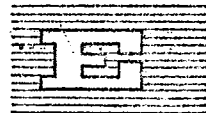


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COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Thirty-seventh session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 1589th MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Friday, 6 February 1981, at 10 a.m.



Chairman:

Mr. CALERO RODRIGUES

(Brazil)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

QUESTION OF THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES, INCLUDING PALESTINE (agenda item 4) (continued) (E/CN.4/1418 and Add.1; E/CN.4/1422; E/CN.4/1423; E/CN.4/1456; A/35/13; A/35/35; A/35/227; A/35/425; A/35/438; A/35/473; A/35/533; A/35/563; A/35/586)

THE RIGHT OF PEOPLES TO SELF-DETERMINATION AND ITS APPLICATION TO PEOPLES UNDER COLONIAL OR ALIEN DOMINATION OR FOREIGN OCCUPATION (agenda item 9) (continued) (E/CN.4/1432; E/CN.4/1451; A/RES/35/35 A and B)

1. Mr. VRHUNEC (Yugoslavia) said that the right of peoples to self-determination was one of the basic principles of contemporary international relations and that its consistent flouting in various parts of the world, including the Middle East, was a proper concern of the Commission. The General Assembly itself had recently reaffirmed that the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and national independence was central to the Middle East crisis. No peace or security could be achieved in the region until that right was exercised.
2. Unfortunately, since the Commission's previous session, the situation in the Middle East had deteriorated. Israel continued to ignore all the relevant decisions of the United Nations and to reinforce its occupation and annexation of Arab territories. Its methods included terror, mass arrests, detention, torture, collective punishment and intimidation, expropriation of property, the establishment of illegal settlements, exploitation of natural resources and plundering of the cultural and historic heritage - all in a deliberate attempt to modify the geographical, ethnic, economic, cultural and religious character of the area. Such brazen violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms not only threatened peace and stability; it was also a denial of such fundamental principles of international relations as the right to self-determination, the right of States to live in security, the prohibition of acquisition of territory by force and the peaceful settlement of disputes, respect for which constituted the only proper framework for a just, lasting and comprehensive settlement.
3. The Palestinian people, led by its sole legitimate representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), was gaining support in its struggle for self-determination and for the establishment of a Palestinian State, and the time had come for Israel to understand that it could not impose solutions against the will of the Palestinian people or achieve its own security by trying to do so. The crisis could best be settled within the framework of the United Nations. A solution could be achieved only by eliminating all the consequences of aggression, which meant that Israel must withdraw from all Arab territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem; that the Palestinian people must realize its inalienable right to self-determination and independence, including the right to establish its own State and the right to return to Palestine; that PLO must be recognized as the sole representative of the Palestinian people, with a right to participate in all negotiations relating to the Palestine problem; and that the right of all the States in the Middle East region to security and free development based on equality and mutual respect must be acknowledged. Those conditions could be fulfilled only through a comprehensive approach based on United Nations decisions and with the full participation of all the parties concerned. Such an approach would be the most effective way to restore and ensure full respect for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of the Palestinian people.

4. Mr. ADENIJI (Nigeria) said that the continuing gross violation by Israel of fundamental human rights in the occupied Arab territories should be a cause for grave concern to all members of the Commission because, apart from its political implications, it also revealed a persistent pattern of disregard of recognized international law. While it was not within the Commission's power to arrive at a political solution, it certainly had a duty to try to mitigate violations of human rights.

5. It was unfortunate that Israel's response to all efforts in that direction was unsatisfactory in every respect. Central to all of Israel's violations of fundamental human rights in the area was the very fact of its continuing military occupation, and the longer that occupation continued the longer the people of Palestine would use every means at its disposal to achieve its inalienable right to self-determination. Instead of working towards an acceptable solution, Israel had intensified its brutal methods - which included expropriation of land, collective punishment and reprisals, intimidation, torture and expulsions - in an attempt to break the spirit of the Palestinian people and to change the legal status, geographic nature and demographic composition of the territories so as to make their integration into Israel a fait accompli. Israel's total disregard of international law as well as the resolutions and decisions of the United Nations had been made even more apparent by its illegal annexation of Jerusalem. The Commission must therefore make it clear to Israel that its policy was in violation of the fourth Geneva Convention and unacceptable to the international community, that it must withdraw completely from the areas seized in 1967 and that it must facilitate the return of the dispossessed Palestinians to their homes and permit them to exercise their right to self-determination. Israel had powerful friends who could exert the necessary pressure on it, and his delegation hoped that they would assume their responsibility so as to ensure that legitimate international decisions were not treated as scraps of paper by the Israeli authorities.

6. Mr. AHMAD (Pakistan) said that his delegation welcomed the Commission's decision to give urgent consideration to the question of Palestine and the occupied Arab territories and hoped that its efforts would contribute to a just settlement of the conflict.

7. Pakistan had warned as far back as 1948 that the creation of Israel would drive a stake into the heart of the Holy Land. The partition of Palestine and the consequent denial of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination had inevitably resulted in continuing Israeli aggression and occupation, and represented not only a human tragedy for the Palestinian people but also a persistent threat to world peace and security.

8. It was clear to any objective observer that Israel's ultimate aim was territorial expansion and the establishment of a Greater Israel. Israeli leaders had made no secret of that ambition and all their actions in the territories - including the establishment of illegal settlements, expropriation, exploitation of natural and human resources, intimidation and terror, in defiance of the international community and international law - clearly pointed in that direction.

9. It was unfortunate that Israel's supporters, instead of facing the facts, had attempted to reach a partial agreement which addressed itself to everything but the core of the problem, namely, the restitution of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to establish a State of its own. That

attempt to construct a peace without justice had only emboldened Israel in its aggressive designs and had led to additional violations of human rights and international norms. The result had been terrorist raids into Lebanon, further intimidation and repression in the occupied territories and the illegal and universally condemned annexation of Jerusalem. The restoration of Arab sovereignty in the Holy City was an essential prerequisite to a just and peaceful settlement.

10. A clear formula for peace had been accepted by virtually the entire world community. It included the complete withdrawal of Israeli forces from all the occupied territories, including Jerusalem; the exercise by the Palestinian people of its right to self-determination, including the right to establish a sovereign State in its own homeland under the leadership of PLO; and the dismantling of the illegal settlements in the occupied territories. Accordingly, his delegation hoped that, at its current session, the Commission would adopt decisions supporting the Palestinian struggle for self-determination and national liberation, condemning Israeli violations of human rights and international norms and obligations, and promoting international measures to oblige Israel to accept the basis for a just and comprehensive settlement set forth in the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council.

11. Mr. PAPASTEFANOU (Greece) said that the lingering problem of the occupied Arab territories was a threat to stability and peace in the Middle East. The question of the violation of human rights in those territories could not be separated from the inalienable right of peoples to self-determination, to which his Government and people attached enormous importance, and no progress could be expected in improving the human rights situation in the area as long as the many resolutions of the United Nations, the fundamental principles of its Charter and the norms of international law continued to be flouted and as long as there was no effective and comprehensive solution to the Palestinian problem. In practice, that meant Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories, recognition of the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and recognition of the right of all countries of the region to live in peace within secure, recognized and guaranteed boundaries. The fact of foreign occupation itself constituted a violation of human rights. In accordance with its own firm support for Palestinian self-determination, Greece had consistently and unreservedly condemned Israel's policy of changing the demographic character of the occupied territories, which included expulsion, maltreatment of prisoners and refusal to allow displaced persons to return to their homes. It was equally firm in its disapproval of Israel's unilateral annexation of Jerusalem, whose universal character must be preserved.

12. His Government welcomed and supported the efforts of the States members of the European Community to find a comprehensive, just and equitable solution to the problems of the area.

13. Mr. ZORIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation welcomed the excellent statement made to the Commission by the observer for PLO. That statement brought into sharp focus the picture of gross and massive violations of human rights being committed in the occupied territories by Israel's ruling circles, with the support of the same forces of imperialism which continued to promote the cold war and to undermine world peace.

14. Of course, the military occupation itself, the brutality of which emerged clearly from the report of the Special Committee (A/35/425), was a denial of elementary human rights and an affront to world opinion. The General Assembly had rightly condemned Israel's attempts to perpetuate its occupation of the territories by such measures as expulsion, destruction of property, the establishment of illegal settlements designed to change the demographic character of the area and collective punishment. Those measures constituted in effect a policy of genocide that was rooted in the very ideology of zionism, a creed which had been condemned by the United Nations as tantamount to racism and which posed a continuing threat to the peace of the region.

15. It was common knowledge that the keys to a just solution of the Middle East problem lay in Israel's complete withdrawal from the occupied territories and the establishment of an independent Palestinian State with the participation of the Palestinian people through PLO, its sole legitimate representative. At its seventh emergency special session, the General Assembly had proclaimed the rights of the Arab people of Palestine, condemned Israel and demanded complete withdrawal from the territories occupied since 1967. Israel's response had been the illegal annexation of Jerusalem.

16. The result of the Camp David agreements, concluded behind the backs of the Palestinian people and against their interests, had been an intensification of measures designed to deny the Palestinian people not only the right to self-determination but its very right to exist: the use of terror, illegal settlements, repression, arbitrary arrests, beatings, torture, mass expulsions, murders, confiscation of water resources, and so forth. Indeed, 700,000 persons had been expelled from their homes since 1967, and moves were afoot to expel the rest. In the face of all that, the observer for Israel had had the impertinence to boast about how well the Palestinians lived. First he had claimed that the fourth Geneva Convention was not applicable to the occupied territories, and in the same breath had said that Israel applied its humanitarian provisions. If it really did apply the humanitarian provisions of that instrument, how could the Convention be inapplicable? The fact was that the occupation itself was illegal and so were all the repressive measures deriving from it.

17. In reality, Israel simply ignored the provisions of the Geneva Convention. The observer for Israel, taking his cue from the racists in South Africa, had labelled as terrorists all those who fought for national liberation and self-determination, those who, given the circumstances of their struggle, were entitled, as the United Nations had recognized in such instruments as the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, to use methods which included resort to arms. That struggle could be ended only by terminating the illegal occupation and permitting the establishment of a Palestinian State, which was precisely what Israel did not want. Repeating United States propaganda, the observer for Israel had even made the outrageous allegation that the USSR was fostering terrorism in the area. The fact was that the Soviet Union had consistently opposed terrorism both in principle and in practice. A clear distinction had to be maintained between terrorism and the legitimate struggle for national self-determination.

18. Terrorist acts were of course being committed in the occupied territories, but by the Israeli ruling circles, and they were made possible only by outside support, mainly from the United States, which was trying to equate terrorism with a legitimate struggle for national liberation. It was quite obvious that only continuing substantial assistance from the United States enabled Israel to keep on flouting all the rules of international behaviour. The purpose of that aid was to preserve United States influence in the Middle East and to strengthen its military presence there.

19. The Soviet Union resolutely condemned the human rights violations being committed in the area, the Zionist doctrines which inspired them, and all those who through their aid to Israel shared responsibility for the situation.

20. Mr. MARTINEZ (Argentina) said that, when the territory of a people was occupied by a foreign Power, such occupation could be maintained and consolidated only by violating the rights of the population of the territory concerned, a situation which could constitute a danger to international peace and security if not resolved to the satisfaction of all the parties. The fact that the people of Palestine had been deprived for many years of its inalienable rights was a matter of deep concern to his delegation, which condemned the unilateral measures taken by Israel to change the physical character and demographic composition of the occupied territories in violation of the fourth Geneva Convention and the relevant United Nations resolutions.

21. The latest report of the Special Committee (A/35/425) showed that the situation, far from improving, had been exacerbated by new measures taken in respect of Jerusalem. The policy pursued by Israel, based on a fait accompli, could not confer legitimacy, because it violated the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of land by force.

22. His delegation reaffirmed its view that Security Council resolution 242 (1967) continued to be an essential element, although it might have to be supplemented in certain respects as a result of new developments. At the time of the adoption of that resolution, his Government had expressed preference for a text that would stress the need for the unconditional withdrawal by Israel from all the territories occupied in 1967. His Government believed that a comprehensive solution to the problem must include acknowledgement of the right of all States in the area to exist within secure and mutually recognized frontiers. Those realities should guide members if the work of the Commission was to lead to practical results.

23. Mr. KHURELBAATAR (Mongolia) said that Mongolia, together with other socialist countries and all progressive forces, supported the legitimate rights of all States and peoples in the Middle East to independence and development. It was becoming increasingly clear that only a comprehensive settlement, including recognition of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and to establish its own State, could resolve the crisis in that region. The growing recognition by the international community of the legitimacy of the struggle waged by the Arab people of Palestine was being accompanied by the increasing international isolation of the Zionist régime. However, Israel continued to flout the numerous decisions of the United Nations by establishing settlements in the occupied territories and committing aggression against the Arab population. Referring to the Camp David accords, he

stressed that the achievement of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East would be impossible without the participation of the Arab people of Palestine, and in particular PLO, its sole representative.

24. The latest report of the Special Committee (A/35/425) showed clearly that the Israeli authorities were denying elementary rights to the peaceful Arab population of the occupied territories, carrying out illegal mass arrests, committing acts of violence and pursuing a policy of expropriation.

25. The Commission could make a significant contribution through a comprehensive review of all the factors underlying the crisis in the Middle East. One of the first steps towards a lasting solution to the Middle East question was to ensure that all military, economic and political co-operation with Israel was brought to an end.

26. His delegation hoped that the considerations it had put forward would be reflected in the decisions to be adopted at the current session. In its opinion, the Commission should be guided in its work by the provisions of the fourth Geneva Convention and the relevant United Nations decisions.

27. Mr. NOVAK (United States of America) said that the attraction of the United States to immigrants lay in its human rights. People still came to the United States from all over the world to breathe air that was free.

28. His earliest memories as a child had been of the invasion of Poland in 1939, of newsreels showing endless bombings, columns of refugees, and victims of the death camps. Thus, he had been touched when Pope John Paul II, during one of his first official journeys abroad, had visited Auschwitz. In his address to the United Nations in New York, the Pope had drawn attention to the fact that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights had come into being mainly because of the holocaust, following which it had been resolved that the entire world, and not merely a few nations, should have a bill of rights.

29. Mr. EL-FATTAL (Syrian Arab Republic), speaking on a point of order, said he would like to know the relationship between the statement being made by the United States representative and the item before the Commission. He hoped that the breath of freedom which had attracted immigrants to the United States would be reflected in other matters under consideration.

30. The CHAIRMAN said that, while he took the point raised by the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic, every delegation was free to draft its statement as it saw fit and to address the problem in its own manner. He invited the United States representative to continue.

31. Mr. NOVAK (United States of America) said that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was a memorial to the sacrifice of millions of persons who had not been permitted to live and the work of the Commission was an attempt to draw some small good from so much evil. Human rights meant respect for human beings and recognition of each person's dignity. They meant co-operation, negotiation and the voice of reason. Accordingly, he had been shocked to hear in the Commission expressions of hatred, racism and anti-Semitism and lies - all in the sacred name of human rights.

32. Mr. EL-FATTAL (Syrian Arab Republic), speaking on a point of order, said that while he respected the right of every delegation to speak, he rejected the accusation by the United States representative that members of the Commission were liars.

33. The CHAIRMAN appealed to all delegations to maintain a climate conducive to achieving the results desired by all. He therefore asked the United States representative to use words which might not be regarded as objectionable.

34. Mr. NOVAK (United States of America) said that attacks on zionism had been made in the Commission in accents of a murderous hatred not heard since the days of the Nazis. In 1945, there had been only some 50 independent nations in the world and they had established the United Nations, which now included some 160 member countries. Israel was one of the new States. Unfortunately, it was not a country rich in resources; much of it had for centuries been desert land unsuited for agriculture and nearly bereft of significant industries.

35. Mr. YOUSSEF (Iraq), speaking on a point of order, said that, in his view, the United States representative had insulted the Commission as a whole. He therefore asked the Chairman to request that representative to refrain from continuing to do so and to adhere to the item under discussion.

36. The CHAIRMAN said he did not think that it was the intention of the United States representative to insult the United Nations. He appealed to representatives to exercise moderation in their statements in order to enable the Commission to proceed in an orderly manner.

37. Mr. NOVAK (United States of America) said that, overcoming all obstacles, the Israelis had built a nation to rival any in the world in its sciences, its arts, its free press, and its institutions of just and humane procedures. His Government had deep and profound respect for Israel. It also had admiration for the wisdom, courage and respect for human rights shown by many Arab nations. Fratricidal war served no one's true hopes. Peace and prosperity came with mutual respect, which was not only the goal of further progress but also the indispensable means to it.

38. His Government had learned from history to honour the high spiritual achievements of Arab culture and admired the personal courage and wisdom of many Arab leaders. The people of the United States had been immensely touched when three leaders of the world, one Moslem, one Christian and one Jewish, had stood together in mutual respect following difficult co-operation and painstaking negotiation. His Government commended Israel for returning land seized in war. It commended Egypt for the spectacular courage and humanity shown to the world in deeds that would endure.

39. The charges heaped against Israel in the Commission were old and had long since been objectively examined and discarded. The State of Israel was a fact, as were the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty and the Camp David accords. They were realities which served as a basis for future progress and future hopes.

40. His delegation wished to pay a tribute to President Sadat, who had captured the love and esteem of millions of human beings and was an example of human brotherhood.

41. The United States delegation also wished to pay a tribute to Israel, whose destiny was inseparably linked to that of the United States. The two countries shared the same high vision of human rights on which the traditions of the Commission were based.

42. Mr. SALAH-BEY (Algeria) said that while it had not been attacked directly, his delegation felt that it had been the target of some of the expressions used by the United States representative. He personally defied the representatives of the United States and Israel to find in the Algerian delegation's statement any language that denoted hatred, lies or anti-Semitism. His delegation had attacked and would continue to attack zionism without resorting to such language.

43. Mr. RAHIM (India) said that despite the international community's repeated condemnation of violation of the human rights of the population of the occupied Arab territories, Israel had chosen to flout the expressed will of world public opinion, thus demonstrating the contempt with which it treated the United Nations. Israel had argued that the situation in those territories had improved during the occupation, but the Indian delegation could not subscribe to any such justification: as it had consistently stated the fundamental violation of human rights in those territories lay in the very fact of the occupation.

44. Not only had Israel continued to disregard United Nations resolutions calling for complete withdrawal from the occupied territories but it had also extended its policy of annexation and settlement. The annexation of the Holy City of Jerusalem was an act for which it had found not a single supporter. Such a policy of aggression and expansion was not merely provocative; it was a threat to international peace and security.

45. As his Prime Minister had pointed out at the seventh emergency special session of the General Assembly, a comprehensive solution to the problems of western Asia entailed as an integral element the exercise by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights, including the self-determination which it had been denied for too long. The Indian Government was confident that the continued efforts of the United Nations would strengthen the determination of the Palestinian people to continue its struggle, and the fulfilment of its aspirations was only a matter of time.

46. Mr. AL FALLOUJI (Observer, League of Arab States), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that Arabs had never been racists; on the contrary, they themselves were the victims of racist policies practised by the Zionists, with the support of the United States. Arabs had historically been content with a society into which all elements were assimilated. It was only since the creation of the Zionist State that separatism had begun to assert itself.

47. It was unfair that those who took up knives and small arms in defence of their national interests should be dubbed terrorists, while those able to wreak untold havoc by means of sophisticated weaponry should be regarded as patriots.

48. Mr. OMEIR (Observer, League of Arab States) said that since 1948 the Arabs in occupied Palestine had suffered at the hands of the Zionists, who had been assisted by the United States and most Western countries.

49. He found it difficult to believe that peace would reign in the world during the administration of the new President of the United States, who had stated that Israel would be encouraged by military means to perpetuate its occupation of Palestine and Jerusalem, and that his Government would help to implement the Camp David accords. The League of Arab States wished to stress that the Camp David accords would have no effect on the struggle of the Arabs against the Zionists in the Middle East.

50. He provided information on some of the activities which the Israeli authorities had carried out against Arabs in the occupied territories during 1980 alone, including eviction, refusal to allow a number of Palestinians to be buried in their homeland, the purchase of property and restrictive measures affecting educational institutions.

51. In conclusion, the League of Arab States urged the Commission to make every effort to ensure respect for the Geneva Conventions and the relevant United Nations decisions. It hoped that a draft resolution to that effect would be adopted unanimously by the Commission.

52. Mr. VARKONYI (Observer for Hungary) said that Hungary attached considerable importance to the Commission's work and was particularly concerned about the plight of the Arab population of the occupied territories. For almost 14 years Israel had been illegally occupying Arab lands and violating the Palestinian people's fundamental rights, in open disregard of numerous relevant United Nations resolutions. Israel, in defiance of the principle of inadmissibility of the acquisition of territories by force, was continuing to take measures to expel the original inhabitants, alter the geography and demography, and change the legal status of those lands, in the hope of creating an irreversible situation. The most striking example was the recent decision by the Knesset to declare Jerusalem Israel's indivisible eternal capital, in flagrant violation of international law.

53. Israel's actions were the root cause of the dangerous situation in the Middle East. It was clear that any just and lasting settlement of the crisis must entail the unconditional withdrawal of Israel from all the Arab territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem. Equally clearly, there could be no lasting results on the basis of the Camp David accords or the separate treaty between Egypt and Israel, which were aimed not at establishing peace in the region but, rather, at creating a new military alliance.

54. His Government, which endorsed the principles and objectives laid down in the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, strongly supported all those resolutions of the Commission which sought to ensure the Palestinian people's right to self-determination. All possible measures should be taken to help that people, and its sole legitimate representative, PLO, in the struggle to regain its homeland and establish a sovereign, independent State.

55. Mrs. SLAMOVA (Observer for Czechoslovakia) said that Israel not only continued to ignore the many United Nations resolutions calling for the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the occupied territories but also disregarded the relevant Geneva Conventions and the basic principles of international law. The facts of Israel's behaviour were confirmed in the latest report of the Special Committee (A/35/425), which pointed out, in paragraph 291, that annexation and settlement continued unabated and that the Israeli Government showed no intention of abandoning its practices. Paragraphs 114 to 222 painted a depressing picture of reprisals, demolition, explosions and measures affecting educational institutions, and paragraph 298 mentioned that violence and bloodshed had increased, during recent months, to unprecedented levels.

56. The nature and effects of Israel's actions against the population of the occupied territories had also been eloquently described to the Commission by the observer for PLO.

57. It should not be overlooked that Israel's violations of the Palestinian people's basic human rights were part of a systematic policy, made possible by support from certain imperialist circles.

58. The situation placed a heavy responsibility on the Commission, which must again consider how it could best contribute to solving the problems faced by the population of the occupied Arab territories. In that connection, Czechoslovakia reiterated that a just and lasting peace in the Middle East could only be achieved by means of a settlement which embraced all parties, including the Palestinian people, whose sole legitimate representative was PLO. Such a settlement must include the withdrawal of Israeli forces and the recognition of the Palestinians' right to found their own independent State.

59. Mr. TRUONG QUAN PHAN (Observer for Viet Nam) said that the Palestinian people, which had suffered 30 years of colonialism under the United Kingdom followed by 30 years of exile and Israeli occupation, had a right to national independence which had long been recognized by the world community. For 13 years there had been an unprecedented reign of terror in the occupied territories, marked by mass arrests, torture, demolition of houses and land expropriation. The decision by the Israeli Parliament to designate Jerusalem Israel's capital, was a particularly flagrant example of Israel's intransigence, coming as it did shortly after the adoption by the General Assembly, at an emergency special session, of a resolution calling for the return of all illegally occupied territories and the establishment of an independent, sovereign Palestinian State.

60. It was clear that the Camp David accords could not contribute to a peaceful and lasting settlement of the Middle East crisis. Such a settlement could be achieved only when Palestinians had secured all their inalienable rights, including the right to found an independent, sovereign State under the guidance of PLO, that people's sole authentic representative. The delegation of Viet Nam fully supported the just struggle being waged to that end.

61. Speaking on agenda item 9, he noted that, despite the statements by many Governments concerning their commitment to the right to self-determination, the deeds did not match the words in some cases. Viet Nam, after having struggled for

more than 30 years to achieve its independence, was unable to enjoy the peace it deserved in order to reconstruct its devastated country, because of further threats of war, an unjust economic blockade and a campaign of slander. Certain imperialist forces claiming to be the protectors of peoples were seeking, in collusion with other reactionary forces, to isolate Viet Nam economically and prevent it from developing the socialist system of its choice - thus gravely violating the right to self-determination. But the peoples of Viet Nam, Laos and Kampuchea, drawing on the solidarity built during their wars of resistance, were making common cause in their struggle for reconstruction and the exercise of that right.

62. The people of Viet Nam supported the struggle of peoples everywhere for peace, national independence, self-determination and social progress. His delegation fully supported the peoples of Namibia, South Africa, Afghanistan, Angola and Mozambique in their efforts in that regard. It also praised the efforts of the Sahrawi people, under the guidance of the Polisario Front, and stood firmly beside the Cuban people in its struggle against United States imperialism. Likewise, his delegation supported the efforts of the Governments and peoples of Nicaragua, Grenada, Jamaica and Panama to consolidate their national independence, and of the peoples of Puerto Rico and Belize against imperialist domination. It also acknowledged the valiant resistance by the peoples of Chile and El Salvador against the fascist régimes which held sway in those countries.

63. Mr. ZAFERA (Observer for Madagascar) said it was Madagascar's well-known wish that the Commission should succeed in taking adequate measures with a view to ending Israel's savage repression of the Palestinian people. Numerous previous speakers had outlined the persistence with which Israel pursued its policy of suppressing the Palestinian people's inalienable rights by establishing settlements, expelling the indigenous population and transforming the geographical, cultural and religious nature of the occupied territories, in violation of the fourth Geneva Convention. The report of the Special Committee (A/35/425) gave particularly disquieting details. The Commission, at its current session, should again condemn Israel's violation of human rights in the occupied territories and reaffirm its support of the just struggle waged by the Palestinian people, directed by its legitimate representative, PLO. A solution to the problem of Palestine was inseparable from the attainment of a lasting peace in the Middle East, which could be achieved only on the basis of recognition of the Palestinians' inalienable rights and the restoration of all the occupied territories. The Camp David accords, ignored the Palestinian people's rights and were therefore denounced by his country.

64. His delegation was convinced that the Commission would take appropriate measures to end Israel's policy of aggression, and thus make an important contribution to the international community's efforts on behalf of the Palestinian people.

65. Mr. DUMOND (International Federation of Human Rights) said that his organization was greatly concerned by the situation in the occupied Arab territories, and particularly by the many allegations about the ill-treatment and torture of persons arrested by the Israeli authorities. It had sent a delegation to Israel in December 1980, with the intention not simply of collecting statements but of gaining admittance to places of detention in order to interview prisoners and observe conditions at first hand. The visiting team had included a specialist in forensic medicine. A full report of the arrangements for the visits and the observations made was to be submitted to the Commission.

66. No obstacles had been placed in the way of the visitors regarding admittance to places of detention. Medical histories had been examined with a view to obtaining information on medical conditions in general and on evidence of individual cases of ill-treatment. By way of example, he mentioned that the team had seen two young men recently arrested and interrogated: they had said that they had not been subjected to torture, although one had complained of having been kept standing for a long time. A medical check had revealed no traces of recent injuries; a number of scars observed had seemed very old, although there had been one case of a possible cigarette burn.

67. The team had observed no lesions or traumas which could be attributed to torture. In one case of a prisoner recurrently ill, the detailed treatment records, including X-rays, had given no grounds for criticism. Medical services were well organized and in fact more flexible than in many countries' prison systems, in that it was the practice to send inmates to outside hospitals or bring in outside consultants when necessary.

68. In short, the visiting team had found no evidence to support allegations of ill-treatment in prisons.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.