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Letter dated 9 January 1976 from the Permanent Representative of the
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the United Nations addressed
to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you a letter dated 9 January 1976 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Mr. A. A. Gromyko, which is a reply to your letter of 19 November 1975 1/ concerning General Assembly resolution 3375 (XXX).

I request you to arrange for this letter from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the USSR to be circulated as an official document of the General Assembly and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Y. MALIK
Permanent Representative of the
USSR to the United Nations

* For information concerning the new system of numbering General Assembly documents, see A/31/INF/1.

1/ In pursuance of operative paragraph 3 of General Assembly resolution 3375 (XXX), the Secretary-General, on 19 November 1975, sent identical letters to the Co-Chairmen of the Peace Conference on the Middle East, informing them of that resolution and asking them to keep him informed of any action that might be taken in relation to it.

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ANNEX

Letter dated 9 January 1976 from the Minister for Foreign
Affairs of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the
Secretary-General

I have studied your letter of 19 November 1975, in which you requested me to keep you informed of any action that may be taken in relation to the well-known General Assembly resolution 3375 (XXX) inviting the Palestine Liberation Organization to participate in the work of the Geneva Conference on the Middle East as well as in all other efforts for peace in the Middle East. In this regard I wish to inform you of the following.

The Soviet Union consistently advocates the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. It is making persistent efforts aimed at solving the main, cardinal questions involved in the political settlement of the Middle East problem - the complete withdrawal of the Israeli troops from all Arab territories occupied in 1967 and the realization of the legitimate national rights of the Arab people of Palestine, including its right to create its own State. Only when these questions are solved will it be possible to establish a truly lasting peace in the Middle East and to ensure stable conditions for a secure, independent existence and development of all the States of the region.

The Soviet Union believes that the only reliable way of reaching a fundamental settlement of the Middle East problem is through joint, collective efforts by all the parties directly concerned including, of course, the Arab people of Palestine represented by the Palestine Liberation Organization.

The urgent need for the participation of the Arab Palestinian people in the achievement of a Middle East settlement was reflected in the relevant decisions of the twenty-ninth session of the United Nations General Assembly, in which it was pointed out that the Arab Palestinian people is a principal party in the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East and that the Palestine Liberation Organization is the representative of the Arab people of Palestine. The thirtieth session of the United Nations General Assembly came out in favour of the participation of the Palestine Liberation Organization in all efforts, deliberations and conferences on the Middle East which are held under the auspices of the United Nations, on an equal footing with other parties. The practice of the Security Council and the General Assembly, which specially invited PLO to participate in their work, also shows the importance and necessity of PLO participation in the consideration of all aspects of a Middle East settlement.

Guided by the goal of attaining a comprehensive political settlement of the Middle East conflict, the Soviet Union on 9 November 1975 proposed to the United States that the USSR and the United States as Co-Chairmen of the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East should take a joint initiative aimed at the resumption

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of its work. We stressed that all the parties directly concerned, including PLO as the representative of the Arab people of Palestine, should from the very beginning participate in the Conference on an equal footing.

In this connexion it should be noted that the various ideas which have been advanced concerning the convening of some kind of unofficial preliminary meeting without the participation of the PLO representatives is nothing but an attempt to avoid implementing the decisions of the United Nations and to block the resumption of the work of the Geneva Conference. The Soviet Union continues to hold the firm view that the most appropriate forum for working out fundamental decisions on a Middle East settlement based on the relevant decisions of the United Nations Security Council and General Assembly is the international machinery specially created for this purpose - the Geneva Peace Conference. The Soviet Union resolutely advocates the speediest possible resumption of this Conference with the full and equal participation of the representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization. It will make every effort to ensure that the work of the Conference is successful and leads to the establishment of a lasting and just peace in the Middle East.

A. GROMYKO
Minister for Foreign Affairs
of the USSR