Arab Republic)

The force option chosen by the United States of America and its ally Israel will be met with intensive Arab resistance to their designs. We believe that the United States has not yet learned the lessons of its military intervention in Lebanon, despite its ignominious defeat and the defeat of its ally Israel in the land of fraternal Lebanon.

One of the most dangerous developments threatening our area is the strategic United States-Israeli alliance, because it is an alliance that is not confined to the support of Israeli expansionism and all its means of aggression against Palestine, Syria and Lebanon, but it is an integrated alliance aimed at threatening the Arabs individually and collectively, since its objective is to expand the sphere of Israeli-United States influence to include all countries of the region.

This strategic institutionalized alliance, directed against the Arabs, today covers all spheres, such as commercial, economic and military, to the point that Israeli strength has become part and parcel of the strength of the United States of America. While United States strength finds in Israel an advance military outpost, this alliance has been broadened recently to include co-operation between the two countries in "star wars" matters.

The Tel Aviv-Washington axis brings to mind axes which led to the outbreak of the Second World War. This poses the most grave threat to the independence, liberty and territorial integrity of our region as a whole. It also constitutes a threat to international peace and security. Undoubtedly, the seeds of this alliance were planted as a result of the capitulation policy initiated by the Camp David accords, which led to an imbalance in the area.

(Mr. El-Fattal, Syrian  
Arab Republic)

If Israel persists in using force against the Arab countries, it is only because it is certain that it finds in Washington the loyal ally which does not shirk its commitments to support and consolidate the aggression of its friend and ally. It was under the American umbrella that Israel declared Jerusalem its eternal capital. It also annexed the Golan Heights in 1981. Then it waged a brutal war against Lebanon in 1982, which led to the blockade and occupation of the first Arab capital, Beirut, and the destruction of the cultural, social and economic infrastructure in Lebanon. Parts of that fraternal country are still today languishing under Israeli occupation and its oppression, terrorism and violence.

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The people in southern Lebanon are subjected to systematic brutal raids by the Israeli forces against defenceless civilians. Their cities and villages both within and outside the occupied zone are bombarded. The objective of these military operations is to prevent the Lebanese from resuming their normal life, to consolidate the occupation, to keep the sword of Damocles hanging over the heads of the Lebanese people and to hamper the process of national détente, which is deepening day by day.

Organic relations existed between Israel and the United States until 1980, but once the new Administration took office in 1981 those relations became institutionalized. They were described by Mr. Shultz in a statement he made on 21 April 1985 as follows:

"Strategic co-operation between the United States and Israel has become an institutionalized official process. We have set up a joint military political group to improve co-operation in order to face the threat against our joint interests in the Middle East. This co-operation is long overdue and today it is an important part of our strategic relations."

This Israeli-American alliance, supported by vast sums of money and a steady flow of sophisticated weapons, is almost an integration of the economies and military capabilities of the two countries. No other American Administration has ever employed the financial resources of the American people in the service of Israel's objectives to the extent that the current Administration has, on the basis of the American imperialist theory that Israel is a strategic capital. This Administration granted Israel \$900 million to help it develop the Levi jet fighter, which today is competing with American fighters in the American and international markets.

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Since 1984 all kinds of American financial assistance have been given to Israel as grants and outstanding debts have been cancelled. As from fiscal year 1985 American financial assistance has been given in a lump sum. Furthermore, the free zone agreement of May 1985 made the American market a fruitful outlet for Israeli goods, which compete with American products.

Congress promulgated a law guaranteeing that American assistance to Israel would not fall below the repayment by Israel of outstanding debts. This ceiling is \$1.1 billion. Although at \$6,200, Israel's per capita foreign debt is the highest in the world, Israel currently receives 17 per cent of overall American foreign assistance. In the fiscal years 1985 and 1986 Israel will receive more than \$7 billion. As for the current fiscal year, Israel has been granted financial assistance to the tune of \$2.6 billion as a grant, of which \$1.4 billion is earmarked for economic assistance and the rest for so-called defence, in addition to the sum of \$800 million as emergency assistance. It is estimated that American assistance to Israel will amount next year to \$4.5 billion. That means that the Israel's per capita share of this aid exceeds \$1,000, whereas the majority of the developing countries throughout the world have an average per capita income of at best \$400.

These figures show clearly that the American economy supports Israel in consolidating its aggression and occupation and rewards it for the use of force against the Arab States. All of this falls within the concept of the strategic alliance and is based on the fact that Israel is an asset to American imperialism.

The gravity of the situation in the Middle East is not due to anything new; it is the inevitable result of the development of the aggressive expansionist character of Israel. Since Israel's inception its aggressiveness has been growing with the expansion of its territory and its greed for Arab land. Once Zionism



(Mr. El-Fattal, Syrian Arab Republic)

found a foothold for the settlers in Arab Palestine in 1917 and once the settler colonialist racist State was established in 1948, it proceeded swiftly by means of violence, force and terrorism to displace the indigenous population, annex the land and seize Arab properties. Israel's record is replete with such acts. It waged wars of aggression against the Arabs, such as the 1948 war against the Palestinian people, the war of 1956 against Egypt, the aggression of 1967 against Syria, Jordan and Egypt, and the 1982 war against Lebanon, all as part of the plan to create Greater Israel.

Israel has never concealed its expansionist intentions although it pays lip-service to peace. For it, peace is merely a truce that allows it to assimilate the fruits of its continuous acts of aggression and to maintain the possibility of committing further acts of aggression in the name of religion, race or history, although it does not believe in religion and has no values or history, except the distorted history fabricated by the theorists of Zionism to give it a counterfeit birth certificate. The Zionist movement is simply a colonialist movement that was born with the inception of the European colonial expansionist movement. It is the other side of the coin, parallel in terms of development, ideology and tactics with the European expansion in the third world in the 19th century.

Israel, since its inception, although it has harped constantly on the word "peace", has rejected all efforts at genuine peace. It understands peace as the consolidation of the fait accompli it creates by force of arms after each war it wages, at which time it calls for peace on the basis of the spoils of the last war.

Like any expansionist, racist, settler colonialist entity, Israel plans and acts to crush the Arabs, dehumanize them and threaten their cultural and national existence. Force is Israel's optimum means and in that exclusivist, racist society

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constitutes the highest of the distorted, degraded Zionist values, which run counter to universal ethics and human values.

Zionism fabricated the myth of "God's chosen people" and "the promised land" to put Palestine and its surroundings on the international real-estate register as its property. The annexation of Palestine was simply designed to eliminate one of the most important aspects of the Christian and Islamic culture, since the exclusivist Jewish State must be wholly Jewish in temporal and secular terms. And the annexation of the Golan Heights was a prelude to further expansionist acts.

(Mr. El-Fattal, Syrian  
Arab Republic)

The more Israel calls for peace the more it expands at the expense of our land and people. Today we find Israel, having occupied the whole of Palestine and the Syrian Golan Heights, is still in parts of south Lebanon which it calls the "security belt" but which has become the "death belt" for the Israeli invaders and their lackeys. Therefore, the Middle East crisis is a conflict between a racist, factional, settler colonialist group and a Christian-Islamic-Arab culture of universal orientation which flows into the mainstream of universal culture.

History shows that the Arabs contributed to the building of that culture in the service of humanity. That conflict is therefore a fateful one, because it threatens all aspects of the Arab presence in all areas occupied by Israel, or those areas that it plans to occupy. It is a fateful conflict, because the Zionist dogma does not even acknowledge the existence of the Arabs. Regardless of their affiliations, parties and orientations, Israeli leaders never cease to claim that Israel had not occupied the West Bank, including Jerusalem, the Gaza Strip and the Golan Heights, but "liberated" them.

Since 1967 Israel has established 41 settlements in the Syrian Golan Heights on behalf of the so-called liberation, 172 settlements in the West Bank on behalf of liberation, and 19 settlements in the Gaza Strip in the name of liberation. Their liberation and the displacement of millions of persons from and into the occupied Arab territories are but war crimes under the rules of contemporary international law and the Fourth Geneva Convention which was codified and developed in the wake of the Second World War to prevent a repetition of the Nazi crimes being perpetrated today by Israel before us all.

The Israelis claim that the Arabs who defend their land, homes, properties and entity are terrorists and have imposed a state of emergency on the population to

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suppress the heroic resistance of the Arabs under occupation in defence of their rights. Naturally, the Israelis and the Western world forget that the right to resist the aggressor is an international human right acknowledged by all. He who does not resist occupation is doomed to extinction.

The European resistance against nazism was not terrorism but heroism the praise of which the world sings. As equal human beings, we cannot but regard the resistance against Israeli occupation as heroism and an epic written by young men and women sacrificing their lives to write a new Arab history. It behoves us to pay a tribute to their sacrifice and acts.

We find no difference between South Africa and Israel. Both have adopted a dogma based on the genocide of the indigenous population and the deprivation of their rights. The white settlers occupied fertile African land, plunder the natural resources and dismembered the country into bantustans in which they force the indigenous population to deprive them of citizenship. They have created large concentration camps with millions of persons and deprived them of equality, as though the only connection between them and their land is their services to the white minority.

There is absolutely not a single difference between South Africa and Israel. In South Africa the white settlers seize the land of the Africans, with the assistance of imperialism and colonialism, enslave or displace the population, and herd them into closed pockets. In Palestine there are alien settlers brought in to expel the Arabs and to annex and occupy their land. There is no difference between Israel and South Africa, since they both threaten and seek to extend hegemony over the surrounding States and serve world imperialism, which in turn serves them.

Pretoria occupies Namibia and maintains a military presence in a part of Angola. As for Israel, it extends from the coastal part of Palestine to the hills

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and now occupies the whole country; it has also extended into Syria and Lebanon. Both régimes justify their existence as based on culture and their acts as inspired by Divine will.

The relations between the régime of Pretoria and Tel Aviv are growing stronger, especially in the military field, since the two seek to develop numerous joint projects. One of the most recent examples is Israel's use of steel from South Africa to armourplate its tanks, in return for which South Africa obtained licence from Israel to manufacture Kfir aircraft. They also have a joint project to build submarines. What is even more dangerous than all that is the use of Namibian uranium in the development of Israel's military industry.

The nature of the Middle East conflict dictates that we, the Arabs, must increase our strength and reinforce our solidarity and unity to repel this expansionist invasion designed to establish Greater Israel from the Nile to the Euphrates. Today the Arabs face a vicious attack designed, first, to dismember them, prevent their unity and even their genuine solidarity. It is designed to prevent them from defending themselves against the expansionist Zionist enemy and stand up to its political and military designs and to strengthen Israeli capabilities in all fields to enable it to preserve its territorial gains and extend its hegemony over the entire region. But, despite the current Arab fragmentation and Israel's growing aggressive capability, the Arab people will not cease resisting - be it in Palestine, the Golan Heights or Lebanon.

The Palestinian people, supported by the Arab masses, confronted Israeli genocide in 1948. In 1967 Israel occupied the whole of Palestine, the Sinai and

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the Golan Heights, and felt that it was finally able to force the Arabs to submit once and for all and that it had become the ruler of the region. However, it soon ran into Palestinian resistance in the occupied Arab and Palestinian territories, as well as that of the population of the Syrian Golan Heights.

By joint Arab action, the 1973 war proved that Israel was not invincible and neither was its army as some had thought. Israel's defeat was imminent but for the imperialist intervention on its side, on the one hand, and the failure of the largest Arab country to act, on the other.

The Lebanese nationalist resistance which started with the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in June 1982, as well as the attendant foreign intervention, is now proving that it is possible to regain land and dignity when the people stand as one in the struggle against the aggressors.

Today no one fails to acknowledge that Israel and its allies have lost the war in Lebanon since they have been prevented from reaping the fruits of aggression of that war, one of which is the attempt to impose hegemony and submission on Lebanon.

The entire world today recognizes the Palestinian people's right to return to its homeland and exercise its right to self-determination, and establish an independent State on its national soil. It also calls for Israel's complete withdrawal after the serious changes brought about in the balance of forces by the glorious October war.

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Arab Republic)

Among these changes is the conviction of the majority of the international community that it is no longer possible to condone Israeli adventures, that there exists a real and dangerous conflict between the Arabs and Israel, that the Middle East conflict directly threatens peace and security throughout the region, and that that peace and security is vital to the peace and security of the world at large.

Unfortunately world imperialism was soon able to undermine Arab solidarity, which had been crystallized in positive changes and new facts after 1973. World imperialism used agents to defy the will of the Arab masses and to usurp their freedom, but they were able to stand up to expansionist aggression. Those agents joined in the plan of surrender.

The Camp David agreement was concluded at the expense of the dignity of the people of Egypt and of the right of the struggling Palestinian people and the Arab States, that believe in the unity of their nationality and destiny and in their ability to stand up to the aggressor and recover their rights.

However, Arab Syria stood up against the surrender deal, which it considered a move from the Arab camp to the Israeli camp.

Since then, out of solidarity, Syria has had to bear great burdens. It expressly states that a permanent and just peace is our requirement. It was on that basis that in 1982 in Pex we stood by the fraternal Arab States to reach a joint Arab peace plan based on unanimity. That plan is based on Israeli withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories and on recovery of the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people, foremost among which is the right to return and to exercise self-determination and establish their own independent, sovereign State on their national soil.

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We also supported the call for the convening of an international conference under the auspices of the United Nations in which all parties to the conflict would participate, including the super-Powers - the Soviet Union and the United States.

We again say that the international conference is for us a requirement. At the same time we firmly oppose all attempts to rule out or circumvent the international conference decided on by the General Assembly in its resolution 38/58 C of 13 December 1983.

As in the past, Syria unequivocally opposes partial and unilateral solutions. It believes that the Amman agreement signed on 11 February 1985 would liquidate the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, foremost among which is that people's right to establish its own independent State on its national soil. We reiterate what the Syrian Foreign Minister said on 1 October 1985 in the General Assembly general debate: that giving up that independent State renders the concept of self-determination meaningless and useless.

Among recent positive developments in the Arab arena in this respect was the issuance of a joint Syrian-Jordanian statement on 13 November 1985 on agreement on the following: first, the need to strengthen joint Arab work in different fields to bring about a lasting, comprehensive and just peace and to face up to Israeli aggression; secondly, the belief of both parties that the question of Palestine is the central Arab question, both rejecting partial and unilateral solutions and direct negotiations with Israel, and reiterating that just, comprehensive and permanent peace cannot be realized save through the convening of an international conference, under the auspices of the United Nations, with the participation of all all parties concerned, including the Soviet Union and the United States; and, thirdly, that political movement necessitates continued serious work to enhance the



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self-defence capacity of the Arab nation with a view to realizing their objective of liberating the land and recover rights.

The right to self-determination and to the establishment of an independent Palestinian State on Palestinian national soil constitutes the corner-stone of United Nations resolutions on the situation in the Middle East and the question of Palestine. It also provides the basis for the efforts of the non-aligned countries and the Non-Aligned Movement in pursuit of a just peace. The Luanda Conference and preceding conferences, especially the Non-Aligned Summit in New Delhi, reiterated this basis in several paragraphs of their final statements.

A permanent and just peace is not an abstract concept. We cannot allow the enemy and its allies to dictate conditions. We do not accept American attempts aimed at imposing surrender on us. Israel and the United States were not satisfied with rejecting the Fez concept; they also rejected the call to participate in the peace conference on the Middle East, contained in General Assembly resolution 38/58 C of 1983. The most important elements of that resolution, which was adopted by a majority of 124 to 4, with the United States and Israel against, are the guidelines in paragraphs 3 and 4, which call upon all parties to the Arab-Israeli conflict, the United States and the USSR and all other parties concerned to participate in the conference on an equal footing and with equal rights.

The American and Israeli rejection of every constructive initiative testifies to their persistence in pursuing a path that serves the aggression and self-interest of each and ruling out the constructive role of the Soviet Union and some other countries, especially the non-aligned countries, to achieve peace. It is also their aim to stifle United Nations resolutions relative to the question of Palestine and the role of the Secretary-General of the United Nations or any role for the Organization in that endeavour.

(Mr. El-Pattal, Syrian  
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Most important of all is the obliteration of the national Palestinian Arab identity. In his statement in Crystal City, Virginia, on 21 April 1985 Mr. Shultz confirmed the opposition of the United States to the international legitimacy represented in United Nations resolutions, in particular General Assembly resolution 38/58 C of 13 December 1983, on the need to establish a Palestinian State, as follows:

"We will not support the establishment of an independent Palestinian State in the West Bank and Gaza."

He also ruled out any role for the United Nations when he stated that

"The only path to justice, progress and peace in the Middle East is the path of direct negotiations."

The peace for which Washington is calling is but a new Camp David; it has been condemned by the General Assembly, the Non-Aligned Movement, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and Arab summit meetings. That peace would reward the aggressor given the strategic imbalance, the redressment of which would constitute a basic requirement to reach a permanent, just and lasting peace in the region.

(Mr. El-Fattal, Syrian Arab Republic)

But, in the light of surrender and unilateral action, does this peace not mean the obstruction of the role of the United Nations and the circumvention of its resolutions? Does it not mean a policy of forcing the Arabs to their knees and to threaten their rights in order to create a strategic American alliance on a wider scale against the people of Palestine, against Syria, Lebanon and the Arab people as a whole? The superior patriarchal view of the United States Administration, which pursues towards the Middle East a policy of considering the region as a backyard warehouse for American-Israeli interests, is compatible and consistent with the view of the Zionist lobby, which rules the leaders of Washington and the members of Congress. It also controls, through its policy of give-and-take, both parties at a given moment and on certain issues, be they domestic or international.

The Zionist lobby, which is working under the umbrella of the American-Israeli Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), clarified this synchronization of interests in the form of requests from the United States concerning the interests of Israel and requests from Israel concerning the interests of the United States. The list of priorities was something like "Duties and commitments". It was presented in a statement of that Committee on 21 April 1985, to include the following: first, to continue providing economic and military assistance from the United States to Israel on the basis of grants; secondly, to oppose any United States sales of advanced weapons to the Arab States which consider themselves in a state of war with Israel; thirdly, to work towards direct negotiations between Israel and the Arab States and to urge the normalization of diplomatic relations as well as trade, cultural and political relations between Israel and the Arab States; fourthly, to strengthen the framework of strategic co-operation and to continue the total military and political alliance between the United States and Israel; fifthly, to implement the establishment of the free-trade zone between the United States and

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Israel; and, finally, to move the United States Embassy to Jerusalem, the capital of Israel.

This new Zionist programme will control United States foreign policy in the foreseeable future. Hence we cannot imagine or conceive of any détente in the Middle East crisis and we see that self-reliance, solidarity and building a defence capacity are the only means of achieving the permanent and just peace for which we are all working.

We expect the General Assembly, which has supported our cause, to continue to support our legitimate struggle against Israeli occupation and expansion and to increase its support in this critical era of our history by taking the following steps: first, to reiterate and to recognize fully and totally the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, foremost among which is its right to return, to self-determination and to the establishment of an independent State on its soil; secondly, to call upon the Security Council to take the necessary measures that make it incumbent on Israel to withdraw unconditionally from all the Arab and Palestinian occupied territories in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions; thirdly, to confirm the call for the convening of an international conference on peace in the Middle East, for which the General Assembly, in its resolution 38/180 O called, and to urge all parties directly concerned in the conflict to participate in the conference under the auspices of the United Nations, including the United States and the Soviet Union, because the conference is the only internationally acceptable road by which to reach a just and permanent settlement of the conflict; fourthly, in the event of Israel's failure to heed these requests, which are internationally supported, to call upon the Security Council to impose sanctions under Chapter VII of the Charter, because Israel would have proven its persistence in defying the provisions of the Charter and its failure to abide by the purposes and objectives of the United Nations.

(Mr. El-Fattal, Syrian Arab Republic)

Arab rights are not a commodity for sale or exchange. We are confident that we want to resist occupation, however long it takes or whatever price it costs, and no matter how great the sacrifices. In our persistent and tireless pursuit of a just peace we will not give up our right, nor the rights of our Arab brothers. I would like to confirm that he who allies himself with Israel and provides it with all kinds of assistance obstructs the work for peace.

Syria wants a just and permanent peace. H.E. Hafez Al-Assad, the President, reiterated that when he said:

"We in Syria have raised the banner of peace for years. We worked for that end as much as far as we could in order to recover the territories occupied by Israel and to recover the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to self-determination and to the establishment of its independent State."

His Excellency the President described many attempts, made under different pretexts, as follows:

"These are attempt to undermine the Arabs, to weaken them and to make them surrender to the Israeli plans."

He also said:

"Israel does not want the international conference for two reasons: first, because it does not want to face the united Arabs and secondly because it does not want to surrender to limitations and guarantees resulting from such a conference because such guarantees might limit its expansionist freedom, which constitutes for Israel its very base. Expansion is the basis of the Israeli ideology."

Mr. MACIEL (Brazil): My delegation has each year renewed its expression of concern with regard to the continuous worsening of the situation in the Middle East, aggravated in recent years by the lack of concrete, practical measures to

(Mr. Maciel, Brazil)

deal with the problems. This seemingly endless succession of debates on the matter in our Organization has served for little but to accentuate the vivid contrast between the tragedy of human suffering in the Middle East and our inability to deal effectively with this problem.

In the course of 1985 the tragedy continued to unfold, and is best exemplified by the almost uninterrupted series of violent acts in Lebanon. My country enjoys very fruitful ties with Lebanon, ties which are stressed by the presence in Brazil of a great number of Lebanese and their descendants. For this reason we follow even more closely the brave struggle of the Lebanese people to restore independence, territorial integrity and sovereignty, an essential step in the resumption of that country's prosperity and traditional roles in regional and international affairs.

Last year, I had the opportunity to mention, during the debate on this question, the importance that Brazil attributed to the talks between Israel and Lebanon on the withdrawal of Israeli occupation forces from occupied Lebanese territories. It is thus with satisfaction that I recognize that progress was possible in this regard and should serve as a constructive example. It must be said, however, that not only Lebanon's future, but also the future of all countries in the region, depends on the strict observance of the principle of non-use of force in international relations by all parties.

(Mr. Maciel, Brazil)

This year the debate on the situation in the Middle East has also been marked by an encouraging note: the fact that new practical and concrete proposals related to many of the complex aspects of the crisis in the region have started to emerge. The international community has witnessed the long overdue resumption of the discussion of alternatives capable of leading to a just, comprehensive and lasting settlement in the Middle East. Moreover, my delegation notes that most of the proposed alternatives seem to take duly into account the essential elements for a lasting settlement, which are: first, complete withdrawal of all forces of occupation from the occupied Arab territories, in accordance with Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973); secondly, respect for the rights of the Palestinian people to return to Palestine, and recognition of their right to self-determination, independence and sovereignty; thirdly, participation by the Palestinian people, through the Palestine Liberation Organization, their sole and legitimate representative, in any negotiations regarding their future; and, fourthly, recognition of the right of all States in the region, including Israel, to exist within internationally recognized boundaries.

It is difficult for the international community to say how negotiations could be conducted. But it is our obligation to insist that they should be conducted, that there are enough grounds to put the process in motion if the will is present. If there is only one lesson to be drawn from the extensive destruction we have witnessed in the Middle East, it is that there must be a determination to explore new ways out of the situation, that there can be no excuse for the absence of negotiations. There are, obviously, important procedural questions which have substantive importance also, but we are confident that they can be solved by an honest attempt to conduct business on the basis of the assessment of the real priorities and national interests, unrestrained by worn-out formulas of a previous period.

(Mr. Maciel, Brazil)

It has been said that one of the main responsibilities of the statesman is to ask the right questions. In the case of the Middle East, all the questions seem to have been asked, and it is now time to obtain the answers.

It is my delegation's sincere hope that all parties from the region will spare no effort in exploring all alternatives, in negotiating with a minimum of preconditions and in showing flexibility and a spirit of compromise. The entire international community also has an obligation to support by all means at its disposal every bona fide effort that could lead to a positive outcome of the peace process in the Middle East.

Allow me to stress the importance of the role of the United Nations in the Middle East. Although at great cost, this Organization's work in the region, in particular in the peace-keeping and assistance fields, has been kept at a significant level and we believe has well served the parties, especially the populations of the region. Thus, my delegation views with concern any incidents which may hamper United Nations activities in the region; we reaffirm the need to respect fully and guarantee both the mandate and the operations of the Organization in the Middle East.

My delegation continues to view with appreciation the work of the Secretary-General on the Middle Eastern problems. We have confidence in his capacity to play an important role in the achievement of a peaceful settlement in the region.

Mr. GOLOB (Yugoslavia): The United Nations has been most directly involved in the quest for a political solution to the question of Palestine and to the Middle East crisis as a whole for almost 40 years. The principles and framework for a peaceful solution have long since been formulated, and have been repeatedly reaffirmed.



(Mr. Golob, Yugoslavia)

In the year of the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations, the developments in the Middle East have not taken a turn for the better. The situation continues to deteriorate owing to aggression and expansion by Israel. Moreover, there are attempts to circumvent and ignore the role of the United Nations. This is done in a bid to secure the aims, at the expense of independence, sovereignty and self-determination.

By the flagrant violation of the basic rights of the Palestinian people and of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of neighbouring countries - lately, even of those far away from its borders - Israel continues to threaten international peace and security.

In the Middle East there is a confrontation between the forces of aggression and domination, aided by foreign interference and influence, and those that are on the side of the inalienable right to self-determination and independence.

The annexation of foreign territories by force is inadmissible. Almost 18 years ago the Security Council adopted a resolution requesting Israel to withdraw from all the territories occupied after June 1967. The occupation of the West Bank, of the Gaza Strip, of Jerusalem, of the Syrian Golan Heights and of parts of Lebanon must be terminated, and the ruthless policy aimed at appropriating foreign land and property and at trampling upon the dignity and threatening the very survival of others must be cut short.

The international community is not reconciled, nor can it be, to the policy of faits accomplis, force, aggression and occupation.

It was established a long time ago that at the core of the crisis is a persistent violation of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, to national independence and to the establishment of its own State.

Repeated warnings have been made that developments in the Middle East reflect the general deterioration in international relations and that they may easily get

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out of control. Frequent recourse to naked force of arms, as well as the growing military presence and interference of non-regional factors and interests, increases tension in an ever-broader area. Security cannot be built on reliance on force, repression and occupation; neither can it be ensured by domination and expansion. All this emphasizes the need for greater efforts and new resolute steps aimed at reaching a comprehensive, just and lasting solution to this crisis. The General Assembly and, particularly, the Security Council should relentlessly pursue this goal.

The Movement of Non-Aligned Countries has for 25 years pointed to the need to solve the crisis on the basis of the resolutions and decisions of the United Nations. The principles that the non-aligned countries invoke in the quest for a solution are based on the United Nations Charter and the decisions of the most important organs of the international Organization. These principles encompass the right of peoples to decide freely on their own destiny as well as the right of each country to enjoy independence and security. Nobody can deny this right to the Palestinian people. It is encouraging that an overwhelming majority of countries continues to believe that the right of the Palestinian people should be upheld and that the annexation of foreign territories is inadmissible and cannot be condoned.

The Ministerial Conference in Luanda, Angola, in September this year, once again reiterated the view of the non-aligned countries that the convening of an international conference on the Middle East under the auspices of the United Nations, with the participation of all interested parties and the participation, on an equal footing, of the Palestine Liberation Organization as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, is the best framework for a comprehensive, just and lasting solution.\*

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\*Mr. Marinescu (Romania), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Golob, Yugoslavia)

We feel that no effort should be spared to ensure the convening of the international conference on the Middle East at the earliest possible date. That conference presents as the only opportunity to get out of the impasse in the Middle East crisis.

Attempts to eliminate the PLO as an independent factor in the solution of the crisis should be rejected. The PLO encompasses and symbolizes the aspirations of the entire Palestinian nation. The people, are resolved to regain their homeland and their place in the community of nations, and deserve our full and unhesitating support.

Finally, let me recall again that a just, comprehensive and lasting solution can be reached only on the basis of the withdrawal of Israel from all Palestinian and Arab territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem; the free exercise of the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, national identity, sovereignty and the establishment of its own State; the participation on an equal footing of the PLO, as the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, in all endeavours towards and negotiations on the peaceful settlement of the issue; and recognition of the right of all peoples and countries in the Middle East to independent and secure development within internationally recognized boundaries.

Mr. FISCHER (Austria): The General Assembly has been considering the situation in the Middle East for almost four decades, but the peoples of the region remain trapped in an unending cycle of confrontation and violence. Efforts to break that cycle and to initiate a genuine peace process have time and again been frustrated by mistrust and fear - the heritage of a tragic and bitter history.

This persistent failure to achieve a comprehensive settlement of the Middle East crisis is particularly serious in view of the high political, strategic and economic stakes involved. The region remains the most dangerous crisis area of the

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world. No other conflict poses a greater threat to international peace and security.

Austria follows the developments in the Middle East with profound concern. We note with some relief, however, that after years of stalemate positions have to some extent, evolved. The agreement between Jordan and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) of 11 February 1985 points, in our view, to the beginning of a genuine dialogue. Other recent initiatives, proposals and diplomatic contacts also indicate a greater degree of willingness to agree on the modalities of a peace process. The chances for negotiations seem to be better today than they have been for many years. In the present situation it is essential that these promising seeds are protected, nurtured and allowed to grow.

Events in past months have shown, however, how fragile this movement towards peace still is. The Israeli attack on the PLO headquarters in Tunis was a serious setback. Austria deplored and condemned that violation of the territorial integrity of Tunisia and of the principle of the non-use of force. Other recent terrorist acts also put a severe strain on the efforts to bring about peace in the Middle East.

At this crucial moment in the history of the Middle East conflict all sides must refrain from any action which could endanger the search for a negotiated settlement. Austria has taken note of the Cairo declaration of Chairman Arafat of 7 November 1985, in which the PLO renounced all military operations outside Israel. We believe, however, that in order to give peace a real chance all parties should renounce all violence, everywhere and without limitations.

We also believe that determined and courageous efforts are required to maintain the momentum and to remove the remaining obstacles preventing the start of negotiations. Austria has noted with satisfaction that a consensus seems to be

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emerging on the necessity of conducting the negotiations within an appropriate international framework. In this context, we support the idea to convene an international conference on peace in the Middle East.

Many ideas have been proposed for the substance of the peace process. While they vary in many respects, they all have a common core: the return of part of the former Mandated Territory of Palestine in exchange for peace and security for Israel. The translation of the simple equation, land for peace, into concrete policy is the key to a comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The Palestinian question is at the heart of the Middle East problem. A solution requires recognition of the national rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to its own State. Equally essential is acceptance by all Arab States and the PLO of Israel's right to exist within secure and recognized boundaries. Both sides have finally to come to terms with each other's existence and legitimate interests. Both sides must show their readiness for negotiations on an equitable and thus durable solution.

If the Arab-Israeli conflict has its roots in the denial of Palestinian rights, the PLO, as the representative of the Palestinian people, must participate in the peace process. Austria hopes that the PLO will soon regain its unity.

The inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by military force, a principle recalled by resolution 242 (1967), is a fundamental tenet of international law. Israeli withdrawal from the territories occupied since 1967 is therefore an essential element of a comprehensive settlement. Austria is deeply concerned about the deteriorating situation in the occupied territories. The continued settlement policy, the expropriation of land and the manifold repressive measures against the Arab population are grave violations of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War. They amount to

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creeping annexation of the territories and thus jeopardize the chances for a negotiated solution. Those policies have resulted in widespread frustration and despair among the Arab population. They have triggered a cycle of violence and repression which must not be allowed to continue. Austria appeals to Israel to change its course and, pending its withdrawal, conduct its policy in the occupied territories in accordance with international law and with full respect for the civil rights of the population. This would promote a climate more conducive to a process of negotiations which would finally lead to a peaceful solution of the Middle East conflict.

(Mr. Fischer, Austria)

Let me now turn to the situation in Lebanon, where the past year has been marked by efforts to achieve national reconciliation and to re-establish peace and security. The Israeli withdrawal from most of Lebanon's territory removed one obstacle to progress. Since then some results seem to have been achieved. Yet the suffering of the civilian population is by no means over. Factional violence and terrorism continue to ravage the country. A decade of civil war and the Israeli invasion have left deep wounds in the fabric of Lebanon. The situation of the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon remains a source of serious concern. The tragic fate of the Lebanese people evokes sorrow and sympathy in Austria. We shall continue our humanitarian relief work and we support all efforts to rebuild an independent, peaceful and prosperous Lebanon.

The Middle East has been at the centre of United Nations concern for 38 years. Beginning with General Assembly resolution 181 (II) of 1947 which called for the creation of two sovereign States in the former Palestine Mandate, the United Nations has in many ways influenced and shaped events in the Middle East. It has helped to negotiate armistice agreements; it has dispatched peace-keeping troops to the region; it has organized large-scale relief operations; and it has focused international attention on the conflict through its debates and the adoption of many resolutions. Through its Security Council it has developed formulas for peace which to this day remain the foundation of all constructive diplomatic initiatives.

However, in spite of all these efforts, a comprehensive solution to the Middle East crisis has remained elusive. The crisis has also demonstrated the limitations of this Organization. It has shown to a greater extent than any other regional conflict that the United Nations can be an effective instrument of peace only if all parties and all major Powers are willing to co-operate. Unfortunately, for almost four decades this co-operation has not been forthcoming.

(Mr. Fischer, Austria)

Just as the United Nations has influenced developments in the Middle East, so in turn has the Middle East conflict influenced the United Nations. Sometimes the Organization has risen to the challenge posed by this problem; sometimes it has not. The inability to achieve a lasting solution has certainly weakened the United Nations and diminished its prestige and effectiveness. The celebration of the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations is therefore also an occasion on which to renew our efforts to advance the process of peace in the Middle East. Austria is convinced that the United Nations, as the only world-wide forum open to all parties to the conflict and other States concerned, has an important role to play in such a process. After years of stagnation we now see a genuine opportunity for progress. It must not be lost.

Mr. MAUNA (Indonesia): During the course of this session of the General Assembly the international community has discussed numerous conflicts that continue to engulf many regions of the world. Some of them have been on the agenda for many years, while others are of more recent origin. None the less, a characteristic common to them all is that they demonstrate that resort to armed force in the settlement of disputes among States has not contributed and cannot contribute to a durable solution. Indeed, the use of force has only rendered them infinitely more difficult to resolve, thereby further endangering the maintenance of international peace and security.

Nowhere is that more apparent than in the Middle East, where the Arab-Israeli conflict poses one of the greatest threats to world peace. Indeed, during the past four decades the region has hardly known peace. Five wars have been fought in the Middle East resulting in untold suffering, death and destruction for all peoples in the region, and bringing the world to the borders of conflagration. Consequently the Organization has devoted more time and energy to that regional conflict than perhaps to any other. Yet despite scores of General Assembly and Security Council



(Mr. Mauna, Indonesia)

resolutions, despite the presence for many years of United Nations peace-keeping and observer forces in the region, despite the International Conference on the Question of Palestine held in 1983, and despite the determined efforts of the Secretary-General to facilitate negotiations under United Nations auspices, the situation in the Middle East remains one of the longest and most onerous potentially explosive crises since the founding of the United Nations.

In recent months alone the Security Council has met no less than three times to consider various aspects of the conflict, that is, in September on the situation in the occupied territories, in October on the complaint by Tunisia, and also as a result of the call by the non-aligned countries for the Council to deal comprehensively with all aspects of the Middle East conflict, including the question of Palestine. This Assembly has already taken up the question of Israeli policies and practices that affect the human rights of the population in the occupied territories and the question of Palestine.

The general consensus to emerge from all these meetings is that time and again despair and frustration about the lack of movement towards a solution of the protracted conflict has resulted in heightened tension and extreme action with tragic results. It is also beyond question that the basic reason for the impasse is Israel's policies and actions, which are designed to thwart any hope of a just and peaceful settlement. Indeed, as we are all aware, Israel has regularly flouted the decisions taken by this Organization, especially those of the Security Council. For decades the Middle East has experienced one crisis after another, brought on by Israeli transgressions of the United Nations Charter and the norms of civilized behaviour. By the proclamation of Jerusalem as its capital, the annexation of the Golan Heights, the establishment of an increasing number of settlements in the occupied territories, and the continued oppression and violation of the human rights of the Arab people in those territories, Israel has made the success of any meaningful negotiations exceedingly remote.

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This wholly intolerable situation is aggravated all the more by the Israeli régime's deliberate policy of attempting to destroy the national cohesion and consciousness of the Palestinian people and physically to annihilate their sole and legitimate representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).

A tragic and infamous example of Israel's aggressive and expansionist policies was its massive invasion of Lebanon three and a half years ago. The unparalleled magnitude of that flagrant aggression against its neighbour underscores the impunity with which Israel has sought to impose its designs on the region, in complete disregard of world censure. And today, Israeli forces continue to occupy sovereign Lebanese territory along their common border, on the pretext of a so-called security zone. The fact of the matter is, however, that Israel is using the zone as a staging area and a launching pad for armed aggression against the territorial integrity of Lebanon, as demonstrated by its incessant attacks; the most recent one, just two days ago, prompted the Government of Lebanon to lodge a complaint with the Security Council. Indonesia strongly condemns such dastardly acts and demands that Israel immediately and totally withdraw its forces to internationally recognized boundaries, in accordance with relevant General Assembly and Security Council resolutions.

Undoubtedly the most important international action to date in establishing guidelines for international efforts to resolve the Middle East conflict was the convening in 1983 of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine under the auspices of the United Nations. Clearly, the Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the Conference are considered to effect a real consensus of the international community. In that regard, the Conference unanimously called for the following: the attainment by the Palestinian people of its legitimate inalienable rights, including the right to return, the right to self-determination and the right to establish its own independent State in Palestine; the right of the

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PLO to participate on an equal footing with other parties in all efforts to settle the Middle East conflict; the need to secure Israeli withdrawal from the territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem; rejection of de facto situations created by Israel, such as its settlements policy in the occupied territories and its policies to alter the character and status of Jerusalem; the right of all States in the region to existence within secure and internationally recognized boundaries; and the convening of an international peace conference on the Middle East under the auspices of the United Nations. Subsequently, the thirty-eighth and thirty-ninth sessions of the General Assembly affirmed by overwhelming majorities those provisions of the 1983 Declaration and Programme of Action of the International Conference.

Although conditions for progress towards the convening of the peace conference, in the United Nations Secretary-General's own words, "are not met at the present time", the significance of international support for such a conference cannot be underestimated in the context of the contribution made by the United Nations to the definition of the basic principles for a settlement of the Middle East conflict and the Palestinian issue. Moreover, the international community fully supports the holding of an international peace conference with the participation of all parties to the Arab-Israeli conflict, including the PLO, as well as the United States and the USSR and other concerned States on an equal footing. Thus, undoubtedly, steady political and diplomatic efforts will continue to be required so that a peace conference can be convened. In this regard, it is imperative that Israel's principal supporters adopt a policy of working with the United Nations towards the holding of the peace conference because any viable solution will have to be a comprehensive one which takes the legitimate interests of all concerned into account. For it is specifically they which have the power and influence to compel Israel's participation in an international peace conference.

(Mr. Mauna, Indonesia)

While Indonesia is under no illusion that the objective of a peace conference could be easily attained, we also believe from a strictly rational viewpoint that the conference at this time offers the best opportunity for resolving all of the complex and interrelated aspects of the conflict, for the alternative may very well again be yet another exacerbation of tensions leading to a further, inexorable slide towards confrontation, with all its cataclysmic consequences not only for the region but the world as a whole.

Mr. AL-KAWARI (Qatar) (interpretation from Arabic): The question of Palestine is at the heart of what it was agreed should be called the problem of the Middle East. It is the root cause of all the painful conditions afflicting the region. In its resolution 39/146, the General Assembly reaffirmed its conviction that the question of Palestine is at the core of the dispute in the Middle East and there could be no lasting, just and comprehensive solution in the region if the Palestinian people is not allowed to exercise its inalienable legitimate rights, and if Israel does not withdraw from all the Palestinian territories and other occupied Arab territories.

As the problem remained unsolved, the situation in the Middle East has worsened. The 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon is clear evidence of the danger of ignoring the question of Palestine. That invasion brought in its wake human tragedies and bloody massacres that put humanity to shame. Under the strikes of the valiant national resistance, which has become a symbol of heroism and sacrifice, Israel withdrew from part of the territories it occupied, but its own forces and its puppet forces still occupy some of Lebanon. It continues its abhorrent acts of aggression daily against that pacific country, despite all the resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council, and despite the explicit condemnation by the international community of that invasion calling upon Israel to withdraw immediately to the international Lebanese border. The people of

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Lebanon is capable of imposing the second withdrawal as it did the first through its courageous resistance if the international community fails to fulfil its duty.

For 40 years, which is the duration of the Zionist occupation of Palestine, the racist authorities there have resorted to every conceivable form of repression and terrorism against the Palestinian people.

(Mr. Al-Kawari, Qatar)

It has carried out one massacre after another. It has detained citizens and confiscated land. It has organized armed gangs to attack citizens. It has assassinated the heads of municipalities. It has continued its policy of expansion and settlement. It has arrested citizens engaged in their daily tasks. It has closed schools, universities and hospitals. It has continued its attempts effectively to annex the occupied territories in order to integrate them into the Israeli economic entity as a source of cheap labour and a market for Israeli products.

As a result of the persistence of this problem, without a solution, Israel occupied the Syrian Golan Heights, filling it with illegal settlers and applying its own laws there. That constituted illegitimate annexation of the territory of others and a flagrant violation of all treaties and other international instruments governing temporary military occupation, which strictly prohibit the annexation of territory by force.

It will not be possible to solve the problem of the Middle East until Israel withdraws from all the occupied territories, including the Golan Heights and the Holy City of Jerusalem, which is uppermost in the heart of all Arabs and Moslems.

Israel has continued to commit acts of aggression. It bombarded the Iraqi nuclear reactor. Its military aircraft attacked Tunisian territory in an attempt to liquidate the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). That aggression makes clear the serious consequences that can flow from the prolongation of the current situation in the Middle East without a radical solution. The most serious consequence is the expansion of the radius of military operations to territories that are far away from the original scene of the conflict. That will constitute a still more serious threat to international peace and security, for the Israeli aggression will not be confined to the Eastern region but will extend to the Arab African North as well.

(Mr. Al-Kawari, Qatar)

Throughout the 40 years of the existence of the United Nations, its various bodies have adopted hundreds of resolutions putting on record the international community's position on this question. Those resolutions contain the fundamental elements for any just and lasting solution to the problem. They affirm that the Palestinian people, like other peoples, have the right to self-determination and to exercise sovereignty over their land, in accordance with the United Nations Charter, the principles of international law and the noble ideals and values for the fulfilment of which the United Nations was created.

By its disregard for the rights of the Palestinian people and the constant acts of aggression it has committed - in 1948, in 1956, in 1962 and in 1982 - Israel has erected a solid barrier to the solution of the Middle East problem. Thus, regrettably, we are faced with a complete dichotomy between resolutions and reality; it is as if we were living in a world of illusions.

The truth is that the aggression and its consequences are still with us, and there is a determination for the present situation to continue. The responsibility for this is not that of Israel alone; it must be shouldered to the same extent by those who give Israel unlimited support and provide it with the means of aggression by strengthening its economy and furnishing it with all kinds of weapons. The responsibility must be shouldered by those who prevent the Security Council from playing its role of solving questions and maintaining peace and security. This has created a serious crisis of credibility for the United Nations. Everyone recognizes the extent of that crisis and the serious consequences it has for the future of the international Organization.

The Arab party to the Middle East dispute has consistently called for an urgent peaceful solution. It has patiently endeavoured to achieve such a solution. It clearly and openly sets forth the just principles which in its view

(Mr. Al-Kawari, Qatar)

are the basis for the solution. What is more, it proposes methods of action which it believes are most likely to achieve a peaceful solution. But concern for a comprehensive, peaceful solution is confined to one party to the dispute. The other party has not responded in any way to the initiatives of the Arab party.

There are two reasons for Israel's insistence on avoiding a peaceful solution and disregarding the international community's will. The first is the aggressive nature of Israel and the Israeli philosophy based on constant expansion, on the maxim that Israel's borders are the farthest reaches of the land on which Israeli soldiers set foot. The second is the unqualified support - which increases parallel with the increase in Israeli aggression - provided Israel by some States Members of the United Nations.

My country shares the view that the best way to achieve a just and comprehensive settlement of this problem, which has lasted far too long, is the convening of an International Peace Conference on the Middle East under the auspices of the United Nations and with the participation of all parties concerned, including the PLO, the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, and the permanent members of the Security Council. It is high time to reach a solution that will guarantee all rights and provide for a comprehensive and just peace on the legitimate bases to which the world has agreed - that is, the return of all the occupied territories and the exercise by the Palestinian people of its right to self-determination and to establish a State on its own land, like all other peoples in the world.

Mr. NOGUCHI (Japan): Almost daily the newspapers carry reports of new outbreaks of violence in the Middle East, providing constant reminders of the complex problems in that volatile region.



(Mr. Noguchi, Japan)

We note with particular sadness that the beautiful country of Lebanon continues to be racked by a civil war that has been raging for more than a decade. The violence in Lebanon is destroying its lovely cities, tearing apart its society, and bringing unspeakable suffering to its people.

The Government of Japan continues to maintain that it is essential that an environment be created as soon as possible for the restoration of Lebanon's territorial integrity, independence and sovereignty. Although most Israeli forces withdrew earlier this year, it is our hope that the remaining forces will be withdrawn without further delay.

The most important element in restoring peace to Lebanon, in our view, is the achievement of national reconciliation. Japan is well aware that the parties concerned have indeed been making national reconciliation efforts for the past 10 years, and recently we witnessed renewed efforts in this regard. But so far they have not achieved the desired results, which only demonstrates how deeply rooted the divisions in Lebanese society are. It is therefore strongly hoped that the Lebanese people will redouble their efforts to achieve national unity. Japan calls on all the parties concerned to demonstrate flexibility, put aside their differences and co-ordinate sectarian interests in order to achieve their long-term common objective - that is, the restoration of peace to their land. I wish to state here that when peace and stability are restored, the Government of Japan intends to co-operate actively in Lebanon's national reconstruction efforts.

(Mr. Noguchi, Japan)

Elsewhere in the region - on land, in the air and at sea - increasing acts of terrorism have claimed the lives of innocent men, women and children and pose a threat to the international community as a whole. The futility of terrorist attacks has been amply demonstrated; they accomplish nothing. On the contrary, terrorist activities raise additional obstacles on the path to peace and stability. Those involved in terrorist activities should realize that their acts only discredit the cause they claim to represent and run counter to the goal they pretend to seek. The Government of Japan condemns these criminal acts, and calls upon all parties concerned to do their utmost to prevent them.

In that context, my Government strongly urges those who are holding hostages in Lebanon to free them unharmed, without further delay.

The situation in Lebanon, which is closely related to the Palestinian issue, underlines the urgent need to find a solution to the Middle East problem as a whole. I outlined Japan's position on the problem in the recent debate on the question of Palestine, as follows: first, peace in the Middle East should be just, lasting and comprehensive; secondly, such a peace should be achieved through the early and complete implementation of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and through the recognition of and respect for the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, including the right of self-determination under the United Nations Charter; thirdly, each and every path towards the achievement of such a peace should be explored, with careful consideration given to the legitimate security requirements of the countries in the region and to the aspirations of all the peoples in the region, including the Palestinian people; and fourthly, Japan is of the view that the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) represents the Palestinian people.

(Mr. Noguchi, Japan)

I wish to stress that, in Japan's view, in order to solve the question of Palestine it is essential that Israel and the PLO participate in the peace process. Moreover, Japan believes that both Israel and the Palestinian people must strive to dispel the shadow of mutual distrust and foster a will to coexist. Japan calls specifically upon the leaders of Israel to show flexibility and to take immediate steps to revise Israel's policy on settlements in the occupied Arab territories and its measures to change unilaterally the status of those territories, including the annexation of East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights.

Although the achievement of peace in the region is not yet in sight, the accord reached by King Hussein and Chairman Arafat last February, and the subsequent efforts by other parties concerned, provide us with a glimmer of hope. It is our fervent wish that those endeavours bear fruit and give new impetus to the peace process.

Peace in the Middle East can be achieved only through a process of negotiation. My Government believes that it is the responsibility of the international community to foster an environment that will facilitate the peace process. Japan is ready to co-operate with international efforts to that end.

An important aspect of the item under consideration is the ongoing and untiring efforts of the various United Nations peace-keeping operations in the region. The Government of Japan pays high tribute to the indispensable role being played in the area by the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) in southern Lebanon, by the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) in the Golan Heights, and by the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO), with observer groups in Egypt and Lebanon. Japan will continue to extend support to these international efforts, in the belief that they are helping to foster conditions in which the complex problems in the region can be resolved.

(Mr. Noguchi, Japan)

The Middle East, as the crossroads of three continents, has a rich history. It spawned glorious civilizations and have birth to three of the world's great religions. In their recent statements in this General Assembly Hall, the leaders of more than one of the countries concerned in the region acknowledged that their peoples, as children of Abraham, are, after all, brothers, and that they must find a way to live together in harmony.

It is my Government's fervent hope that the peoples of the Middle East, guided by the wisdom of their traditions, handed down through the ages, will soon be able to establish friendly relations among themselves.

Mr. DOS SANTOS (Mozambique): Some years ago, a people which had suffered oppression, degradation, humiliation and extermination gathered in a piece of land in the Middle East, and there founded a State under the auspices of the United Nations.

Israel as we know it today is a country inhabited by the survivors of the many centuries of persecution and extermination suffered by the Jewish people. But what is more important and more relevant to the issue under consideration today is the fact that the birth of that State is inextricably linked to the very existence of our Organization: unlike other Member States, Israel was established by the United Nations. Therefore, it is only fair to say that Israel owes its existence to the United Nations, to which, one would think, it would be grateful.

It is ironic, however, that 37 years later we should be sitting here and delivering condemnatory statements against Israel. Israel is even threatened with expulsion from this family of nations, the very family that gave comfort to its people when they needed it most.

What went wrong along the way?

Nothing can respond to this question with greater eloquence than the resolutions adopted each and every year on the situation in the Middle East.

(Mr. Dos Santos, Mozambique)

Nothing is as convincing as the numerous resolutions adopted by the Security Council on this issue, not to mention the statements in the General Assembly and the deliberations of the special sessions convened expressly to discuss the question of the Middle East.

What profoundly touches the feelings of my delegation - and, I believe, of other delegations as well - is the presence in this Hall of the delegation of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). The PLO is the voice of those who have no voice and no land in their own land. The PLO is the hope of the entire Palestinian people scattered throughout many parts of the globe. Each Palestinian carries deep in his or her heart the image of the land he or she was forced to leave in order to escape oppression, degradation and humiliation.

The truth of the matter is as simple as this: Israel has turned out to be an aggressive, expansionist and occupationist State in the region. It has occupied Palestinian territories and other Arab lands, including Jerusalem, since 1967. It has denied the Palestinian people its inalienable right to self-determination and national independence and to the establishment of a sovereign State in Palestine. Israel has not respected the United Nations Charter or the principles of international law.

(Mr. Dos Santos, Mozambique)

At issue is the dream of the establishment of a greater Israel, the fulfilment of which requires the removal of any obstacle at any cost and by whatever means are necessary. Any Palestinian, especially if he or she seeks to resist the occupation of his or her land, is an enemy and therefore a terrorist. Anyone branded as an enemy must be destroyed. Anyone in any manner associated with this enemy, be it by blood ties or otherwise, must also be destroyed. This is the establishment of guilt by association. Even houses are often found guilty by association, however remote the association may be, and therefore many times fall victim to the bulldozer or demolition charges.

At issue is the fact that Israel does not desire peace and is not able to thrive on it. Its establishment required violence, and its maintenance likewise demands the exercise of force in the most brutal manner and extreme form. It breathes violence, so it conjures up any excuses, however absurd, at any prospect, however, dim, of peace.

The demand that the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) should recognize Israel is a case in point. First of all, Israel is a Member of the United Nations and thus recognized by many countries, including permanent members of the Security Council. Were it not for its aggressive policies, many countries would not have been forced to sever their diplomatic relations and many more would have recognized it by now. Israel brands the PLO as a terrorist organization, and yet it demands that it be recognized by that terrorist organization. Of what value is that recognition, and what respectability would it confer on the recognized?

Does anyone think that a proposal to recognize the terrorist after the latter has recognized Israel first is in the making? No way. The offer proposes that after recognizing Israel the PLO should purely and simply commit hara-kiri, should drop dead.

(Mr. Dos Santos, Mozambique)

The PLO is being required selectively to accept Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), but Israel is not being required to accept the United Nations resolutions it has rejected. The PLO has now accepted all relevant United Nations resolutions, and yet that gesture has not been found satisfactory by those who have made the demands.

The PLO has been required to denounce and condemn terrorist acts, and it has repeatedly and unequivocally done so on more than one occasion; yet this has not been found acceptable.

An international peace conference on the Middle East is being shunned because some of the participating countries, we are told, do not maintain diplomatic relations with Israel, but we are not told that such recognition would remove any objection to the holding of the conference. As a consequence, the region is on fire. There is tension, war and instability.

That is what went wrong in the Middle East. Israel is responsible for the prevailing climate in the region. This is clear and true, even to the allies of Israel. They pretend to be blind simply because blindness in this particular case helps to protect their geostrategic and political interests.

What role should we play in this matter? Well, the United Nations has been involved in the search for a peaceful settlement of the problems of the Middle East and its root cause, namely, the Palestinian question, since its infancy. It has probably devoted more time and attention, more imagination and resources, to this issue than to any other international problem. It is to be regretted, however, that, despite all those endeavours, the prospects for peace remain very dim because of the lack of co-operation by Israel. Instead, Israel has stepped up its acts of aggression, not only against countries in the region but against other countries far afield.

(Mr. Dos Santos, Mozambique)

Just recently the Security Council was convened to consider yet another act of genocide perpetrated by the Zionist régime. This time the victim was Tunisia, a peace-loving country of our African family. That odious attack against Tunisia, a country with which Israel shares no common border, represents a new dimension in the whole chain of acts of aggression committed by Israel. That action constitutes a threat to international peace and security and yet another violation of the principles and objectives of the Charter of the United Nations and of international law.

Thus we are confronted with a glaring example of intransigence and arrogance on the part of Israel that should be met with appropriate action. At the end of the debate on this issue another resolution will be adopted. Once again Israel will be condemned for its aggressive policy. Once again we will demand that it immediately and unconditionally withdraw from Palestinian and Arab territories. But this is what we have been doing - so far with no encouraging results. Thus, more imagination is required of us.

Nevertheless, before we embark on such an exercise, my delegation is of the view that we should benefit from the intelligence and vision of the founders of our Organization, as embodied in the United Nations Charter. Let us exhaust all the possible channels offered by our Charter in our actions to restore peace in the Middle East and the world at large. The Charter contains specific provisions for dealing with such acts of aggression and breaches of the peace.

Coming as I do from southern Africa, I cannot help taking some time to draw similarities between the régime of Israel and that of apartheid South Africa. Israel is to the Middle East what the apartheid régime is to southern Africa. Both are equally barbarous, stubborn and bloodthirsty régimes. Both arrogate to themselves the right to kill Palestinians and Africans wherever their warmongering fancy may lead them. Both are isolated and condemned by the international community



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on account of their abominable policies. Aggression and genocide are the common denominators between the two régimes. Both régimes are actively engaged in the establishment, recruitment, training, financing and supplying of armed bandits with the aim of destabilizing neighbouring countries.

It is for those reasons that my delegation - as, indeed, the whole of the international community - is disturbed by the ever-growing collaboration between Israel and South Africa. The military co-operation between the two régimes, particularly in the nuclear field, poses a great danger to peace, not only in the regions concerned, but in others as well. It is therefore very appropriate that the General Assembly has devoted great attention to this issue. My delegation strongly condemns this collaboration between Israel and South Africa.

The position of my Government on the issue before us is well known. It is our strong belief that peace in the Middle East can only be achieved on the basis of recognition of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and to establish their own sovereign and independent State. Israel must withdraw from the occupied Palestinian and Arab territories and respect the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of States in the region, as well as their right to live in peace and freedom.

(Mr. Dos Santos, Mozambique)

We also believe that all peace initiatives, at either the regional or the international level, should be explored exhaustively, with a view to ending the Middle East crisis. Among those initiatives, the Arab Peace Plan won the support of the General Assembly and of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Another peace proposal on which my delegation has had the opportunity to express its view on previous occasions is the holding of an international conference on peace in the Middle East, called for by the General Assembly. At this point my delegation wishes to reiterate its support for that proposal. We are convinced that that conference would be one of the keys to a just, comprehensive and lasting solution to the Middle East crisis.

I wish to seize this opportunity to renew our strong support for and solidarity with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in their legitimate struggle. With regard to Lebanon, we call upon Israel to withdraw its troops from that country immediately and unconditionally and to respect fully Lebanon's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. In conclusion, we reiterate our strong appeal to Iran and Iraq to bring a swift end to the fratricidal war which has adversely affected world peace and security.

Mr. TROYANOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): It would be no exaggeration to say that among the areas of crisis in the world, the Middle East conflict has no equal in duration, intensity and in its destabilizing effect on both the regional and the world situation. For decades now, at times smouldering and at others erupting, the hotbed of war in the Middle East has claimed thousands upon thousands of lives, causing untold material and moral damage to all the States and peoples involved. Sparks from the Middle East conflagration have many times created a red-hot political atmosphere in the international situation, bringing the world to the brink of danger. For that

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reason the debates on the Middle East issues, in particular at this anniversary session of the General Assembly, should be an occasion for all of us to take a longer and harder look at the root causes of this continuing conflict and to identify the obstacles to its settlement.

That needs to be done also because the United Nations has consistently given priority in its work to the Middle East, and is still doing so. The Organization has adopted a number of useful decisions which, taken together, provide a solid basis for the search for a stable peace in the region with due regard for the legitimate interests of all the parties concerned, both the Arabs and Israel. As the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, noted in his recent report to the General Assembly on the Middle East, the United Nations

"has probably devoted to this issue more time and more attention than to any other international problem." (A/40/779, para. 34)

The conclusion in this report is particularly disturbing and alarming:

"The search for a peaceful settlement of the Middle East problem remains elusive and the situation in the Middle East continues to be unstable."  
(para. 32)

That conclusion, which has been echoed over so many years, must be a cause for serious concern among all those genuinely striving for true peace in the region.

For the overwhelming majority of States it is indisputable that the root cause of the continuing conflict in the Middle East is the aggressive and expansionist policy of the Israeli leaders, which comprises many elements. These include Israel's stubborn refusal to end its illegal occupation of Arab lands or to recognize the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, and in its annexation of East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights, as well as the large-scale colonization of the occupied territories, the repressive policies against the indigenous

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population, and systematic armed provocations against and encroachments on the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Arab States. All these actions have been repeatedly and deservedly condemned by the General Assembly, the Security Council and many other international forums.

Clearly there is no need to enumerate once again all the decisions that have been taken. Many delegations have already referred to them in some detail. Suffice it to say that as a whole those decisions represent a stern indictment of the Israeli occupiers, daily strengthened by fresh accusations.

Only two months ago the Security Council once again decisively condemned the raid by the Israeli Air Force on Tunis, describing it as an act of armed aggression against a Member State of the United Nations. Nevertheless, as we all know, many decisions of the United Nations on the Middle East and Palestine still remain to be implemented.

No one has any doubts about how Israel can so long continue its defiant violation of all the basic rules of international law and of inter-State relations, to disregard the Charter and United Nations decisions, and systematically ignore the will of the international community. First of all it is because Israel's senior "strategic partner", the United States, has lavishly financed the expansionist policies of the Israeli leaders and has injected multi-billion dollar grants to keep their overgrown military machine. In the second place, Tel Aviv has long been accustomed to expect that each time it finds itself in the dock, its overseas patron will hurry to the rescue to cover up its unsavoury deeds. The 10 vetoes by the United States Administration in the Security Council on the Middle East problem in less than five years are eloquent testimony as to why, to this day, Israel has not been taken to task.

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That is not all. The other aspect of the Washington and Tel Aviv policies is their destructive attitude towards a Middle East settlement. They are trying at all costs to split the Arab States and force upon the Arabs humiliating separate deals with the aim of securing in one way or another the fruits of the Israeli aggression. With a diligence worthy of a better cause, both partners still pretend that they are on the verge of producing some magical formula that could lead to peace in the Middle East without the withdrawal of the Israeli troops from all the occupied Arab territories or restoring the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. We must say that we have often seen many similar attempts in the past and that, predictably, all of them have failed.

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We would ask them: are there any real grounds for such a policy? The answer is that there are not, and there cannot be. As representatives know, Israel was established by a General Assembly decision, which envisaged the simultaneous creation in the former Mandated Territory of Palestine of an independent Arab State. All subsequent attempts to get around that question, to forget about the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and sovereignty, have only resulted in the already complex knot of the Middle East problem being tightened even more. The policy of separate deals has steadily lead us deeper and deeper into the Middle East labyrinth. Very few people today remember the promises of peace for all time which we heard from Camp David, because they have long since been drowned out by the rumble of Israeli tanks at the walls of Beirut. How much more blood must be spilled in the Middle East before everyone realizes the dire consequences of this continuing policy?

The question is directed primarily at the Israeli leaders, because it is above all they who should think of the future of their State and people. It is at the very least short-sighted and naive to believe today that a small country with a population of 4 million and limited resources can indefinitely keep up in a military race with so many neighbours. The guarantee of Israel's security lies not in its wasteful and fleeting military supremacy, but in the establishment of peaceful, good-neighbourly relations with the Arabs. To achieve that, it is necessary to show realism. Israel should renounce its excessive, unrealistic ambitions, stop seeing the whole Arab world as a defence perimeter, to use the words of a present member of the Israeli cabinet, and instead start genuine and constructive negotiations.

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The same question is also addressed to those who support and encourage Israel in its present policies. The United States recently proclaimed a desire to promote a settlement of regional conflicts in the world. If what is meant is not an arbitrary and selective approach to this question, and it is not an attempt to use a new pretext to interfere in the internal affairs of sovereign, independent States, such a desire can only be welcomed. However, to achieve it what is required is the renunciation of unconditional support for one of the parties in the Middle East conflict; abandonment of the idea that the region is one's own backyard; rejection of the policy of separate deals; and use of the machinery for a peaceful settlement which was proposed a long time ago - an international conference on the Middle East. The overwhelming majority of States supports the immediate convening of such a conference as the only realistic way to resolve the Middle East problem. Only a few representatives obstinately push the red button every time the General Assembly votes in favour of such a conference. By doing so, they clearly demonstrate who is in fact impeding the search for peace in the Middle East and who is obstructing a genuine Middle East settlement.

The Soviet Union has naturally been closely following developments in the Middle East, a region situated in the immediate vicinity of its borders. It has not only been following the situation, but has been behaving with a great sense of responsibility, in order that the situation does not go completely out of control. We are seeking, and will continue to seek, political approaches to a comprehensive, just settlement of the conflict. We are convinced that the process of such a settlement should be brought about in the interests of all the peoples of the region, including the Palestinian and Israeli peoples.

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As the Assembly knows, in July last year the Soviet Union made some far-reaching proposals for a Middle East settlement. They have gained widespread support throughout the world as a constructive, realistic programme of action, aimed at finding a fundamental, comprehensive solution to the problems of the Middle East.

The Soviet proposals are based on the now universally recognized principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war. That means that Israel should return to the Arabs all the lands it has occupied since 1967 - the Golan Heights, the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem and southern Lebanon. Those proposals are based on the premise that there can be no peace in the Middle East without the realization of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination and the creation of their own independent State. Those proposals are fair to all the parties to the Middle East conflict. They are aimed at genuinely guaranteeing the right of all the States of the region to a safe, independent existence, ending the state of war and establishing peace between them. It is also proposed that international guarantees be given in connection with the settlement and to which the Soviet Union is prepared to subscribe.

The Soviet Union also clearly sees a specific way of implementing those principles for a Middle East settlement, namely, by the convening of an international peace conference, with the participation of Israel, all the Arab States concerned and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. The Soviet Union and the United States should also take part in the conference since, because of circumstances, they play an important role in Middle East affairs. The participants in the conference should also include some other countries that are capable of making a positive contribution to resolving the problems of the Middle East.



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Apart from the question of participation, the Soviet proposals also cover other aspects of the practical organization and work of the conference. The Soviet position was clearly formulated recently in a statement by the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Mr. Gorbachev, who said:

"Why is the Soviet Union so insistently advocating the convening of an international conference on the Middle East? It is certainly not because we hope, as certain people allege, to get the upper hand at that conference or gain unilateral advantages. The Soviet Union has no such intentions.

"We favour the conference for the simple reason that it is virtually the only reasonable and effective way to put an end to the state of belligerence which has existed for so many years in the Middle East and establish lasting peace there, and to achieve it without further bloodshed, without intrigues or deals made by some people behind the backs of others, and taking due account of the legitimate interests of all the parties concerned, without any exception."

Naturally, the convening of an international conference on the Middle East is not an easy matter. It will require adequate preparatory work. The first requirement is, that the opponents of the conference change their approach. We need the close co-operation and solidarity of the Arab countries, because experience clearly shows that the Arabs are strong when united and weak when divided. The conference also needs broad international support. We hope that the Assembly will this year once again decisively support its convening.

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Without underestimating the difficulties in the way of a peaceful settlement in the Middle East, the Soviet delegation would like to stress that it is high time to combine our efforts and change the course of events in the Middle East, to put out the smouldering pocket of international tension and to guarantee the peace and security of all States and peoples of the region. The Soviet Union again calls on all those who will determine the movement for peace to demonstrate statesmanlike responsibility and realism and make their contribution towards the attainment of that noble goal.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): In conformity with resolution 3237 (XXIX) dated 20 November 1974, I call on the Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Mr. RAMLAWI (Palestine Liberation Organization) (interpretation from Arabic): The General Assembly is today considering the situation in the Middle East 18 years after it arose following the occupation by Israel of Palestinian land and other Arab territories in 1967. Ever since then the General Assembly has been dealing with this problem and has adopted numerous resolutions on the matter. In those resolutions the General Assembly has condemned Israel for its occupation of those territories and for its inhuman practices against the population. It has called for the unconditional withdrawal of Israel from the occupied territories in accordance with the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territories by force, one of the principles of the Charter concerning the maintenance of peace among peoples and States. Israel's response to the attempts by the international community and by the General Assembly has been to tighten its military hold on the occupied Arab territories by annexing Jerusalem and declaring it the capital of Israel; by enacting the Law of Administrative Detention, which had been enacted by the British Mandate forces in 1945, and by making laws which

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allowed the Israeli occupying forces to confiscate water, land and property, to resort to arbitrary detention; and to arbitrary murder of citizens, to practise the most appalling forms of torture in the detention camps and prisons and to unleash gangs to terrorize Palestinian citizens. The idea was to expel them beyond the borders and to apply Israeli laws and administration in the Syrian Golan Heights as a practical means of annexing them to Israel. Israel has established colonialist settlements in different parts of the occupied territories, and occupied more Arab territories in Lebanon during the Israeli invasion of that country in 1982.

Despite the repeated appeals by and resolutions of the international community for a cessation of these acts, which by their nature constitute a flagrant violation of the United Nations Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the 1949 Geneva Conventions, the 1907 Hague Convention and the norms of international law, Israel continues its policy of aggression and expansion, ignoring the will of the international community and persisting in imposing the policy of *fait accompli* by force, in total disregard of the consequences of that policy for international peace and security.

Since its foundation, the United Nations has never experienced the defiance of one of its Member States and its total disregard of the Organization's resolutions in the very shameful way that Israel has acted. It looks as though Israel has become a super-Power on this planet, a Power that cannot be deterred by any international law, will not abide by human values and cannot be restrained by the will of the international community.

The States of the world have no difficulty in recognizing the source of the power backing Israel, not only in its hostility towards the Palestinian and other Arab peoples but also towards the will of the international community represented by the United Nations and its resolutions. The unqualified support provided by the

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United States to Israel on the political, military and economic levels, which reached its climax with the strategic alliance between them and the granting to Israel of trade priorities in the United States as well as protecting it in international forums. All this - constitutes the decisive factor in Israel's continuation of its arrogant policy of aggression. This puts Israel and the United States on an equal footing when dealing with the United Nations, on the one hand, and in Israel's hostilities towards neighbouring Arab countries and to the Palestinian people on the other hand. United States support for Israel on the political level is a major stumbling block preventing the United Nations from imposing its will in the search for a just and comprehensive solution to the problem. Thus, the recommendations of the General Assembly are still vetoed by the United States in favour of Israel and its aggression and the United States prevents the Security Council from adopting any resolution that would put an end to the aggressive policy of Israel and end its rebellion against the decisions and resolutions of the United Nations.

The United States does this in order to paralyse the will of the international community, embodied in the resolutions of the General Assembly, on the question of the Middle East and the question of Palestine. It does so to enable it to impose American solutions, to serve its own interests in the region and to maintain Israel's occupation of the land.

In view of that Israeli-American aggression, the States of the world can understand the rejection by the United States and Israel of the proposal for the convening of an international peace conference in the Middle East, as called for by the General Assembly at its last two sessions and in the Declaration of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, held in Geneva in 1983. The United States and Israel have rejected that proposal. They have also rejected the

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Arab peace plan, known as the Fez plan, formulated by all the Arab countries, which was welcomed by all States in the world as a common Arab vision that would lead to the solution of the Middle East problem. The Arab countries and the PLO formulated the Fez peace plan and accepted the idea of convening an international peace conference in which all the parties to the conflict would participate, including the PLO, the Soviet Union, the United States of America and the other permanent members of the Security Council, under the auspices of the United Nations, in order to consider a just, comprehensive and lasting solution to the problem of Palestine in accordance with the resolutions of the United Nations, a solution that would guarantee the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and lay the foundations of comprehensive, just and lasting peace and stability in the region.

The Middle East problem, which started with the occupation by Israel of the Palestinian and Arab territories in 1967, would not have arisen had it not been for the question of Palestine, which has existed since the creation of the United Nations. The United Nations, and the General Assembly in particular, have attempted to solve this problem since 1947, when the General Assembly adopted its famous resolution 181 (II) providing for the establishment of two States in the land of Palestine, an Arab one and a Jewish one.

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The General Assembly has reaffirmed in numerous resolutions that the question of Palestine is at the core of the Middle East conflict. Without a just solution to the question of Palestine, which is at the core of the conflict, any solution to the question of the Middle East will be temporary and will not serve to restore peace. Such a solution would be like treating a chronic disease with pain-killers.

Israel does not want the core of the problem to be solved. It has diverted the world's attention by stressing marginal issues which have nothing to do with the central problem, thus keeping the Middle East prey to wars which could spread to other regions distant from the source of the dispute.

The PLO is the leader of the struggle waged by the Palestinian people by every means at its disposal, and attaches great importance to political struggle. The PLO has seized every opportunity in the context of international law and of efforts to achieve a just and comprehensive solution; it has always taken a serious-minded, just position in so doing. To further the achievement of a solution, it has accepted all United Nations resolutions relevant to the question of Palestine; it accepted the 1983 Geneva declarations and the recommendations of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine.

The PLO reiterates that it is necessary to convene an international conference on peace in the Middle East and rejects all other alternatives, such as an "international umbrella" or international guarantees as understood by the United States and Israel for any negotiations on the question of Palestine in lieu of an international conference. We reaffirm that attempting to circumvent international legitimacy is as dangerous as attempting to circumvent the achievement of the rights of the Palestinian people: both would aim at undermining the foundations of a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

In the context of all these developments, the Palestinian people will continue its struggle to regain its legitimate national rights and to restore just and

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comprehensive peace in the region. We reiterate our confidence and hope in the United Nations. We appeal to the General Assembly and the Security Council to adopt tangible, effective action to end Israel's inhuman, arbitrary practices and that country's continuous violation of human rights in the occupied territories.

Yesterday, the representative of Israel proposed a draft resolution, but said that he was not optimistic about its acceptance by the General Assembly. He said that

"such a ... resolution does not stand a chance here. Until it does, this debate is meaningless". (A/40/PV.104, p. 12)

That is Israel's attitude towards the United Nations and its General Assembly: if the General Assembly does not acquiesce in Israel's expansionist designs and aggressive policies towards other countries, the debate is "meaningless". That is how Israel treats the United Nations and the General Assembly. They must agree to its policies of aggression and expansion at the expense of other peoples, or their work is "meaningless". This gives us an idea of how it treats the Palestinian people, which has suffered under the yoke of colonialism for more than 18 years.

We have an idea too of the suffering of the Lebanese people, whose land has been invaded and destroyed by Israeli forces. Israel's invasion has caused the death of 70,000 civilians who had lived safely on their land and in their homes, and the aggression continues, as demonstrated by yesterday's act of aggression.

The Security Council and the General Assembly should take steps to impose sanctions against Israel for its failure to comply with United Nations resolutions, lest the situation deteriorate, the number of victims increase, and new wars break out. Thus, the international community must agree on a formula in line with its responsibility to guarantee peace and security. That will be possible only with an

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end to Israel's policy of expansion and aggression and its inhumane policies against civilians under occupation, and with a guarantee of the rights of the Palestinian people as recognized by the United Nations: the right of self-determination without outside interference and the right to regain its land and establish an independent State in its homeland under the leadership of the PLO.

The meeting rose at 1.40 p.m.