



Security Council

PROVISIONAL

S/PV.2646
27 January 1986

ENGLISH

JAN 29 1986

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TWO THOUSAND
SIX HUNDRED AND FORTY-SIXTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Monday, 27 January 1986, at 10.30 a.m.

<u>President:</u>	Mr. LI Luye	(China)
<u>Members:</u>	Australia	Mr. WOOLCOTT
	Bulgaria	Mr. TSVETKOV
	Congo	Mr. ADOUKI
	Denmark	Mr. BIERRING
	France	Mr. de KEMOULARIA
	Ghana	Mr. GBEHO
	Madagascar	Mr. RABETAFIKA
	Thailand	Mr. KASEMSRI
	Trinidad and Tobago	Mr. ALLEYNE
	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics	Mr. SAFRONCHUK
	United Arab Emirates	Mr. AL-SHAALI
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir John THOMSON
	United States of America	Mr. WALTERS
	Venezuela	Mr. PABON

This record contains the original text of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the Official Records of the Security Council.

Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, within one week, to the Chief, Official Records Editing Section, Department of Conference Services, room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

The meeting was called to order at 11.05 a.m.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted.

THE SITUATION IN THE OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES

- (a) LETTER DATED 16 JANUARY 1986 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF MOROCCO TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL (S/17740)
- (b) LETTER DATED 16 JANUARY 1986 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL (S/17741)

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Chinese): In accordance with decisions taken by the Council at previous meetings on this item, I invite the representative of Morocco to take a place at the Council table; I invite the representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization to take a place at the Council table; I invite the representatives of Bangladesh, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the Syrian Arab Republic and Turkey to take the places reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Alaoui (Morocco) took a place at the Council table; Mr. Terzi (Palestine Liberation Organization) took a place at the Council table; Mr. Chowdhury (Bangladesh), Mr. Shaker (Egypt), Mr. Netanyahu (Israel), Mr. Kasrawi (Jordan), Mr. Azzarouk (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), Mr. Shah Nawaz (Pakistan), Mr. Al-Kawari (Qatar), Mr. Shihabi (Saudi Arabia) Mr. El-Fattal (Syrian Arab Republic) and Mr. Turkmen (Turkey) took the places reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Chinese): I should like to inform the members of the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Afghanistan, Algeria, Brunei Darussalam, Guinea, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Mauritania, Tunisia and Yemen in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity

(The President)

with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to take part in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Zarif (Afghanistan), Mr. Djoudi (Algeria), Mr. Haji Omar (Brunei Darussalam), Mr. Camara (Guinea), Mr. Wiryono (Indonesia), Mr. Rajaie-Khorassani (Islamic Republic of Iran), Mr. Ould Boye (Mauritania), Mr. Bouziri (Tunisia) and Mr. Basendwah (Yemen) took the places reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Chinese): I should like to inform members of the Council that I have received a letter dated 22 January 1986 from the Permanent Representative of Morocco to the United Nations, which reads as follows:

"I have the honour to request the Security Council to invite His Excellency Mr. Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada, Secretary-General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, to address the Security Council under rule 39 of its rules of procedure, in connection with the item entitled 'The situation in the occupied Arab territories' now before the Council."

That letter has been issued as document S/17758.

If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Council agrees to extend an invitation to Mr. Pirzada under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the appropriate moment I shall invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

(The President)

The Security Council will now resume its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I should like to draw the attention of members of the Council to the following documents: letter dated 22 January 1986 from the Permanent Representative of Morocco to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/17757); and note verbale dated 23 January 1986 from the Permanent Mission of Morocco to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/17760).

The first speaker is the representative of Tunisia. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. BOUZIRI (Tunisia) (interpretation from French): My delegation is pleased, Sir, to see you presiding over the Security Council at the beginning of a year which, unfortunately, has been marked by renewed tension.

We are convinced that your wisdom and the high qualities you have already demonstrated here will enable the Council to bring its present deliberations to a successful end. Those qualities are a reflection of your great country, China, with which Tunisia is linked by active friendship and fruitful co-operation.

(Mr. Bouziri, Tunisia)

I wish to take this same opportunity to pay a tribute to your predecessor, Ambassador Bassole, Permanent Representative of Burkina Faso, for the excellent manner in which he performed his duties as President of the Council last month.

I also wish to extend my congratulations and wishes for success to Bulgaria, the Congo, Ghana, the United Arab Emirates and Venezuela, which have just assumed their new responsibilities in the Council.

On 13 and 17 January the Security Council was asked to consider the unjustified attacks and abusive practices of the Israeli occupation forces in southern Lebanon. Today, it is asked to consider the complaint of the entire Islamic nation at the desecration of the Al-Aqsa Mosque.

Tunisia, which last October was the victim of flagrant aggression, is compelled to speak out once again against the criminal acts committed by Israel in the occupied Arab territories.

The events of 8, 9 and 14 January have been described in the letters from the Permanent Representative of Jordan and the Permanent Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization addressed to the Secretary-General of our Organization on 9 and 10 January. They have been described here by preceding speakers, and Council members know their exceptional gravity, aware as they are of the political affiliation of the perpetrators. Those who continually call for the destruction of the Dome of the Rock and the rebuilding of the "Temple", as well as for the outright expulsion of Palestinian Arabs from the West Bank, had no intention of making a traditional visit to the Holy Places on Temple Mount or, as the Israeli delegate indicated, a peaceful trip. Far from it. The reinforcement of Israeli security troops assigned to the area, the attempts to raise the Israeli flag in the sanctuary and the intimidation of and aggression against the Palestinian faithful are all proof of the acts of reprehensible desecration committed by Israeli parliamentarians and the troops supporting them. Similar acts were perpetrated in

(Mr. Bouziri, Tunisia)

the town of Hebron-Al Khalil on 17 January in an attempt to desecrate the Ibrahim Mosque, while gangs of fanatics led by the terrorist Kach organization attacked the sanctuary of the Dome of the Rock in Al-Quds.

Tunisia, along with other members of the Islamic community, feels very strongly about such sacrilegious acts aimed at humiliating the Islamic world. Its outrage is all the stronger because the events at the Al Aqsa Mosque are not mere news items or isolated acts. Their official nature denotes a clear escalation in Israel's reprehensible actions against the Holy Places of Islam.

Attacks on such Holy Places have so far been the acts of individuals who have not, generally, been affiliated with the Government or with other official or semi-official bodies - despite, it must be noted, the widely evidenced connivance of the Israeli authorities. They are often attributed to so-called unbalanced persons who cannot be held responsible for their criminal deeds.

Today, however, the responsibility of the Israeli authorities is obvious, for the developments we have witnessed compel us to believe that the Zionist ideology cannot tolerate any other religion and that it is resolved to destroy every Islamic value in the Holy Land eternally symbolized in the venerated sanctuary of the Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock. The Christian Holy Places, which have often been desecrated since the occupation of the Holy City, are also the target of Israel's religious intolerance.

Is it not deplorable and bitterly ironic to note that the acts of discrimination and intolerance from which the Jews have suffered for such a long time are now being performed today by Israel against the people of Palestine which, as we all know, is made up of both Christians and Muslims?

Yet when Islam took control of Jerusalem in the year 637 it augmented the City's sacred character and kept it safe from all attack. It saw to it that the Holy City was kept open to the other revealed religions. It is, to say the least,

(Mr. Bouziri, Tunisia)

surprising that some people are attempting to rewrite history and to present Islam as an intolerant religion.

It is a fact that the Arabs gave Al-Quds its present-day form. The destruction of the Temple built by Solomon was not, let us remember, done by Islam, but by Nebuchadnezzar and by the Romans, who totally razed Jerusalem. The presence of Islam for 14 centuries in the Holy City of Al-Quds explains the enduring sacred presence that cannot be severed from the spirit of tolerance in which Islam has always maintained the Holy City open to the monotheistic religions.

It is that irreproachable attitude of Islam towards religious belief and ritual practices that today explains the outrage of a billion Muslims throughout the world for whom Al-Quds is the Orient, the focus of prayer and the third-holiest city of Islam. That outrage was expressed yesterday by the Al-Quds Committee of the Islamic Conference, which issued a moving and heartfelt appeal to the international community to assume its responsibilities in the face of Israel's actions against the Holy Places of Islam.

How then can we tolerate the acts of the Israeli desecrators, knowing as we do that over the years the attacks against this holy building have become increasingly frequent and virulent? The long list of acts of sacrilege against our Holy Places evidences an obvious lack of tolerance on the part of the Israeli occupier. We cannot otherwise interpret such events, nor the incitements to hatred against the Arabs and the desecration and destruction of their Holy Places made by certain members of the Knesset, the Israeli Government and other leaders, such as Yuval Neeman, Geula Cohen, Gershon Solomon and Ariel Sharon.

Although it is true that the Israeli authorities are not directly responsible for these criminal acts against Al-Aqsa and that they continue to maintain that the acts are the work of unbalanced persons, how is it that their intelligence services, of which they are so proud, which keep a 24-hour watch on their victims

(Mr. Bouziri, Tunisia)

in Palestine and elsewhere, were not able to prevent the arson in Al-Aqsa or the massacre of faithful perpetrated by Goodman in the Al-Aqsa Mosque in 1982. Is it not surprising that the various attempts by the Israeli extremists to blow up the Mosque have not led to a strengthening of security around the sanctuary? Those are questions that must be asked and that find their answer in the statements and decisions of the Israeli Government regarding the Judaization of Al-Quds and the whole of the West Bank.

(Mr. Bouziri, Tunisia)

The events that have taken place recently at the Al-Aqsa Mosque are in flagrant violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention, which prohibits, among other things, interference by the occupying Power in the religious life of the peoples. Israel, as we know, has always refused to implement the provisions of that Convention.

More serious still, Israel has defied the United Nations resolutions on the City of Al-Quds, which have therefore remained a dead letter. Indeed, that attitude of contempt for the international community dates from the very establishment of Israel.

General Assembly resolution 303 (IV), of 9 December 1949, restated the intention of the United Nations that Jerusalem should be placed under a permanent international régime, ensuring appropriate guarantees for the protection of the Holy Places, both within and outside Jerusalem, and specifically confirmed the provisions of General Assembly resolution 181 (II), of 29 November 1947, in regard particularly to the Holy City's status as a corpus separatum.

It should also be noted that nine resolutions adopted by the Security Council since 1967 relate to the series of faits accomplis that have been imposed by Israel on the Holy City of Al Quds and have been rejected by the international community as being contrary to the principles of international law and conduct. My delegation recalls in particular resolutions 476 (1980) and 478 (1980), adopted by the Council on, respectively, 30 June and 20 August 1980. Those resolutions confirm that all the measures that have altered the geographic, demographic and historical character and status of the Holy City of Jerusalem are null and void and must be rescinded. Resolution 478 (1980), need we recall, censures in the strongest terms the adoption by Israel of the "basic law" on Jerusalem, and its refusal to comply with relevant Security Council resolutions.

(Mr. Bouziri, Tunisia)

If Israel had respected those provisions, as well as its obligations as a Member of the Organization, this body would not have had to be convened twice within one week.

We should perhaps recall that paragraph 6 of the above-mentioned resolution 476 (1980) specifically reaffirmed the Council's

"determination, in the event of non-compliance by Israel with the present resolution, to examine practical ways and means in accordance with relevant provisions of the Charter of the United Nations to secure the full

implementation of the present resolution". (resolution 476 (1980), para. 6)

Like the provisions of the other relevant resolutions, that warning too was disregarded.

We regard it as inadmissible for a Member of this Organization to arrogate to itself the right not to conform with Security Council resolutions whenever they denounce that Member's failure to comply with its international obligations or condemn the violations of and attacks on the Charter and international law of which that Member is guilty.

Need we recall that in 1948 Israel accepted General Assembly resolution 273 (III), which decided that

"Israel is a peace-loving State which accepts the obligations contained in the Charter and is able and willing to carry out those obligations". (General Assembly resolution 273 (III), para. 1).

The international community is of course entitled to demand that Israel respect the Security Council's decisions instead of continuing deliberately to trample them under foot. Once again today the international community is witnessing serious acts that point to a certain trend to cast aside this body of law.

(Mr. Bouziri, Tunisia)

As a peace-loving country that abides by its obligations under the Charter, Tunisia cannot but deplore the difficult situation in which the Security Council is placed each time the peace and security of the Middle East are endangered. Non-respect for the Council's resolutions is a source of deep concern to us; it undermines the Council's authority, seriously affects its dignity and guarantees impunity for those who believe themselves to be above international law.

That is the situation that we wish to avoid today by asking the Security Council to adopt the necessary decisions - and also to enforce them.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Chinese): I thank the representative of Tunisia for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): The Soviet delegation has listened carefully to the statements of the representatives of Morocco and the United Arab Emirates, which requested the convening of the Security Council, and also to what has been said by the representatives of a number of other States that have participated in the discussion.

There can be no doubt but that the situation in Jerusalem resulting from the actions by Israel with regard to the Muslim Holy Places in Al-Haram Al-Sharif has aroused deep concern among many Members of our Organization. This has been demonstrated also in the statement adopted by the Foreign Ministers of the countries members of the Organization of the Islamic Conference at their recent meeting in Fez. As has been stressed by previous speakers, the issue here far transcends a religious framework: it affects the interests of a considerable number of States and, therefore, the interests of the international community as a whole.

(Mr. Safronchuk, USSR)

Events in Jerusalem cannot be viewed in isolation from the overall situation in the Arab territories occupied by Israel in 1967, a constituent element of which is the Arab part of that city. The Security Council and General Assembly have repeatedly adopted resolutions categorically condemning attempts by Israel to alter the historic character, demographic composition and juridical status of the occupied territories, including eastern Jerusalem. In particular, Security Council resolution 478 (1980) flatly described all such actions and measures undertaken by the Israeli occupying authorities in Jerusalem as illegal, null and void and as a serious obstruction to achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

Nevertheless, for all these years Israel has continued defiantly to disregard the numerous United Nations decisions and has refused to comply with them. Suffice it to recall that in 1980 Jerusalem was declared the "eternal and indivisible" capital of Israel, and a year later we saw the annexation of the Syrian Golan Heights. Israel's actions on the West Bank of the Jordan and in the Gaza Strip have left no doubt that, here again, we have a far-reaching process of deliberate, planned absorption of those territories. Relying on its comprehensive support from outside, Israel has stubbornly refused to recognize the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and has systematically committed acts of armed intrusion into the territories of the Arab States. Here are to be found the major reasons for the lack of a settlement of the Middle East conflict and the constant tension in the area, one further symptom of which is the most recent events in Jerusalem.

The Soviet delegation believes that Israel's actions in Jerusalem warrant categorical condemnation. We support the demands made in the statements of the representatives of many States that the Security Council take all necessary measures to prevent a repetition of such actions in the future.

(Mr. Safronchuk, USSR)

At the same time, we should not lose sight of the most important fact: the whole problem stemming from Israel's occupation in June 1967 of Arab territories urgently awaits a solution. There must be a total withdrawal of Israeli troops from all the occupied Arab territories and the Palestinian people must be allowed fully to exercise its inalienable right to statehood. In a nutshell, there must be a comprehensive, just, political settlement of the Middle East problem, which means that there must be an international conference; otherwise, there cannot be and will not be lasting peace in the Middle East.

Mr. GBEHO (Ghana): Since this is my maiden speech in the Security Council I wish to take the opportunity to congratulate you, Sir, most warmly on your assumption of the presidency of the Council. My delegation is confident that you will continue to bring your vast experience and diplomatic skills to bear on the conduct of the affairs of the Council for the remainder of the month of January.

It is for the Ghana delegation a matter of particular pleasure to co-operate closely with you, Sir, because of the very close ties that have bonded our two countries for over two decades now. As you know, I have a personal attachment to your great country, it having been my first overseas post in my foreign service career some 26 years ago. I have come since then, as indeed my Government also has, better to understand and respect your great country, its ancient wisdom, culture and political traditions. We have no doubt that the leadership of China this month will be an asset to the Council.

May I also seize this opportunity to put on record my delegation's expression of thanks and appreciation to the Permanent Representative of Burkina Faso, Mr. Leandre Bassole, who presided over the Security Council last month for an unprecedented third time, for the skill, wisdom and dedication that he put into his leadership.

(Mr. Gbeho, Ghana)

The current debate has been occasioned primarily by the complaint brought to the Council against Israel by the Permanent Representative of Jordan, as evidenced in document S/17727, and also subsequently by the requests for an urgent meeting of the Council made by the Permanent Representatives of Morocco and the United Arab Emirates in documents S/17740 and S/17741, respectively.

In a nutshell, members of the Israeli Knesset are alleged to have desecrated the Al-Aqsa Mosque in the occupied territories on 8 January 1986, resulting in violent incidents by the Muslim worshippers and Israeli functionaries that threatened serious breaches of the peace. The Israeli delegation disputes the allegation; indeed, it accuses the Arab complainants of gross exaggeration of the facts. The Permanent Representative of Israel even questioned, in his statement to the Council on 21 January 1986, the need for the urgent convening of the Council on the issue.

I wish to deal first with the question whether an urgent meeting of the Council should have been convened. The statements made by both sides to the dispute - the Arab delegations on the one side and Israel on the other - leave no room for doubt that an incident occurred in the occupied city on 8 January 1986. The only difference in the two accounts relates to the seriousness of the confrontation. However, my delegation has no doubt that everyone present in this Chamber during the past week has been able to deduce, from the number of Arab delegations that spoke on the issue and the vehemence with which they stated their respective cases, that Governments in the sub-region generally have felt strongly about the incident and considered the Israeli visits as provocative. The resolution adopted by the Organization of the Islamic Conference, held in Fez from 6 to 10 January this year, bears further testimony to Arab vehemence on the matter.

(Mr. Gbeho, Ghana)

To that extent, there was and still is a potential threat to international peace and security, because there was a likelihood of a serious and perhaps violent confrontation between Israel and its Arab neighbours in the region. Since there was an element of a serious threat to international peace and security, therefore, there is a need for the Security Council to be seized of the matter. Its conclusions after a thorough debate are a different matter.

My delegation sees the mandate of the Security Council as being not only to respond to incidents that threaten international peace and security, but also, and perhaps more important, to deal effectively with potential threats. It is our view, therefore, that there is a prima facie case for urgent consideration of the matter in the Council at this time. It is a duty that the Council owes the international community.

I now turn to the substance of the complaint itself. As I have already outlined, members of the Israeli Knesset are alleged to have violated the sanctity of the Al-Aqsa Mosque in the occupied city of Al-Quds on 8 January 1986.

(Mr. Gbeho, Ghana)

Details of the incident and subsequent ones are documented in the letters of the respective Arab delegations to the President of the Council. After a careful examination of all the documents, and having listened to the statements before the Council, especially that of the Israeli representative, the Ghana delegation is convinced that the incidents were indeed serious and have serious implications for those involved, in the first instance, and also for international peace and security.

Even if one goes only by the written and spoken word of the Israeli representative, one finds that at the same time as he tries to play down the seriousness of the various incidents, especially that of 8 January 1986, he himself in other passages describes the 8 January incident with epithets such as "near riot", "religious confrontation" and "molestation". The very use of these significant words would seem to confirm the seriousness of the incidents and their potential for prejudicing law and order. Furthermore the fact that the Israeli authorities found it necessary to use hundreds of police officers and that the premises involved were considered by the Muslim Arabs of the occupied territories to be holy ground means that one cannot downplay the threat to peace involved. My delegation has no doubt that, considering also that the confrontation was over religious differences, the potential for serious confrontation could not and cannot even now be ruled out. We are sure that all sides would affirm that religious differences and incidents more often than not excite the most intense passions in peoples.

In the statement of the Israeli representative it was denied that any violation of the sanctity of the Mosque took place. He clarified that the incident took place "at the edge of the south-east of the platform that forms the Temple

(Mr. Gbeho, Ghana)

Mount" (S/PV.2643, p. 27). This account is not, however, corroborated by any of the many other descriptions given before the Council. But, even assuming that the Israeli version of the account is the more accurate one, my delegation is forced to ask if the Israelis are so religiously insensitive as to fail to realize that any show of force or arrogant authority in the vicinity of any temple, shrine, church, synagogue or indeed any religious grounds has a tremendous potential for violence. I am sure that if a group of non-Catholics - this is for purposes of argument only - should make an arrogant presence felt in the vicinity of the Vatican the consequences would be grave for law and order. Similarly, if a group of non-Hindus, for example, should turn up suddenly and irreverently at a sacred shrine in India the potential for serious violence would be great. Therefore the visit of the Knesset delegation to the vicinity of the Al-Aqsa Mosque, even if not inside it, and at the time it occurred, was indeed an act of provocation. The assertion of secular authority over religious grounds, especially at prayer time, must be conducted with great circumspection lest it degenerate into full-scale violence. This principle is doubly important in a situation where that secular authority is disputed.

My delegation listened carefully to the statement of the Israeli delegation, and it regrets to state that its version of what happened was less than clear on the specific purpose of the visit of 8 January. The visit of the members of the Knesset has been described as routine, but that is about all that is revealed, apart from the other fact that the Israeli Government doubtfully appropriates to itself control over the whole area. The questions that pose themselves in the case of the 8 January incident are as follows: was the timing of the visit proper, and did it take into consideration an intensive effort to avoid any trouble at all costs? The facts suggest that that was not the case, because the visit of the group from the Knesset took place ostensibly at a time when the Muslim Arabs of the occupied territory would certainly be at noon-time prayers in the Mosque.

(Mr. Gbeho, Ghana)

The sight of the visitors, who after all are rightly or wrongly regarded as oppressors, was most certainly a prescription for sparking off violence. My delegation comes to the reluctant conclusion that the visit was a tactless execution of powers with no sensitivity whatsoever for the religious feelings of the Arabs in and around the area - and this from high-ranking representatives of a State that prides itself on its religious tolerance, convictions and traditions.

It goes without saying that tempers have been frayed and continue to be excited over the Israeli visits in general to Mosques in Jerusalem and other parts of the occupied territories because of the Israeli attempts to assert sovereignty over the entire area and its properties, including Muslim Holy Places. This is a highly explosive situation, but it is necessary that this Council address the problem without fear or favour. The Council cannot afford to be seen to be ambivalent or evasive.

The incontrovertible truth is that Israel holds the so-called occupied territories illegally and seeks to establish permanent sovereignty over them. They were forcibly taken in unfortunate wars and against international law. The Israeli visits to the Muslim Mosques were in pursuit of altering the status of Jerusalem. The Council is already familiar with the problem, and there is no need for the Ghana delegation to further expatiate on it. Let me, however, recall that past resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly have deplored Israeli persistence in the illegal occupation of those areas. Security Council resolution 252 (1968) deplores

"the failure of Israel to comply with the General Assembly resolutions" and urgently calls upon Israel, inter alia, to

"desist forthwith from taking any further action which tends to change the status of Jerusalem".

(Mr. Gbeho, Ghana)

In the operative paragraphs of resolution 267 (1969) the Security Council

"1. Reaffirms its resolution 252 (1968);

"2. Deplores the failure of Israel to show any regard for the resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council ...;

"3. Censures in the strongest terms all measures taken to change the status of the City of Jerusalem;

"4. Confirms that all legislative and administrative measures and actions taken by Israel which purport to alter the status of Jerusalem, including expropriation of land and properties thereon, are invalid and cannot change that status".

In operative paragraph 2 of resolution 271 (1969) the Security Council, inter alia,

"Recognizes that any act of destruction or profanation of the Holy Places, religious buildings and sites in Jerusalem or any encouragement of, or connivance at, any such act may seriously endanger international peace and security".

In operative paragraph 3 of resolution 298 (1971) the Security Council, among other things

"Confirms in the clearest possible terms that all legislative and administrative actions taken by Israel to change the status of the City of Jerusalem, including expropriation of land and properties, transfer of populations and legislation aimed at the incorporation of the occupied section, are totally invalid and cannot change that status".

The background to the recent incidents clearly shows that Israel is an illegal occupier and has no legal entitlement to the area it now claims to be routinely inspecting. That it has a military or police presence there does not give it ownership and cannot therefore be condoned by this Council, which, as we have seen, has pronounced itself unambiguously on the matter in the past.

(Mr. Gbeho, Ghana)

Indeed, my delegation is convinced that the visit was purposely to establish legal and administrative sovereignty over the Holy Places in the face of mounting Arab disagreement and resentment. The action of despatching Knesset members to Muslim Holy Places is not only wrong but likely to prejudice international peace and security because of the domineering and arrogant manner in which it is done. To expect otherwise would be politically foolhardy. That is not the stuff of which peace is made. Furthermore, my delegation is of the view that the Israeli claim, repeated emphatically before the Council by the Permanent Representative, is contrary to international law and Council resolutions and must be rejected.

Having thus analysed the situation, the Council is faced with what it should now do to uphold justice, to contain the present conflagration and to ensure that peace reigns in the area. In so doing, the Council is not required to take sides with either Israel or the Arabs in the Mosque or in the occupied territories, but rather to ensure decisions and arrangements that would assure peace in the long term. My delegation believes that such a feat can be achieved only when the Council consistently adheres to the principles contained in the Charter.

There is no question that, had Israel not held on to the occupied territories illegally, most of the problems would not have arisen. The long and somewhat tendentious argumentation presented here by its representative begs the fundamental question of the illegality of its presence. The presence of its flag in the area is legally beside the point, and the so-called noble actions of the régime in the area, especially in Jerusalem, are grossly vitiated by their fundamental illegality. It may be true that Israel's intention is to guarantee access to the religious places by all faiths, but the Ghana delegation believes that you cannot give to others that which is not yours in the first instance. Israel's actions in the circumstances are at best those of a modern-day Robin Hood. Their declared altruistic motive does not make the fundamentally illegal actions any more legal.

(Mr. Gbeho, Ghana)

Proceeding from this logic, the Ghana delegation believes that the Council should once again express strong reservation about Israeli conduct and call upon Israel to withdraw from the area, in addition to desisting from those so-called routine visits that harbour in their very nature the seeds of conflict and violence. In arranging the visit on 8 January 1986 as they did, the Israeli authorities were courting trouble and displayed an alarming insensitivity to the religious feelings of Muslims. My delegation has no doubt that if the reverse were to obtain the same Israelis would resent a Muslim uncalled-for presence in the synagogue immensely. The Christian lesson of "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you" cannot be over-emphasized here.

In making this recommendation my delegation is not unmindful of Israeli sentiment in the matter, but we believe that the task of the Council is to lay the bricks for international harmony and not to take sides for selfish and individual reasons. In this instance, international law must apply in the interest of a long-term assurance of peace and security. Those who side with one party or another only because it currently holds the military or economic upper-hand, rather than on the basis of legitimacy and good-neighbourliness, are surely conniving at a serious threat to international peace and security.

Finally, I take the opportunity to appeal to all parties to act with restraint in the matter in order not to allow the situation to degenerate to the point of further violence. It is essential to maintain a spirit of tolerance and good-neighbourliness as we strive to find more permanent solutions to the many problems that have plagued the subregion since 1948. A political settlement on the basis of international law, not matter when it comes, is the obvious, even the only, way forward. A military solution has in-built failure because a decision of the Security Council already exists and should be implemented by all sides. Confrontation is senseless and should be replaced by dialogue, by tolerance, by

(Mr. Gbeho, Ghana)

negotiations and by compromise. The Ghana delegation stands ready to play its part in finding a durable solution.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Chinese): I thank the representative of Ghana for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Algeria. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. DJOUDI (Algeria) (interpretation from French): First of all, Sir, it is my pleasure to address to you the warm congratulations of my delegation on your accession to the presidency of the Secretary for the month of January.

The support for just causes always manifested by the People's Republic of China, with which my country has close relations of friendship and co-operation, as well as your personal skills as an experienced diplomat guarantee full success in your guidance of the work of the Council.

To your predecessor, my colleague and brother Ambassador Leandre Bassole of Burkina Faso, I wish here to pay tribute to the exemplary way in which he conducted the Security Council's proceedings last month.

Lastly, I take this opportunity to welcome the dedicated contribution made to this organ by the five non-permanent members who have just come to the end of their mandate - Burkina Faso, Egypt, India, Peru and the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic - and to express my delegation's sincere congratulations to their successors - Bulgaria, Congo, Ghana, the United Arab Emirates and Venezuela.

Al-Haram Al-Sharif, a Holy Place of Islam in the eternal Al-Quds thrice in the space of a few days has been subjected to acts of desecration committed by representatives of Zionism.

Thus, by the resumption of sacrilegious acts, the Zionist régime, which yesterday thought that it could hide behind the falsehood of adducing the behaviour

(Mr. Djoudi, Algeria)

of misled individuals or fanatics, has added insult to injury by acting in clear daylight through its duly authorized representatives.

These attacks on this Holy Place of Islam have carried provocation to its limit with the raid into that place of prayer of the butcher of Sabra and Shatila at the very moment when the faithful were gathered to carry out their religious duties.

These sacrilegious acts are true acts of aggression directed against Islam and almost a billion of its faithful. It is inconceivable to a profoundly indignant Muslim world community that such a violation of its spiritual values - in pursuit of a policy of systematic violation of the principles governing international society - can go unpunished.

(Mr. Djoudi, Algeria)

Such an attitude shows Zionism's consistent adherence to the cult of violence and intolerance. Strengthened by the impunity it has enjoyed in this Council, in particular, it has gone as far as desecration and sacrilege in a Holy Place of Islam and a jewel of universal civilization.

The attack on Al-Haram Al-Sharif also illustrates the pursuit of deliberate aggression in the service of a colonial policy. In particular, it was intended as a pretext for intensifying savage repression and the now permanent process of expropriation and the expulsion of citizens from the ancestral City of Al-Quds, in an inadmissible attempt at Zionization, despite the realities of history and against all the rules of law.

In other words, the desecration of Al-Haram Al-Sharif introduces a new dimension of danger to international peace and security posed by the bellicose policy of the Tel Aviv régime. It expands the scope of aggression which thus encompasses the whole Muslim community whose religion has been the highest expression of its commitment to justice and tolerance. It is therefore a challenge to all those throughout the world who are committed to peace and justice, as well as to the defence of the great values of universal civilization.

The contemporary history of the Middle East is that of a tragic succession of violent manifestations of the expansionist, racist policy pursued by the Zionist régime. The massacre at Deir Yassin, the carnage at Sabra and Shatila, and the repressed freedom in the occupied Arab territories have been followed by daily crimes committed against the civilian population, the expropriation and destruction of property, and the expulsion of the legitimate owners to benefit a colonial settlement policy intended to change the demographic, geographic and cultural characteristics of an entire region.

(Mr. Djoudi, Algeria)

As an expression of imperialist strategy, the behaviour of the Zionist régime is characterized by continuous aggression against Arab countries and the practise of a terrorism that has become an institutionalized system.

Violations of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of independent Arab countries - yesterday in Tammuz, Iraq; then the invasion of Lebanon; closer to us, in Tunis in the Maghreb; and on a daily basis in southern Lebanon - are all part of an attempt against the Arab world, from the Gulf to the Atlantic, which carries with it the risk of a conflict of unforeseeable consequences.

The serious acts committed against Al-Haram Al-Sharif remind us all of the important responsibility that the international community bears faced with the question of the Middle East in general and the fate of the City of Al-Quds in particular.

The collective memory of mankind bears witness to the fact that that Holy City was the crossroads of the three revealed religions, a symbol of tolerance and dialogue. Today it is the object of attacks on an illustrious past and the focal point of threats to the existence of a people which has been oppressed, even in its conscience, through the violation of the symbols of its religion.

The fate of the City of Al-Quds is inextricably linked to the wider dimension of the question of the Middle East in which the Palestinian tragedy is the central element.

The "basic law" has revealed the true designs of the Zionist régime and its intention to make Al-Quds its so-called eternal capital. Security Council resolution 476 (1980), in which the Council declared null and void the "basic law", has been scorned by the supporters of the Zionist régime which a few days ago in this Council gave further proof of Tel Aviv's arrogant attitude.

(Mr. Djoudi, Algeria)

In the period between the 1969 act of arson in the Al-Aqsa Mosque and the violation of Al-Haram Al-Sharif in January 1986, including the murder of the faithful in the same place in April 1982, that religious sanctuary has become the privileged target of Zionist hatred, moved by the sole desire of bringing about the disappearance of the holiest monuments to Islamic and Arab civilization in Palestine.

Those odious acts have been repeated only because the Security Council has not exercised the powers conferred upon it by the Charter to ensure respect for its own decisions in resolution 271 (1969).

Experience shows that blocking conventional peace-keeping machinery has encouraged renewed aggression. However, the proof offered by the heroic reaction to the Israeli invasion of Lebanon is, in the final analysis, only part of the incredible energy with which peoples resist occupation and repression.

My delegation wishes here to express the profound indignation and revulsion felt by the people and Government of Algeria at the serious violations against the Holy Places of Al-Haram Al-Sharif and the repression of the Muslim population of the City of Al-Quds. It strongly condemns this act of aggression against the Arab people of Palestine and the desecration of Islamic Holy Places.

By their nature and scope these events pose a serious threat to international peace and security. Therefore, the international community as a whole, in particular the Security Council, must react to this dangerous hotbed of tension, the Middle East crisis, the settlement of which requires a genuine solution of the Palestinian problem.

(Mr. Djoudi, Algeria)

The protection of the sacred nature of the Holy Places of Al-Quds, as well as the advent of peace in that sensitive area of the Middle East, can be achieved only through the total evacuation of all occupied Arab territories and the restoration of the legitimate and inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, in particular its right to establish a free and sovereign State on its national soil with Al-Quds as its capital.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Chinese): I thank the representative of Algeria for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Mauritania. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. OULD BOYE (Mauritania) (interpretation from Arabic): Allow me at the outset to extend my thanks to you, Mr. President, for granting me an opportunity to speak before the Council on a question to which my country attaches the utmost importance: the latest Israeli act of aggression against the sanctity of the Al-Aqsa Mosque.

Please accept my sincere congratulations, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for the month of January 1986. You represent a great country that has contributed more than any other friendly country in the world to my nation's development.

I am also pleased to congratulate the fraternal delegation of Burkina Faso on its presidency of the Council last month.

(Mr. Ould Boye, Mauritania)

One is at a loss to express the feelings of anger we in Mauritania felt upon learning that Israel had renewed its intention to implement a plot against the Al-Aqsa Mosque by providing the Interior Affairs Committee of the Israeli Knesset access to this Holy Place.

Israel has been systematically pursuing an arbitrary policy against the Christian and Islamic Holy Places in the occupied Arab territories. The Holy Al-Aqsa Mosque has since 1967 been the target of the colonialist design to exercise control over it. We all recall the fire that occurred at that mosque in 1969 under Israeli occupation. Israel has since that time been trying to inflict damage upon it and upon other mosques.

The scientific study provided by the Department of Palestine Affairs of the League of Arab States, which has been published, proved with objective evidence that the Israeli hand of destruction had been extended to most mosques in the villages and cities of occupied Palestine - before and after 1967 - especially in Jaffa, Haifa, Beersheba, Lod, Acre, Al-Khalil and Al-Quds. For example, in Jaffa the well-known daily, Asharq Al-Awsat, on 16 January 1986 stated that

"In Jaffa mosques and churches are torn down. Houses of worship are transformed into dens of iniquity, restaurants and theatres. The Protestant Church in Jaffa, which was built in the thirteenth century, has been completely destroyed by the occupation authorities; its ruins still indicate where it was located.

"The Great Mosque in Jaffa is no longer a house of worship; worshippers are not allowed access, and its outside walls have been covered with placards promoting consumerism and alcoholic beverages."

Israel did not stop at that; it has dug up grave sites and transformed them in the way it transformed mosques and churches.

(Mr. Ould Boye, Mauritania)

Israel is confronting the uprising of the Palestinian people, whose wrath has been aroused in defending its existence and the Holy Places against siege, violence and searches. That has not been confined to Al-Quds and Nablus; it has been extended to other areas.

Israel's practices in the occupied Arab territories are totally irrational; they are an affront to the conscience of mankind. One could speak at length on these practices, which are matched only by the Nazi practices or those of the South African racist régime.

The Israeli aggression, which has gone beyond occupation of territories to doing violence to culture, values and religion, is further proof that Israel is an alien cell in the body of the Middle East - the cradle of Divine Revelations - and that the religious slogan espoused by Israel is but a means used by a certain faction to arouse the sympathy of Jews throughout the world in order to enlist their support in seizing territory Israel has usurped in order to build a State and have it become a force to be reckoned with in international rivalry in commercial and financial fields.

Nahum Goldman, the President of the Zionist Organization, was candid in explaining the reasons that prompted the Zionists to opt for the invasion of Palestine. In 1947 in Montreal, Canada, he said - and this is a quote from a book written by a group of authors, including the late Mahdi Ben-Barakah, Kheri Hamad and Lutfy Al-Khouli -

"It would have been possible for the Jews to get Uganda or Madagascar, or other territories in which to establish their national homeland. But the Jews wanted only Palestine, not only because the waters of the Dead Sea can through evaporation yield \$5 billion of minerals and salt and because the subterranean soil of Palestine contains, as has been said, oil reserves exceeding all those of the two Americas, but also because Palestine is the crossroads between

(Mr. Ould Boye, Mauritania)

Europe, Asia and Africa and the real centre for world political power and the strategic military centre to control the world."

Those are the axes of Israel's thinking: oil, commerce and control of the world. Hence it should come as no surprise that a group whose philosophy is based on aggression, force and domination should be carrying out practices that are incompatible with ethics, laws and international norms.

All religions are unanimous with regard to tolerance. We Muslims have been taught to respect other religions and to be tolerant of their adherents. In the Holy Koran and in the prophetic traditions, there are explicit provisions on this matter, and they could be the subject of many lectures. The Holy Koran teaches us not to be intolerant; for our faith to be complete, we must believe in all the messages of the apostles and the prophets. Thus in sura "Baqara", we find:

"Say ye: 'We believe in God, and the revelation given to us, and to Abraham, Ismail, Isaac, Jacob, and the Tribes,' - that is, Jacob's sons - "and that given to Moses and Jesus, and that given to all Prophets from their Lord: We make no difference between one and another of them: And we bow to God'." (The Holy Koran, II:136)

Caliph Abu Bakr al-Sadiq did not confine himself to advising the Muslim army not to burn trees or harm the young or the elderly. He also ordered his army to avoid any damage to houses of worship or harm to worshippers therein.

(Mr. Ould Boye, Mauritania)

Through its constant acts of aggression against places of worship, Israel is demonstrating that it attaches no importance to divine revelation or to human principles and values. Israel's persistent defiance of Islam is but one part of its overall orientation. Israel is an entity which was imposed by blood and iron; its sole concerns are the balance of power and seizing opportunities. If it were possible, Israel would without a doubt destroy the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and other Christian Holy Places.

Israel's acts, violating the sanctity of the Al-Aqsa Mosque and terrorizing Palestinian citizens, are an affront to the feelings of Muslims throughout the world, as well as to the conscience of free peoples all over the world. We are certain that Israel's grave actions in the occupied Arab territories, which completely contravene the United Nations Charter and the fundamental norms of human rights, will prompt the Security Council to impose severe sanctions against Israel in order to put an end to these acts of aggression, not only against the Al-Aqsa Mosque, but also against all other Holy Places.

Israel's recent reckless practices form part of the aftermath of its treacherous occupation of Palestine. The political aim of those practices is to depopulate the occupied territories and expropriate them in toto, which is in keeping with the iron-fist policy followed more and more in the occupied territories. Statements and actions of Sharon, Kahane and other Israeli leaders are unshakeable evidence of the goals of this iron-fist policy, a policy of repression against the Palestinian people which is intended to finish building Israeli settler colonialism throughout the homeland of the Palestinian people.

Thus, Mauritania hopes that the Security Council will seize the opportunity to undertake serious action to find a comprehensive, just solution to the question of Palestine assuring Israel's withdrawal from Palestine and all other occupied Arab territories, and guaranteeing the exercise by the militant Palestinian people of

(Mr. Ould Boye, Mauritania)

its legitimate right to return to its homeland and enjoy self-determination on its own territory, including the establishment of an independent State of its own. That, in the final analysis, is justice and will provide true, certain guarantees of respect for all the Holy Places in Palestine, foremost among them the Holy Al-Aqsa Mosque.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Chinese): I thank the representative of Mauritania for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Indonesia. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. WIRYONO (Indonesia): At the outset, Sir, I should like to congratulate you upon your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of January. My delegation is confident that under your able and wise guidance the Council's deliberations will conclude successfully.

At the same time, we convey our appreciation to the Permanent Representative of Burkina Faso for presiding over the Council last month with such distinction.

I wish also to avail myself of this opportunity to congratulate the five new non-permanent members of the Council, and to express our gratitude to the outgoing members for their valuable contribution to the work of the Council during their tenure.

My delegation requested to participate in the Council's debate in view of its profound concern over the situation in the occupied territories, particularly Al-Quds. As a member of the Organization of the Islamic Conference and its Jerusalem Committee, Indonesia has always attached the highest importance to the preservation and maintenance of the sanctity of Al-Aqsa Al-Haram Al-Sharif, the First Kiblah and the third holiest shrine of Islam. Indeed, to the more than 150 million Indonesians of the Muslim faith - living as they do in harmony and

(Mr. Wiryono, Indonesia)

mutual respect with their fellow citizens of other religious beliefs - it is an outrage whenever any holy shrine is desecrated in Al-Quds.

The present series of meetings was called by the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the Arab Group in the wake of the unconscionable and premeditated violation and desecration of holy Muslim sites: the Al-Aqsa Mosque on 8, 14 and 19 January, and the Ibrahim sanctuary on 17 January. The events as they unfolded are undeniable, and it is hardly necessary for me to elaborate upon them. Rather I should like to use this time to focus briefly on the essential aspects of the transgressions against Islam and on their implications.

The first incident took place on 8 January, when members of the Israeli Knesset, in the company of Israeli extremists, attempted to establish a place of prayer for the adherents of Judaism within the confines of the Al-Aqsa Mosque. Incensed by this sacrilege, the Muslim worshippers had no alternative but to confront the intruders. The outrage was further compounded when Israeli police forces entered the Mosque, not to maintain order but to humiliate the faithful. However, the full magnitude of the implications of that incident became apparent when on 14 January an even larger group of Knesset members violated the Al-Aqsa Mosque, thereby deliberately provoking Muslim worshippers into a pre-planned confrontation as a pretext for calling for a massive show of force by the Israeli police, which led to the arrest of numerous Muslim worshippers.

As if that were not enough, on 19 January a large band of Israeli extremists attempted to force their way into the Al-Aqsa Mosque and when turned away staged a provocative and highly threatening demonstration outside the holy site. Before that last incident, on 17 January, yet another attempt at desecration took place, at the Ibrahim sanctuary in Al-Khalil, resulting in clashes and confrontation.

(Mr. Wiryono, Indonesia)

The fact of the matter is that within a span of a few days no less than four wanton acts of aggression were carried out against sacred Muslim shrines, not only by Israeli settlers, but, even more ominously, by a large contingent of elected Israeli officials. My delegation was shocked by the actions and behaviour of the members of the Israeli legislature and subsequently by the police forces. However, in hindsight, there is nothing new in this. For the history of transgressions against Muslim Holy Places and the City of Al-Quds itself has been chronicled in the annals and resolutions of the Council, which fully expose the Israeli Government's duplicity in targeting the Al-Aqsa Mosque in its incessant campaign to Judaize Al-Quds and to force the indigenous Palestinian Arab population to leave.

It is to be recalled that immediately after the Israeli occupation of Al-Quds the Council adopted resolution 252 (1968) declaring null and void any measures designed to change the status of the Holy City and demanding that Israel rescind and desist from any further measures and actions. Time and again, in resolutions 267 (1969), 298 (1971) and 476 (1980), this Council has reaffirmed those provisions and called for an end to Israeli occupation of the Arab territories, including Al-Quds.

Moreover, the Security Council has on numerous occasions been called into session to take up repeated acts of violation of the sanctity of the Al-Aqsa Mosque. In response to an attempt to burn down the Mosque the Council adopted resolution 271 (1969), which underscored that any act of profanation against Holy Places or the encouragement thereof seriously endangered international peace and security. None the less, that aggression was followed by many others. Hence, in confronting the most recent acts of sacrilege the Council must not consider them in isolation from the prior ones. Rather, they must be viewed as part and parcel of Israel's actions in contravention of the norms and principles of international law, especially those relating to the treatment of civilians under alien occupation.

(Mr. Wiryono, Indonesia)

Our sense of outrage cannot be overstated. My Government has consistently maintained its firm unity with our brothers in the Islamic world, the Arab nation and all civilized members of the international community in calling for concrete actions by the Council to compel Israeli compliance with its relevant and longstanding decisions. However, as stated by my Foreign Minister at the sixteenth meeting of Islamic Foreign Ministers held at Fez earlier this month,

"We realistically face the fact that the sacrilege committed by Israel against all of Islam, against Palestinians, against the sacred soil of the occupied territories and against Jerusalem, has continued unabated."

In light of the gravity of the present situation, we fully supported the decision of the Organization of the Islamic Conference to bring the matter before the Security Council and to denounce

"the odious and treacherous act of aggression against Al-Aqsa Mosque perpetrated with the support and protection of the Israeli occupation authorities."

For the people of Indonesia who, with the assistance of the Organization of the Islamic Conference and fellow Muslim countries, are at this time in the process of restoring the ancient and revered Demak Mosque in Central Java, the defilement by the Israeli occupier of the holy shrines in the occupied territories constitutes an intolerable affront to their sense of justice and religious tolerance. The first principal tenet of our State philosophy is belief in God and the guarantee of freedom to profess and practice one's religion. It is therefore repugnant to us when, in the Holy City of Jerusalem, which represents the great spiritual traditions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, acts are perpetrated to undermine the sanctity of holy shrines. Indeed, today as never before Israel poses a great challenge to the international community's determination to preserve this unique character of the Holy City. To be sure, the sense of outrage felt by the countries

(Mr. Wiryono, Indonesia)

of the Islamic world cannot but be shared by all who revere the living historical significance and spiritual tradition that Jerusalem symbolizes.

Clearly, these acts and any recurrence of them cannot but bring about a further escalation of the tensions and confrontation in the region, which represent a grave threat to international peace and security. My delegation therefore calls upon the Council not to shirk its responsibility and to respond with firmness, not only to put an end to such acts but, beyond that, to achieve a peaceful and comprehensive settlement of the Middle East conflict as a whole that must necessarily include the attainment of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Chinese): I thank the representative of Indonesia for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker is His Excellency Mr. Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada, Secretary-General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, to whom the Council has extended an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedures. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. PIRZADA: I should like to begin by expressing my thanks to you, Mr. President, and to the members of the Security Council for giving me the opportunity to participate in this debate in my capacity as Secretary-General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

I would also like to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council. The People's Republic of China has consistently espoused justice, equity and peace in the conduct of international relations, and I am confident that under your presidency the serious developments in Al-Quds Al-Sharif, which have outraged the deeply held religious sentiments of Muslims everywhere and caused anguish and pain to the entire Islamic world, will

(Mr. Pirzada)

be addressed and examined by the Council and that an appropriate response will be forthcoming from this body, which has been charged with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. The role of the Security Council has acquired an added significance this year, for 1986 has been declared by the United Nations as the Year of Peace. The present debate provides an early opportunity to the Council to exercise its responsibility and demonstrate its commitment to justice and fair play.

I am addressing the Council today in pursuance of the mandate given me by the Al-Quds Committee of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, presided over by His Majesty King Hassan II of the Kingdom of Morocco, who is also Chairman of the Islamic Summit Conference. At the end of its deliberations the Al-Quds Committee charged me to proceed immediately to New York to participate in the debate and to convey to the Security Council the deep sense of outrage and denunciation of the Islamic Ummah, comprising more than a billion people, at the premeditated and planned profanation of the Islamic Holy Shrines by the Zionists in Al-Quds Al-Sharif and other occupied territories, and particularly the repeated incursions into the Holy Al-Aqsa Mosque by Israeli officials, police and security forces, members of the Knesset and even a member of the Israeli cabinet.

(Mr. Pirzada)

I am mandated to state in unequivocal terms that the Islamic world will not tolerate the profanation and Judaization of Islamic Holy Places; it will not accept repeated affronts to its deeply held religious beliefs. Jerusalem must be returned to Arab and Islamic sovereignty.

I should like also to recall that the Sixteenth Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, held in Fez, Kingdom of Morocco, on 10 January 1986, adopted a resolution condemning the forcible entry into the Al-Aqsa Mosque of some members of the Israeli Knesset, under the protection of Israeli security forces.

The serious developments which led to the holding of an urgent and extraordinary session of the Al-Quds Committee and which impelled the Islamic countries to seek a meeting of the Security Council have been highlighted by the speakers who have preceded me and are well known to the members of the Council. I do not therefore intend to dwell on them in any detail.

I should, however, like to underline that we are not discussing an isolated incident which has been blown out of all proportions. We are looking at the latest situation in the perspective and the context of the past record of the forces occupying Arab and Palestinian territories, including the Holy City of Jerusalem.

Since its aggression in 1967 and occupation of Arab and Palestinian lands, Israel has been following a consistent policy of Judaizing the occupied areas, establishing settlements, forcing the local populations to leave by intimidation, force and pressure, and systematically destroying the religious and cultural heritage of Muslims and Christians in Jerusalem and other parts of the West Bank.

Al-Aqsa, the first kiblah and the third holiest shrine of Islam, has been a particular target in this campaign. What Israel has not dared to do openly, in order to maintain a facade of freedom of worship and the protection of holy

(Mr. Pirzada)

shrines, it has sought to achieve by clandestine, devious and indirect means. The first move in this direction was the so-called excavations, ostensibly for archaeological research, which were undertaken around and under the Mosque. The objective was so to weaken the foundations and structures that the Holy Shrine would collapse by itself. In 1969 came the criminal arson which was explained as the act of a deranged individual. In 1982 another "fanatic" and "deranged" individual opened fire inside the Mosque, killing some worshippers and injuring many others. Some other "madmen" tried to blow up the Mosque in 1983 and again in 1984. And now comes the "routine visit" of some members of the Interior Committee of the Knesset, which has been, according to the representative of Israel, deliberately used to incite anti-Jewish hatred and has been transferred to the Security Council by the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) to

"regain lost ground by trying to inflame religious intolerance and hatred".

(S/PV.2643, p. 29-30)

He conveniently forgets that the request was made on behalf of the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the Arab Group.

The Security Council is well aware that that explanation is a distortion of truth. The truth is that the entry into the Mosque was not an innocent, isolated or routine visit, nor can it be laid at the door of deranged individuals. Furthermore, since the first incident on 8 January, the Mosque has been invaded time and again under the protection of Israeli security forces; efforts have been made to hoist the Israeli flag over the Mosque; Jewish religious prayers have been offered; and members of extremist parties - who just happened to accompany the

(Mr. Pirzada)

delegation at its first visit and have returned in greater force since, with the full protection of Israeli forces - have made inflammatory speeches in the Haram Al-Sharif. These same individuals had on earlier occasions openly called for the destruction of the Mosque and for the "purification" of the Israeli society by removing all Arabs and Palestinians from it.

The fact remains, misleading explanations notwithstanding, that the members of the Knesset and their cohorts did not go to the Mosque in their private capacity; that, despite disclaimers by some officials of the Israeli Government, the Prime Minister of Israel asserted the full sovereignty of Israel over Jerusalem and over the Al-Aqsa Mosque - the clear implication being that Israel may at any time take over the Mosque physically. Furthermore, these incidents were provoked by the Zionists to establish themselves in the Mosque. If proof is required, one only has to look at the fate of the Mosque of Abraham in Al-Khalil, which has been turned practically into a synagogue and where Muslim prayers were disturbed by Zionist hooligans as recently as 17 January. I might also add that it was not the Muslims who entered a synagogue to pray: quite the contrary. The charge of inflaming religious sentiments thus rests squarely on the shoulders of those who forced their way into the Mosque.

The Israeli representative also waxed eloquent and lyrical in praise of Israel's record of

"unparalleled, unsurpassed respect for all religions and all faiths".

(S/PV.2643, p. 32)

One suspects that this respect, this religious tolerance, boils down to Israel's so-called right to occupy the places of worship of other religions. One would

(Mr. Pirzada)

like to see the reaction of the Jewish clergy and laity, or even the Israeli authorities, if a group of Muslims were to force their way into a synagogue and insist on holding Muslim prayers there.

Let us also examine for a moment the root cause of the problem. The basic cause, of course, is the illegal occupation of Arab and Palestinian lands by Israel through aggression and use of force, in violation of international law, norms of behaviour and decisions of the United Nations Security Council. The United Nations Security Council has repeatedly called upon Israel to withdraw from all occupied Arab and Palestinian territories. It has on numerous occasions declared that all measures and actions taken by Israel which have altered or purport to alter the character or the geographic, demographic, historical and legal status of Jerusalem, including the so-called basic law, are invalid and null and void and must be rescinded. What has been the response of Israel? It has consistently refused to withdraw from the occupied territories. It has defied the United Nations. It is holding on tenaciously to the fruits of its aggression. No neighbouring country is safe from its deprivations, be it Jordan, Syria or Lebanon. It has ranged far afield in its aggression. It has attacked Iraq, it has committed aggression against Tunisia, and it has threatened attacks against others. It has consistently torpedoed all movement towards peace, for peace would oblige it to vacate the Arab and Palestinian lands it has occupied. It has continued to Judaize the occupied territories and Islamic Holy Places. It has refused to recognize the Palestinian people and their inalienable rights. One would have hoped that the troubled history of Jews and the sufferings they had to undergo over the centuries at the hands of their oppressors in Europe would make the Zionists sensible of and sensitive to the sufferings of others. But the reverse seems to have been the case. They have in turn become the oppressors. They have sent the Palestinian people into the diaspora. They deny the Palestinians what they demanded for themselves - the right to exist.

(Mr. Pirzada)

If Israeli professions of peace are honest, let Israel demonstrate the honesty of its purpose by actions - by implementing in full faith the decisions of the Security Council and the General Assembly, by practising religious tolerance, by withdrawing from territories it has occupied, by recognizing the right of the people of Palestine to self-determination and statehood and by agreeing to the holding of an international conference on peace in the Middle East, with the full and equal participation of the Palestine Liberation Organization. Let Israel show that it is ready for peace.

The international community - even those who have supported Israel all along - cannot be duped for ever by professions of peace and actions of war, by rhetoric of religious tolerance and actions of fanatical intolerance, by demands of security for itself and denial of security to its neighbours, by trumpeting the past oppressions against its people and visiting the same fate on the Palestinians, by claims to civilized behaviour and the practice of victimizing the Palestinian people, by espousing democratic principles for its own people and denying democratic rights to the people of Palestine.

The duality and duplicity have gone on for long enough. It is time for the Security Council to act. What holds Israel back from ushering in an era of peace? What holds the Security Council back from dispensing justice? The Islamic world demands justice. The Palestinians demand justice. If the Security Council cannot act, or is not allowed to act, if all avenues to seeking redress are closed, there can be no peace or international order, and world peace will continue to remain hostage to the overweening pride and obduracy of Israel.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Chinese): I thank Mr. Pirzada for his kind words addressed to me.

In view of the lateness of the hour, I intend to adjourn the meeting now. The next meeting of the Security Council to continue its consideration of the item on its agenda will take place this afternoon at 3.30 p.m.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.