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**SECURITY COUNCIL
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TWENTY-SECOND YEAR

1370th MEETING: 25 OCTOBER 1967

NEW YORK

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NOTE

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The resolutions of the Security Council, numbered in accordance with a system adopted in 1964, are published in yearly volumes of *Resolutions and Decisions of the Security Council*. The new system, which has been applied retroactively to resolutions adopted before 1 January 1965, became fully operative on that date.

THIRTEEN HUNDRED AND SEVENTIETH MEETING

Held in New York on Wednesday, 25 October 1967, at 11 a.m.

President: Mr. Senjin TSURUOKA (Japan).

Present: The representatives of the following States: Argentina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Denmark, Ethiopia, France, India, Japan, Mali, Nigeria, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America.

Provisional agenda (S/Agenda/1370)

Adoption of the agenda.

The situation in the Middle East:

- (a) Letter dated 24 October 1967 from the Permanent Representative of the United Arab Republic addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/8207);
- (b) Letter dated 24 October 1967 from the Permanent Representative of Israel addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/8208).

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East:

- 1) Letter dated 24 October 1967 from the Permanent Representative of the United Arab Republic addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/8207);
- 2) Letter dated 24 October 1967 from the Permanent Representative of Israel addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/8208)

The PRESIDENT (*translated from French*): In accordance with the decision taken at the 1369th meeting, and with the consent of the Council, I propose to invite the representatives of Israel, the United Arab Republic, Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic to take places at the Council table to participate without vote in the discussion.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. G. Rafael (Israel), Mr. M. A. El Kony (United Arab Republic), Mr. A. M. 'ifa'i (Jordan) and Mr. A. Daoudy (Syria) took places at the Council table.

The PRESIDENT (*translated from French*): The first speaker on my list this morning is the representative of Nigeria on whom I now call.

Mr. ADEBO (Nigeria): I want to join with my colleagues who have already expressed themselves with a feeling of horror and dismay at recent events in the Middle

East. My country has from time to time stressed that unless something definitive is done about the whole Arab-Israel dispute in the Middle East the Security Council will continue to be faced with this kind of explosion.

4. During the recent general debate in plenary meeting of the General Assembly the Commissioner for External Affairs of Nigeria, reviewing the situation in the Middle East, said as follows:

"It is now generally agreed that no country should be allowed to achieve territorial gains by military conquest. It is also agreed that we must help create a political climate in the Middle East in which all the inhabitants in that area of the world will live hereafter in reasonable peace and security."¹

The impression of the Nigerian delegation following the conclusion of our general debate was that the best place in which to try to bring about a proper state of things in the Middle East was not on the floor of the General Assembly but in the Security Council. We were delighted that most other delegations, Member States of the United Nations, agreed with this view, including the principal parties to the Arab-Israel dispute.

5. Action began to be taken by members of the Security Council as long as two or three weeks ago. I mention this in order to reassure the general public of all the world that what has now happened is not a result of any lethargy on the part of the members of the Security Council but a misfortune for which those members cannot be held responsible. In the last few days meetings have been held every day under the guidance of our distinguished and very experienced President in order to try to work out something that will enable us to put a stop to this kind of development.

6. Two days ago it seemed to many of us that there might be an opening. We could not, in the circumstances of this case, have put it higher. Everybody began to work harder than ever to try to see what we could make of that opening. It was, therefore, with considerable distress that the Nigerian delegation, like other delegations in the General Assembly, learned that there had been an incident in the Middle East involving a naval vessel of the Israel Government.

7. We were waiting for reports about how this happened, where the ship was, why it was there, who fired on it, why it was fired on, and so on, because it seems to us that, after

¹ Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-second Session, Plenary Meetings, 1586th meeting, para. 137.

we had received all this information, this was a matter of which the Security Council ought to take notice. Then what happened? An action took place yesterday of a kind which the Security Council has time and again repudiated and condemned in this important forum—an action of a kind that looks like reprisal action. It may be that after investigations are completed those who are investigating will say that this was not the case, but if this action is what it looks to be it seems to me a very great pity indeed that it was taken by the Israel authorities. We say this with a due sense of responsibility because it is consistent with the position that Nigeria has consistently taken here.

8. If it is proved that the Israel ship was sunk in circumstances in which it should not have been attacked the Nigerian Government will join in condemning that action. And, if there is conclusive evidence that this action taken by the Israel authorities was a reprisal action in consequence of that earlier incident, we will also join in condemning that action.

9. We are very shocked by this latter action for a number of reasons, one of which is its severity. We have had occasion here to complain about the severity of reprisal action even when there has been provocation. We have had occasion here to remind our fellow-Members of the United Nations that whenever they suffer provocation from another Government their proper course is to come before the Security Council. Therefore, we feel that the Security Council has on its hands a very important matter that requires very deliberate consideration. It is not a matter from which we should shy away at all, because shying away from it will not solve the problem. This would once again postpone the problem to the detriment of the principal parties concerned and to the detriment of the world as a whole.

10. What again has distressed the Nigerian delegation is the fact that today we have received further reports that the action against the oil refineries of the United Arab Republic is still continuing. Again, it may be that when those who are supervising the cease-fire come to making their report they will say it is not so, but there is no doubt in the minds of any of us, least of all the Nigerian delegation, that a situation is fast developing in the Middle East which is explosive and full of potential consequences for the world.

11. I observe that the two major Powers members of the Security Council have put forward draft resolutions which they feel will enable us to dispose of this question. From the experience of all of us in this Council, we know that a partial resolution is a futile one. We all know that a resolution which does not carry the support of the generality of the membership of this Council does not have the effect that it should. And it seems to us that to proceed immediately to vote upon the draft resolutions before the Council at this stage would be a reckless proceeding. For that reason, with due deference to the representatives of the United States and the Soviet Union, who have put forward these draft resolutions [S/8213, S/8212], I would respectfully suggest to them that we should defer further consideration of these draft resolutions on the floor of the Security Council.

12. My reason for saying this is the same as that which motivated the permanent members of the Security Council when, about a week ago, they let it be known to the President that they would welcome any initiative which the non-permanent members of the Council might take to help to resolve the whole of the Middle East situation. I therefore appeal to them, here again, to allow an opportunity for consultation among the non-permanent members of the Security Council, which might enable us to produce a compromise draft resolution that would not damage the position of these two great Powers but would be aimed at bringing immediate relief to the area that we are discussing.

13. If we intended to stop there it would be again an irresponsible act, but the purpose of the Nigerian delegation includes the continuation of the efforts of the non-permanent members, immediately after, to see whether they could not, with even greater urgency, produce something for the consideration of the Council that would deal with the Arab-Israel question as a whole.

14. To summarize, my appeal to representatives at this table is this: that if you, Mr. President, will permit us to do so, we should have a short suspension of our proceedings this morning so that, in the light of the gravity of the situation in the Middle East, in the light of the reports which have filtered through to us this morning, and in the light of the facts which I have presented about the need to take a decision which would be effective, we could try to produce, during a suspension of about an hour, something to which we should all feel able to subscribe.

15. The PRESIDENT (*translated from French*): The Nigerian representative has proposed that the meeting be suspended for about an hour in order to allow the members of the Council to have consultations on the question now before us.

16. In accordance with rule 33 of the Security Council's provisional rules of procedure, such a motion should be decided without debate. Are there any objections to the Nigerian representative's proposal?

17. Mr. ADEBO (Nigeria): I apologize for intervening, but one of my colleagues has just invited my attention to the clock in this chamber which points to almost 12 o'clock. He wonders whether, even if we completed our task within an hour, the time remaining before members would wish to go to lunch would be sufficient for the purpose of deciding upon the result of our consultations. In these circumstances, if I may be permitted to amend my suggestion, I would recommend that we should meet again at any time following the lunch hour which you, Mr. President, might wish to designate.

18. The PRESIDENT (*translated from French*): The Nigerian representative has modified his original proposal and suggests that the meeting should be reconvened this afternoon. I would therefore suggest that we adjourn till 3 o'clock if the Council members agree. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the proposal is adopted.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 11.50 a.m.