



SECURITY COUNCIL
OFFICIAL RECORDS

MAR 25 1971

UN/SA COLLECTION

TWENTY-SECOND YEAR

1379th MEETING: 16 NOVEMBER 1967

NEW YORK

CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
Provisional agenda (S/Agenda/1379)	1
Adoption of the agenda	1
The situation in the Middle East: Letter dated 7 November 1967 from the Permanent Representative of the United Arab Republic addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/8226)	1

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THIRTEEN HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-NINTH MEETING

Held in New York on Thursday, 16 November 1967, at 4 p.m.

President: Mr. Mamadou Boucabar KANTE (Mali).

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/1379)

1. Adoption of the agenda.

2. The situation in the Middle East:

Letter dated 7 November 1967 from the Permanent Representative of the United Arab Republic addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/8226).

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East

Letter dated 7 November 1967 from the Permanent Representative of the United Arab Republic addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/8226)

1. The PRESIDENT (*translated from French*): In accordance with the decisions taken by the Council at its 1373rd meeting on 9 November and at its 1375th meeting on 13 November, I propose with the consent of the Council to invite the representatives of the United Arab Republic, Israel, Jordan and Syria to take places at the Council table and to participate without vote in the discussion.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Mahmoud Riad (United Arab Republic), Mr. A. Eban (Israel), Mr. A. M. Rifa'i (Jordan) and Mr. A. Daoudy (Syria) took places at the Council table.

2. The PRESIDENT (*translated from French*): The Council will now resume its examination of the item before it. The first speaker on my list is the representative of the United Kingdom, and I now call upon him.

3. Lord CARADON (United Kingdom): Now that our debate on the continuing crisis in the Middle East is nearing an end, and now that the views and aims and hopes of all concerned have been very ably and very forcibly presented to us and now that we have undertaken prolonged and thorough and anxious consultations, the time approaches

when we must decide together what should be done—never forgetting that what we do here must be judged by the test of effective action.

4. I have said before that so great is the need and so great, I believe, the measure of agreement between us that I cannot believe that we shall fail.

5. We have had the benefit last month and this of the leadership of our President for October, the Ambassador of Japan, and this month you, Sir, have greatly encouraged us to press on with our work to a successful conclusion.

6. I wish, too, to pay a special tribute to the work of the elected members of the Council. It is in our best traditions that when the permanent members of the Council hesitate or hold back it is the elected members who give us the lead and the initiative to overcome the dangers of deadlock. Most respectfully I express my admiration for the spirit of urgency and determination which they showed. Unanimously they pointed the way to progress when they reported that they were agreed on the necessity for the appointment of a United Nations special representative to go to the Middle East without further delay, when they told us that we should search for a solution in accordance with the principles of pacific settlement of disputes set out in Chapter VI of the United Nations Charter, and when they urged that we should all co-operate in stating as precisely as possible the principles in accordance with which this special representative should work.

7. Since they so reported, consultations have proceeded amongst the permanent members of the Council with the parties concerned and with all of us, permanent and elected members alike, making our contribution in co-operative and constructive effort. That is the way the Council should work, and we who are permanent representatives of our countries here at the United Nations have also greatly benefited by the presence in New York of the Foreign Ministers who have come to take part in our deliberations.

8. Nevertheless, in spite of the extensive common ground which has been cleared for advance, many of us greatly feared not long ago that we might not be able to formulate a resolution which would carry the full authority of the Council. We had before us two draft resolutions. We saw the merits of both. But we came to the alarming conclusion that there was a serious danger, because of the position taken up by one side or the other, that neither of these resolutions would carry general support, and neither would therefore lead to the effective action on the ground without which our labours would be in vain.

9. We consequently felt—and we were encouraged to realize how widely our feeling was shared—that the time had come to make a new effort. We wanted to make clear and defend the policy which we have advocated throughout. But much more important than that, we wanted to work with others to devise a resolution which would take full account of the essential interests of both sides as they have stated them, and which would also give the United Nations special representative the best hope of success in carrying out his mandate.

10. We went to both sides. We know and respect their intense feelings. We well realize that the future security and progress and happiness of their peoples depends on what we do here. It is entirely understandable, therefore, that to each point, indeed to each word, they should attach the utmost importance. Nevertheless, the representatives of both sides have been ready to consider with the greatest patience and care the representations which we have put to them. Perhaps we cannot hope that full agreement between both sides can be secured. It may be too early to hope for such a miracle. But there has been a readiness to go back over every word and phrase, and a readiness, too, to understand the needs and views of others.

11. In the long discussions with representatives of Arab countries, they have made it clear that they seek no more than justice. The central issue of the recovery and restoration of their territories is naturally uppermost in their minds. The issue of withdrawal to them is all-important and, of course, they seek a just settlement to end the long suffering of the refugees.

12. The Israelis, on the other hand, tell us that withdrawal must never be to insecurity and hostility. The action to be taken must be within the framework of a permanent peace and withdrawal must be to secure boundaries. There must be an end of the use and threat and fear of violence and hostility. I have said before that these aims do not conflict; they are equal. They are both essential. There must be adequate provision in any resolution to meet them both, since to attempt to pursue one without the other would be foolish and futile.

13. So we have been guided by all the earlier work which has been done and by the eloquent statements which have been made by both sides, and we have endeavoured, with the help of my brother members of the Council, to set out in a draft resolution what I believe will be recognized as a sincere and fair and honest attempt both to meet the just claims of both sides and also to discharge the high responsibility of this Council.

14. I cannot maintain that the resolution which we have by these means prepared will be accepted in full by either side. Naturally they will have their doubts and differences on wording and formulation and presentation and emphasis, but I trust that both sides, as well as all members of this Council, will recognize that the resolution which I now present to the Council is indeed balanced and just. The resolution, which I respectfully present to the Council, states:

“The Security Council,

“Expressing its continuing concern with the grave situation in the Middle East,

“Emphasizing the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war and the need to work for a just and lasting peace in which every State in the area can live in security,

“Emphasizing further that all Member States in their acceptance of the Charter of the United Nations have undertaken a commitment to act in accordance with Article 2 of the Charter,

“1. Affirms that the fulfilment of Charter principles requires the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East which should include the application of both the following principles:

- “(i) Withdrawal of Israel armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict;*
- “(ii) Termination of all claims or states of belligerency and respect for and acknowledgement of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every State in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force;*

“2. Affirms further the necessity

“(a) For guaranteeing freedom of navigation through international waterways in the area;

“(b) For achieving a just settlement of the refugee problem;

“(c) For guaranteeing the territorial inviolability and political independence of every State in the area, through measures including the establishment of demilitarized zones;

“3. Requests the Secretary-General to designate a Special Representative to proceed to the Middle East to establish and maintain contacts with the States concerned in order to promote agreement and assist efforts to achieve a peaceful and accepted settlement in accordance with the provisions and principles in this resolution;

“4. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the Security Council on the progress of the efforts of the Special Representative as soon as possible.” [S/8247.]

The draft resolution speaks for itself and I need not attempt any detailed explanation. We have all for many months past had these issues constantly uppermost in our minds.

15. All of us recognize that peace is the prize. None of us wishes a temporary truce or a superficial accommodation. We could never advocate a return to uneasy hostility. As I have said, my Government would never wish to be associated with any so-called settlement which was only a continuation of a false truce, and all of us without any hesitation at all can agree that we seek a settlement within the principles laid down in Article 2 of the Charter. So much for the preamble.

16. As to the first operative paragraph, and with due respect for fulfilment of Charter principles, we consider it essential that there should be applied the principles of both withdrawal and security, and we have no doubt that the words set out throughout that paragraph are perfectly clear.

17. As to the second operative paragraph, there is I believe no vestige of disagreement between us all that there must be a guarantee of freedom of navigation through international waterways. There must be a just settlement of the refugee problem. There must be a guarantee and adequate means to ensure the territorial inviolability and political independence of every State in the area.

18. As to the third operative paragraph, I have said before that I consider that the United Nations special representative should be free to decide himself the exact means and methods by which he pursues his endeavours in contact with the States concerned both to promote agreement and to assist efforts to achieve a peaceful and accepted and final settlement.

19. I believe indeed that the proposals which this draft resolution includes can and should command overwhelming support in the Council. I believe that they represent the best hope of achieving effective action in the Middle East. The provisions here set out are drawn from the work undertaken and the proposals put forward by other members of the Council. But they are much more than a collection of different ideas. They represent a balanced whole and, so I am convinced, a just finding.

20. In commending this draft resolution to the Council, I would say only two things further. First, again I would stress the need for urgent action. We have waited too long already. I am convinced that if we wait any longer the opportunity we now have, the last opportunity, will be lost. Surely we have now consulted enough and argued enough and spoken enough. I am convinced that if we do not reach our final decision this week, the opportunity of a just settlement may escape us forever.

21. Finally, again I would emphasize that the alternative to agreement is too terrible to contemplate. If we go back on the road of hate and suffering and conflict we shall look back to this week and realize what an opportunity we lost and what an appalling responsibility rests on us for our failure—failure to enable all the peoples of the countries concerned to turn away from death and destruction and start out on a new era of peace and justice.

22. I dearly hope that we shall rise to the opportunity now before us, and I ask that all should most urgently and carefully consider the proposals which I respectfully submit.

23. The PRESIDENT (*translated from French*): The next speaker on my list is the representative of the United Arab Republic, and I now call upon him.

24. Mr. Mahmoud RIAD (United Arab Republic): At the present stage of our deliberations and in the light of what has been stated by some members of the Council, I consider it imperative that I once again clarify the position of the United Arab Republic.

25. The Security Council is considering the situation which has resulted from the aggression committed by Israel on 5 June 1967 against the United Arab Republic, Jordan and Syria. The aggressive Israel forces continue to occupy territories of Syria, Jordan and the United Arab Republic and territories under United Arab Republic administration. The duty of the Security Council in accordance with the Charter, as well as with the various decisions previously adopted by this Organization, is very clear, that is, to secure the withdrawal of the Israel forces from all the territories which they have occupied after 4 June 1967. Our position on this question is absolutely firm. We have emphasized it throughout all the informal consultations which have taken place and we have stated it in no vague or ambiguous terms in the deliberations of the Security Council and the General Assembly. Under no circumstances will the United Arab Republic compromise on this point, nor, in our judgement, should the Security Council. An aggression has taken place against the Charter, and therefore the consequences of that aggression have to be fully eliminated in accordance with the Charter.

26. During the private consultations which have taken place, we have willingly discussed all formulas and all drafts. We have never refused to discuss in these endeavours any idea which was presented to us, but we made our position very clear on the question of the withdrawal of the Israel forces. The withdrawal of those forces from the territories occupied by them is a matter prescribed by every essential rule of the Charter.

27. The Security Council is aware of its duties and responsibilities as prescribed by the Charter. On our part, we shall never accept aggression; indeed, no one should expect us to.

28. I have outlined the position of my country in clear terms to the Council. That position is in full conformity with every single norm and rule governing international relations. We stand by our position and, equally, we ask every member of the Security Council to stand by the rules of the Charter, the requirements of peace, and the essentials of justice.

29. The PRESIDENT (*translated from French*): The next speaker on my list is the representative of Israel, and I now call upon him.

30. Mr. EBAN (Israel): In the light of what we have heard this afternoon, I wish briefly to restate the general principles of Israel's policy.

31. For nineteen years, Israel has been the victim of constant hostility, belligerency and aggression, by Governments which have always regarded themselves as being in a state of war with Israel. It is internationally known and recognized that Israel's resistance last June was not aggression, but resistance to aggression; and we reject every attempt to portray Israel's decision to survive as aggression.

32. Our policy is that we shall maintain and respect the cease-fire situation until it is replaced by peace treaties ending the state of war, determining the agreed national frontiers of States, and ensuring a stable and mutually

guaranteed security. We cannot return to the shattered armistice régime or to the fragile demarcation lines, or to any system of relations other than permanent, contractually binding peace.

33. We agree with those who have said, in the General Assembly and elsewhere, that agreement on secure and recognized boundaries is absolutely essential to a just and lasting peace; and we believe that any constructive resolution should emphasize the duty of the States themselves, the States of the Middle East, to work out the conditions of their own peace in direct negotiation.

34. It is in the light of this policy that we have examined and will examine and analyse any draft or text that has been or is being put before us.

35. The PRESIDENT (*translated from French*): As the list of speakers is now exhausted and no delegation has asked to speak, I should like to address the Council as the representative of MALI.

36. My Indian and Nigerian colleagues have introduced, on behalf of our three delegations, a draft resolution dated 7 November 1967 [S/8227]. Both of them have described ably and sincerely the true reasons for our actions. I therefore do not propose to repeat the highly pertinent arguments they have adduced. Nor do I wish to stir up again here the strong emotions which have attended every discussion on this crisis, whether in the Security Council or in the General Assembly.

37. I should like merely to bring to your attention a few points concerning the responsibilities we bear in the face of the serious situation in the Middle East today. I should like to keep strictly within this context in considering the situation which is perturbing us today.

38. This crisis is unquestionably the most serious that has confronted the United Nations in the last ten years, and we are thus facing a formidable test. If we are to succeed in finding a solution, we must be guided not by partiality and passion, but solely by a spirit of justice and equity. Peace is not a stock exchange asset. It cannot and must not be negotiated as such.

39. Five months have now elapsed since war once again swept over the Middle East, bringing ruin and desolation in its train. Since then, the Israel armed forces have been occupying vast areas of the territory of other States, in violation of the Charter. This is a case without precedent in the annals of the United Nations. Never, before this conflict, has the Organization been placed in a position where it was incapable of following up the cease-fire orders with an order for the withdrawal of troops to their original positions.

40. Above and beyond the perpetuation of this situation in the Middle East looms the spectre of a greater danger: that of the incapacity of the United Nations to play its role, i.e. to ensure the restoration and maintenance of peace in justice and equity. While we do not wish to be over-pessimistic, we must nevertheless recognize that we shall present a sorry spectacle to the world if we do not succeed in settling this crisis.

41. We must at all cost relinquish the illusion that time can cure all ills. These twenty years of Palestine's history, marked by constant crises and convulsions, is adequate proof of the folly of such a hope.

42. The responsibilities of the Council are quite clearly defined by the Charter itself. The safeguarding of peace and the application of the law in justice and equity are the sole principles which must guide us in carrying out our difficult mission. It is in the light of these considerations, to the exclusion of all others, that we must tackle the serious and difficult problems presented by Israel's aggression.

43. The immediate stumbling block in the crisis is the withdrawal of the Israel forces from the territories of the United Arab Republic, Jordan and Syria which they occupied following the aggression of 5 June 1967. Their withdrawal is a prerequisite for any political solution to the crisis. The first task of the Council is therefore to secure, in application of the provisions of the Charter, the withdrawal of the Israel forces to the positions they held before the aggression.

44. Despite the differences of opinion which have emerged in the course of the debates on this item, both in the General Assembly and in the Security Council, the inviolability of the national territory of States, which is one of the fundamental principles of the Charter, has been reaffirmed by almost the entire membership of the United Nations. That is the feeling which has emerged more clearly than any other during the present session of the General Assembly. It would therefore be a grave mistake to link the withdrawal of the Israel troops with any other element of the Middle East crisis, if only because of the awkward precedent it would set. The fact that neither the General Assembly nor the Security Council has so far succeeded in giving effect to this minimum requirement—the withdrawal of the Israel forces—creates a situation fraught with serious consequences for the members of the international community.

45. It is as a result of a sober assessment of the threat to peace inherent in the dilemma facing the United Nations in its search for a just and equitable solution to the Middle East crisis that the sponsors of draft resolution S/8227 have ventured a last effort at conciliation. As you may imagine, this was not achieved without painstaking negotiations and concessions on all sides. You will note yourselves the similarity between the draft resolution before you today and the Latin American resolution which received the support of a large number of delegations at the fifth emergency special session [A/L.523/Rev.1]. You will understand our surprise at seeing it rejected in advance by those same delegations which a few months ago welcomed the contents of the Latin American draft resolution as constructive and acceptable.

46. Our draft resolution does not pretend to be anything miraculous, but it has at least the merit of approaching the problem objectively and impartially and indicating a course of action calculated to bring about peace in the Middle East.

47. There is another point of agreement which likewise cannot be denied in view of the clear and unambiguous way

in which it has been expressed in the debates of recent months, namely the necessity to do universal justice to the Arab people of Palestine. The wretched treatment meted out to this people over the last twenty years is the real source of the malady which has been ravaging the Middle East ever since the implementation of the plan for the partition of Palestine. The forcible expulsion of millions of human beings from their homes and homeland and the wholesale privations suffered by the Palestine Arabs as victims of a plan conceived without their participation are acts which provoke in every human being reactions as natural as that which prompts men to seek to return to their homeland, their home, their lands and the soil where their ancestors lie.

48. In his recent analysis of the international political situation, the Secretary-General very rightly recalled, as a perennial necessity, the natural right of every human being, wherever he may be, to live in his homeland and to establish a home and build a future there. It is precisely the denial of this sacred right so far to the Arab people of Palestine that has been basically responsible for the episodes of violence upon violence which have engendered the law of "an eye for an eye" and led to the state of belligerency that has prevailed in the Middle East for the last twenty years.

49. If the Europe of a past era could find no better way of saving its conscience for the genocide perpetrated against the Jewish people in the course of history than by establishing a Jewish national home in Palestine, thus fulfilling the dreams of people like Theodor Herzl, we today find it intolerable that the bloodshed and suffering of that people should be paid for by reducing millions of other human beings to want, ruin and misery.

50. If, therefore, we wish to break the vicious circle of reprisals and counter-reprisals in the Middle East, we must start by finding a political and humane solution for the plight of the Arab refugees, which remains at the heart of the Middle East drama. The future of peace in the region will depend on the redress of that wrong.

51. The third problem which requires an urgent solution on our part is, surely, the question of navigation in international waterways. The delegation of Mali considers that freedom of navigation through the international waterways in the region should be extended to all States, in accordance with international agreements and conventions.

52. These are the prior conditions which must be fulfilled before there can be peace in the Middle East—not peace dictated by armed force, but genuine peace, to which all States in the region must subscribe and which will guarantee each one of them the right to live in complete security, safe from threats and acts of war, in respect for sovereignty, political independence and territorial integrity.

53. That is the sole aim of the draft resolution which has been submitted to you by India, Nigeria and Mali: peace in the Middle East, the peace we are responsible to the international community for maintaining.

54. As I said at the beginning of my statement, I feel that in view of the eloquent explanations given by my colleagues from India and Nigeria there is no need for me to comment further on the provisions of this draft resolution. I shall merely add that in drafting the text we were guided solely by a desire for peace and justice.

55. These are the views which my delegation felt it should put before the Council for consideration, as a contribution to the search for a solution to this grave crisis in the Middle East. Although it is a sensitive and complex problem, it is not beyond our capacities or our resources to solve it. If we are to achieve that end, however, all parties, including those directly involved, must sacrifice their susceptibilities, their pride and their resentment to the cause of peace.

56. Neither Israel nor the Arabs, still less the international community, have any interest in perpetuating the present situation. Let us therefore pool our resources and try to put out this dangerous fire which threatens to set the whole world ablaze.

57. We have no right to let the international community down. The efforts to reach agreement made by all the members of the Security Council in recent weeks indicate clearly the high degree of awareness in all quarters of the historic responsibility we bear, for there is no more formidable task than settling the problems of peace and war between nations.

58. Speaking now as PRESIDENT, I call upon the representative of Canada on a point of order.

59. Mr. IGNATIEFF (Canada): On a point of order, I should like to draw attention to the fact that a new draft resolution has been introduced this afternoon by the United Kingdom representative [S/8247], and that the situation which we now face, with three draft resolutions before us, requires very careful consideration by all members of the Council. In the circumstances, I believe that a reasonable period should be allowed for consultations, but, as has been said by many around this table, at the same time there should be no undue delay in our work. I would therefore propose, in order to allow time for consultations and for delegations, if necessary, to seek further instructions, that the Council should adjourn until tomorrow, Friday, November 17, at 3.30 p.m. I make this motion in accordance with sub-paragraph (3) of rule 33 of our provisional rules of procedure.

60. The PRESIDENT (*translated from French*): The representative of Canada proposes that our next meeting on the situation in the Middle East should be held tomorrow, Friday, at 3.30 p.m. If I hear no objection, I shall take it as agreed.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 5.10 p.m.

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