



**Security Council**

PROVISIONAL

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ENGLISH

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PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TWO THOUSAND  
SIX HUNDRED AND FIFTY-FIRST MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,  
on Tuesday, 4 February 1986, at 6 p.m.

President: Mr. ADOUKI

(Congo)

Members: Australia  
Bulgaria  
China  
Denmark  
France  
Ghana  
Madagascar  
Thailand  
Trinidad and Tobago  
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics  
United Arab Emirates  
United Kingdom of Great Britain and  
Northern Ireland  
United States of America  
Venezuela

Mr. HOGUE  
Mr. TSVETKOV  
Mr. LIANG Yufan  
Mr. BIERRING  
Mr. de KEMOULARIA  
Mr. GBEHO  
Mr. RABETAFIKA  
Mr. KASEMSRI  
Mr. MOHAMMED  
Mr. SAFRONCHUK  
Mr. AL-SHAALI  
  
Sir John THOMSON  
Ms. BYRNE  
Mr. AGUILAR

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The meeting was called to order at 6.55 p.m.

EXPRESSION OF THANKS TO THE RETIRING PRESIDENT

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): As this is the first meeting of the Council in February 1986, on behalf of the Council I should like to pay a special tribute to His Excellency Ambassador Li Luye, Permanent Representative of the People's Republic of China and President of the Security Council last month. His wisdom, together with his remarkable talents as a diplomat, made it possible for him to direct the work of the Council with skill and win our admiration and esteem. As President of the Council for the month of February I extend our thanks to him.

I should like to welcome also His Excellency Ambassador Andres Aguilar, the new Permanent Representative of Venezuela in the Security Council. There is no doubt that his contribution will be useful to the success of our work. On behalf of the Council I extend a warm welcome to Ambassador Aguilar.

I trust the Council will forgive me if for a moment I insert a personal note as the head of the Congolese delegation.

This is the first time in our brief history as a State Member of the Organization that the Congo has had the great honour and exceptional privilege of occupying a seat on the Security Council. Our membership of the Organization, our support of its purposes and principles and of the important role played by the Security Council in the maintenance of international peace and security has thereby reached its culmination. The Council may count on the Congo's full co-operation towards the success of our work.

## ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted.

LETTER DATED 4 FEBRUARY 1986 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL (S/17787)

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I should like to inform members of the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In accordance with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in conformity 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. Netanyahu (Israel) and Mr. El-Fattal (Syrian Arab Republic) took places at the Council table.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I should like to inform members of the Council that I have received a letter dated 4 February 1986 from the Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations, which reads as follows:

"I have the honour to request the Security Council to invite Mr. Samir Mansouri, Deputy Permanent Observer of the League of Arab States to the United Nations, to participate in the Council's discussion of the item entitled 'Letter dated 4 February 1986 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/17787)', in keeping with rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure."

(The President)

That letter will be circulated as a Security Council document under the symbol S/17791. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Council agrees to extend an invitation to Mr. Samir Mansouri under rule 39 of the provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

In due course I shall invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

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

The Security Council is meeting today in response to a letter dated 4 February 1986 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/17787).

I should also like to draw the attention of members of the Council to the following documents: S/17785, letter dated 4 February 1986 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General; and S/17788, letter dated 4 February 1986 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council.

The first speaker is the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic, on whom I now call.

Mr. EL-FATTAL (Syrian Arab Republic) (interpretation from Arabic): At the very outset I should like to extend to you, Sir, our warmest congratulations on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council. We are convinced that your presidency of the Security Council will lead this body to positive results as far as protecting the international community against State terrorism by Israel is concerned.

(Mr. El-Fattal, Syrian Arab Republic)

No matter how much United States financial or media support the representative of Israel gets, that can never change anything. The year 1986 is completely different from the year 1948.

Mr. Begin, the perpetrator of the Deir Yassin massacre who also bombed the King David Hotel in Jerusalem during the British Mandate over Palestine, has been rewarded with the Nobel Peace Prize for his well-known terrorism. He is the terrorist. We have already referred to Shamir, but there is Sharon. Does the representative of the Israeli enemy remember what Sharon did with the village of Qibya? He demolished it completely, with everybody in it asleep in their homes - everybody, including children, women, and the elderly.

Does anyone believe an honest word can be uttered by a racist entity like Israel which is no different from South Africa?

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): There are no further speakers for this meeting. The next meeting of the Security Council to continue its consideration of the item on its agenda will be fixed in consultation with the members of the Council.

The meeting rose at 8.15 p.m.



(Mr. El-Fattal, Syrian Arab Republic)

We have not forgotten your country's struggle to gain independence; we supported that struggle for a long time. It is our pleasure to see your great country playing such a principal role in the Security Council today. Indeed, it has played a major role since its accession to the United Nations, particularly in the field of decolonization and for the creation of better conditions in a world that respects the peace and security of oppressed peoples.

May I also take this opportunity to express to the Permanent Representative of the People's Republic of China, Mr. Li Luye, our deepest appreciation for his most able conduct of the Security Council's deliberations during the month of January.

I should like to thank you, Mr. President, and, through you, the other members of the Security Council for responding to the request of the Syrian Arab Republic to convene an immediate meeting of the Security Council. That request stemmed from the seriousness of the threat to international civil aviation - a crime perpetrated by Israel against the international community as a whole.

The delegation of the Syrian Arab Republic seized the Council of the matter this morning. The incident on which we base our complaint can be summed up as follows: it is a case of air piracy and international terrorism directed against international civil aviation.

At 0854 hours universal time on the morning of 4 February 1986 - in other words, this morning - a Libyan private civilian G-2 type aircraft registered under No. LN 777 left Tripoli International Airport, Libya, with a Syrian official delegation, headed by Mr. Abdullah Al-Ahmar, Assistant Secretary-General of the Arab Baath Socialist Party, on board.

(Mr. El-Fattal, Syrian Arab Republic)

While it was flying in international airspace - and let me repeat "international airspace" - over the Mediterranean Sea, the captain of the aircraft informed the Cyprus Airport control centre, at 1101 hours, that two Israeli fighter aircraft were intercepting them and demanding that he accompany them. Two minutes later, that is, at 1103 hours, the aircraft's contact with Cyprus Airport was broken off.



(Mr. El-Fattal, Syrian Arab Republic)

In transmitting this information to the Security Council, we wish to draw the Council's attention to the gravity of this terrorist act against the peace and security of civilian travel in international airspace and the dangerous consequences deriving therefrom. We request that the necessary steps and measures be taken to discover the fate of the said aircraft and the fate of its passengers and crew, and to ensure their safety. The Syrian Arab Republic unambiguously places full responsibility for this air piracy upon Israel. The Syrian Arab Republic requested the Secretary-General to inform the President and members of the Security Council of this action in order to prevent a repetition of it - if, that is, the Security Council shoulders its responsibilities.

On many previous occasions the Security Council has unanimously adopted resolutions condemning such acts of piracy. I shall refer only to resolution 337 (1973), adopted unanimously by the Council on 15 August 1973. That resolution reads, in part:

(spoke in English)

"Condemns the Government of Israel for violating Lebanon's sovereignty and territorial integrity and for the forcible diversion and seizure by the Israeli air force of a Lebanese airliner from Lebanon's airspace;

"Considers that these actions by Israel constitute a violation of the Lebanese-Israeli Armistice Agreement of 1949, ...

"Calls on the International Civil Aviation Organization to take due account of this resolution when considering adequate measures to safeguard international civil aviation against these actions;

"Calls on Israel to desist from any and all acts that violate Lebanon's sovereignty and territorial integrity and endanger the safety of international

(Mr. El-Fattal, Syrian Arab Republic)

civil aviation and solemnly warns Israel that, if such acts are repeated, the Council will consider taking adequate steps or measures to enforce its resolutions". (resolution 337 (1973), paras. 1-4)

(continued in Arabic)

When we met with the Secretary-General today to present our complaint, we were very pleased to find that he too considers the Israeli action to be very serious. Indeed, he has issued a statement, from which we wish to quote the following:

(spoke in English)

"[The Secretary-General] is deeply concerned at what appears to be a serious infringement of freedom of civil aviation, and an act that could aggravate the already tense situation in the area". (SG/SM/3827)

(continued in Arabic)

There can be no doubt but that this Israeli action is very serious. If it is left unpunished, if the international community does not take a clear, united stand against it, if the Security Council does not adopt an appropriate resolution condemning the action, Israel will be given encouragement - as happened in the past when the Security Council failed to adopt appropriate resolutions - to perpetrate further acts of aggression not only against the territory and airspace of other States but, indeed, in international airspace.

If Israel continues its arrogant and mad conduct, if it continues to regard international airspace as a playing field for its American fighter aircraft, that will put an end to freedom of aviation and to the principle of the inadmissibility of committing illegal acts in international airspace. If that time comes, no one will be able to board an aircraft for a flight to or from our region.

(Mr. El-Fattal, Syrian Arab Republic)

This Israeli act violates all international agreements protecting international airspace and the aircraft therein. Furthermore, it poses a very dangerous threat to the safety of civil aviation. In addition, Israel's action threatens the lives of innocent persons. It threatens peace and security not only in the region concerned but in the whole world.

The international crime committed by Israel is indeed within the jurisdiction of the Security Council because it affects civil aviation in all parts of the world. For that reason, what we are requesting of the Security Council can be summed up as follows:

First, it should strongly condemn Israel for the act of piracy and terrorism that it committed this morning.

Secondly, full responsibility for this act of air piracy and terrorism committed this morning must be placed on Israel.

Thirdly, the Council should demand that Israel put an end to acts of piracy and terrorism and that it heed international agreements and the norms of international law.

To that end, I am merely - at this late hour - transmitting this complaint to the Security Council. I reserve the right to make a more comprehensive statement on the acts of terrorism perpetrated by Israel against our people - on the land, in the sea and in the air.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I thank the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Israel, and I now call on him.

Mr. NETANYAHU (Israel): I congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency. We have no doubt that you will perform as brilliantly - and I use

(Mr. Netanyahu, Israel)

that word carefully - as your predecessor, Ambassador Li Luye of China, did; we extend warmest regards to him as well.

It is always useful to begin a statement with the facts. The facts - and I shall be brief in describing them - are these:

Israel suspected that a Libyan aircraft - an executive aircraft carrying a dozen people, not a civil airliner - was carrying terrorists, people involved in planning attacks against Israel. Our pilots intercepted that aircraft on its way from Libya. It was brought down to an Israeli airfield. The passengers were examined. It turned out that there were no such people aboard.

(Mr. Netanyahu, Israel)

After the passengers and crew had been given coffee and been treated to a brief respite in Israel, they got back on the plane. They are no longer in Israel. They have not been in Israel for the past six hours or so; I may be wrong - it may be five hours. Nobody, of course, was hurt, and the aeroplane was retrieved.

Why this matter is a subject for an urgent meeting of the Security Council, I do not know. The Security Council was not asked to convene after the Rome and Vienna airport attacks, when quite a few people were hurt - indeed, butchered. No one asked for the convening of the Council; no one talked about air piracy or about the problems posed to international peace and security at the time. No one even requested, as I recall, a presidential statement.

It is very interesting to us that the request for this particular meeting, this urgent meeting, does not come from Libya, though the Permanent Representative of Syria admitted that it was a Libyan plane and a Libyan crew. One would therefore expect Libya to be the plaintiff in this case, if there is a complaint to be made. Yet it is quite instructive that Libya has chosen not to submit this complaint.

I suggest that the reason Libya has not submitted this complaint is precisely that the degree of absurdity of the meeting would then be obvious to all. Why did we act? I said we believed, we had reason to believe, to suspect, that there were terrorists on board. But that was not just a suspicion or a belief that grew out of thin air. It grew out of the terrorist meeting held this week, that in fact has just ended, in Tripoli, convened by Qaddafi himself under his personal sponsorship, a meeting of 20 terrorist organizations, including such people as Ahmed Jabril, Habash and Abu Musa. According to Abu Musa, as quoted today in The New York Times, there were also representatives of Abu Nidal at the meeting.

(Mr. Netanyahu, Israel)

At that meeting, titled "The Revolutionary Forces of the Arab Nation", there were very clear declarations about continuing the terrorist attacks against Israel - more killings, more raids, more bloodshed. That was not disguised; it was pronounced for all the world to hear.

Under the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations,

"Every State has the duty to refrain from organizing, instigating, assisting or participating in acts of civil strife or terrorist acts in another State or acquiescing in organized activities within its territory directed towards the commission of such acts ...". (General Assembly resolution 2625 (XXV), annex)

Clearly, Libya - and for that matter, Syria - does not fit that bill, because Qaddafi arranged that conference for reasons and purposes directly contrary to that fundamental concept.

I do not know whether members of the Council expect Israel to sit idly by, to have such a terrorist conference, to have the recent attacks, in which other nationals were involved and have suffered, and say "We cannot act. We have reason to believe terrorists are on board, that they are planning additional attacks, but we must sit idly by and wait to absorb the attack."

I would also argue that it makes no difference whether we were right or, in this case, not right in assuming that such terrorists were on board, because, if we had found, for example, one of the terrorist leaders involved in the Rome and Vienna airport attacks, those who criticize us would not alter their criticism, because there was or was not such a terrorist on board. It would be argued, as I hear it being argued, that it is wrong to have any interception of civil aviation

(Mr. Netanyahu, Israel)

under any circumstances, and that what matters is not the result - one can never ascertain the results in advance; everything is based on probabilities - but the act and the intention, and the intention here was to intercept terrorists.

We find that this type of inhibition, this absolutist inhibition, this particular interpretation of the limits of international law and, indeed, the inhibiting of the essential concept of self-defence, in practice was never applicable and in fact is certainly out of date, given the nature of terrorist warfare that is being waged.

International law does not allow, as is clear, for States to wage terrorist war. It also does not cover those States. It does not grant any immunity to them or the terrorists that they launch, precisely because they violate all those immunities and all those rights that they are now evoking and that I heard the representative of Syria evoke.

In fact, classic international law actually allows a country, for example, to stop ships in international waters if pirates are believed to be harboured on board. That was quoted, for example, in Bowett's classic book, where he wrote:

"It is clear, as the case of the Marianna Flora shows, that the right may be exercised against acts of piratical aggression if the circumstances are such as to reasonably warrant the apprehension of real danger by the State. The fact that the ship subsequently proves innocent of piratical character would seem to be irrelevant if the initial suspicion is well-founded."

There is no better way - there are ways as good, but there is no better way - to fight international terrorism than to try to catch its chief perpetrators. That was the purpose of our activity, and it is something I do not believe several of the countries represented around this table would deny.

(Mr. Netanyahu, Israel)

As for the principle of the limits, the absolutist limits, on self-defence, we would say that a nation attacked by terrorists is permitted to use force to prevent or pre-empt future attacks, and we would add that it is simply not serious to argue that international law prohibits us capturing terrorists in international waters or international airspace.

If the Council meets again on this matter - I hope it will not - I hope that we shall have a serious discussion about this complex problem of international terrorism and its implications for international norms and those who abuse those norms. But even those who do not yet fully accept the fundamental concept of self-defence, as it must be construed in the age of terrorism, I believe are prepared to accept that the sanctity of human lives precedes the sanctity of airspace.

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

The next speaker is Mr. Samir Mansouri, Deputy Permanent Observer of the League of Arab States to the United Nations, to whom the Council addressed an invitation under rule 39 of the provisional rules of procedure.

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



Mr. MANSOURI (interpretation from Arabic): Permit me at the outset to convey to you, Sir, the warmest congratulations of the League of Arab States on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. We are confident that your diplomatic experience and political wisdom will redound to the honour of your country, sisterly Congo, in its efforts to consolidate international legitimacy and its commitment to the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter and, in particular, to Security Council resolutions, the implementation of which is obligatory.

We wish also to express our appreciation to Ambassador Li Luye, Permanent Representative of the People's Republic of China, for his guidance of the Council's work last month.

For the third time in the space of a month, the Security Council is considering a new complaint against Israel, this one put forward by an Arab State which now joins the list of the victims of aggression: the Syrian Arab Republic. This time, the complaint is with reference to Israeli practices and to acts of piracy carried out by the Israeli authorities in international airspace.

The Council has heard His Excellency the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic detailing the Israeli act of piracy which consisted in forcing a Libyan civilian aircraft to land in occupied Palestine. Israel openly confesses to having carried out that act of air piracy in defiance of all the norms of international law and all agreements guaranteeing safety, security and freedom of aviation, quite apart from having put at risk several human lives, the lives of the passengers on the aeroplane.

It is ironic that the Israeli Minister for Transportation, in a letter annexed to document S/17723 of 9 January 1986, called for the convening of an international conference which would, in his words,

"express the resolve of all enlightened and civilized nations to combat terror against civil aviation and airports". (S/17723, p. 2)

(Mr. Mansouri)

And now we find the Israeli authorities themselves, less than one month after their false alarm, having this morning made use of their jets in an act of piracy against a civilian aircraft flying in international airspace en route to Damascus. That contradiction reveals the true nature of Israel's intentions, which may be seen in its actions, not in its false claims and assertions made in a bid to win over public opinion. Those actions reflect the real policy of the Israeli authorities, a policy aiming at continued Zionist hegemony and expansion at the expense of the Arab people.

Today's act of air piracy makes it clear that, in Israel's view, under no circumstances will anything be permitted to impede the achievement of Israel's expansionist ambitions for the perpetuation of its occupation of Arab territories, with further expansion at the expense of the rights of the Arab people. This act of piracy reaffirms anew that the Israeli authorities have broadened their terrorist and aggressive practices beyond aggression in Arab territories and against Arab States, to infringe upon the safety of civil aviation in international airspace without justification, and on imaginary pretexts which are logically and reasonably unacceptable, quite apart from being in complete contravention of international laws and norms.

Israel is encouraged in its continued blatant defiance of the international community; this is a natural result of the paralysis of the Security Council and its inability to condemn Israel and its inhuman practices in the occupied Arab territories. That in turn is a result of the unconditional protection granted Israel by the Government of the United States of America, both in this Council and within the framework of the strategic co-operation agreements between the two countries.

I wish now to read out a statement issued at Tunis today by the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States on the hijacking of the Libyan aircraft. The statement reads as follows:

(Mr. Mansouri)

"This constitutes a new act of piracy perpetrated by the Zionist armed forces in defiance of all international agreements and in the full knowledge that its act of international terrorism would meet with encouragement and admiration in certain quarters. The hijacking of the Arab jet aircraft is yet further proof of Israel's determination to persist in its policy of violence and provocation in order to frustrate peace efforts and to leave only one option open: the option of Israeli hegemony, which can lead to nothing but confrontation."

It is absolutely obvious that Israel, claiming to resist so-called terrorism, intends to persist in the practice of the State terrorism it has engaged in since its inception. The Israeli authorities have arrogated unto themselves this right in total disregard of the provisions of international law. They define who is a terrorist in conformity with their own notions, forgetting that all the Israeli leaders have been described by historians as terrorists.

The Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 579 (1985), in which it affirmed the need for all States to subscribe to the provisions of the International Convention against the Taking of Hostages, the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Civil Aviation and other relevant instruments. Unfortunately, and in contravention of the terms of that and other resolutions, Israel has defied those provisions and engaged in the act of air piracy before the Council today. That was an act of terrorism and aggression, and poses a threat to international peace and security in the region.

I wish in this connection to recall the statement issued by the Council at its commemorative meeting of 26 September 1985. That statement read, in part, as follows:

(Mr. Mansouri)

"The members of the Council were cognizant of the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security conferred by the Charter on the Security Council and of the special rights and responsibilities of its permanent members .... They agreed to employ appropriate measures available under the Charter when considering international disputes, threats to the peace, breaches of the peace and acts of aggression."

(S/PV.2608, p. 127)

In the light of that statement and the avowed determination of this Council to shoulder its responsibilities, the League of Arab States calls upon the Security Council today to condemn vigorously this premeditated act of aggression and those who perpetrated it. We call upon the Council to reaffirm that it is imperative that there be no repetition of acts such as this one, which was perpetrated by a State Member of this Organization.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I thank Mr. Mansouri for the kind words he addressed to me.

The representative of the Syrian Arab Republic has asked to make a statement in exercise of the right of reply, and I call on him.

Mr. EL-FATTAL (Syrian Arab Republic) (interpretation from Arabic): I have a few remarks to make. They have to do with the allegations of the representative of international Zionism at this meeting. We believe that what he said was an insult to the intelligence of the members of the Council and to its functions.

Israel proceeds from what it calls the theory of self-defence to launch wars. Was not the 1956 war it launched against the Arab Republic of Egypt begun in the name of self-defence, because at that time Egypt had acquired some weapons with which to defend itself? Did Israel not prepare and wage the 1967 war under the banner of self-defence? Did Israel not engage in the 1978 invasion of Lebanon on the same pretext of self-defence and has it not remained in south Lebanon since that time and until the 1982 war, when it swept across half of Lebanon under the banner of self-defence?

The question is not one of self-defence. Israel, or the representative of Israel, has no right to tell the Council when Israel is acting in self-defence and when it is not. Israel was established on the basis of terrorism, and it cannot survive, occupy, expand and annex Jerusalem and the Golan Heights other than by justifying its deeds under the banner and pretext of self-defence. Israeli terrorism is daily being practised against our Arab people in Palestine, in the occupied Syrian Golan Heights and in south Lebanon in view of the entire world. Now the representative of Israel is asking the Council why it convenes a meeting whenever there is an Arab complaint.

The representative of Israel said the same thing when Israeli war planes - provided by the United States - launched the well-known attack against the peaceful Iraqi nuclear installation and described that action as one of self-defence. Israel daily confiscates Arab territories piece by piece, building dozens of settlements on those lands in addition to the more than 160 settlements it

(Mr. El-Fattal, Syrian Arab Republic)

has already established under the pretext of self-defence. Self-defence here comes under a different Israeli concept, that of Israeli security. Where does Israeli security start and where does it end?

Were the Council - apart from some of its members - to agree to Israel's argument that its security was threatened, then Israel would have no security until it achieved all the ends of Zionism, which are well-known to all, namely, to occupy the territories between the Nile and the Euphrates. Then, and only then, would Israel's dream be accomplished and Israel's security guaranteed.

Did not Mr. Begin, one of the leaders of Israel, a Nobel laureate, commit the Deir Yassin massacre, purposely killing 400 people of that village that posed no threat to the security of the Israeli gangsters in those days before Israel was established? Did Mr. Shamir, the present Israeli Foreign Minister and former Prime Minister, not commit another massacre in which Count Bernadotte, the United Nations Mediator in Palestine, was killed? - killed by the terrorist Shamir, who played a large part in designing Israeli policy in the past, who does so today and who will do so in the future.

Every time we come to the Security Council we are told, "Do not come to the Council." Tunisia is bombed, and the representative of Israel says the same thing: "Why do you come to the Security Council?" Jerusalem, the Holy Land, is desecrated, and the representative of Israel asks: "Why are you coming to the Security Council?" Of course, the representative of Israel does not want the Security Council to convene a meeting because the Security Council is the instrument that might be effective in deterring Israel's aggression were it not for America's protection of Israel and the American veto used in the interest of Israel.

We listened to the representative of Israel pass a new international law - the law of suspicion, the law of probability: every Arab in the world is determined

(Mr. El-Fattal, Syrian Arab Republic)

to liberate the occupied Arab territories; hence every Arab is a terrorist. And since Arabs travel, attend meetings and return from meetings, then Israel, according to the theory invoked this evening, therefore has every right to stop any Arab and make itself into the guardian and interceptor of Arab aircraft because it suspects every Arab of being a freedom-fighter, in other words, a terrorist. That is the new concept the Israeli representative has introduced to the Security Council.

Insolence is insolence, but to go to the extent of proclaiming that it is an Israeli policy and within Israeli law to destroy civilian aviation in the entire region whenever a plane - whether it be Libyan, Syrian or Egyptian or, perhaps tomorrow, even American - may carry a passenger who is fighting for his freedom and the restoration of his land. Does the Council then give Israel the right to seize that plane by piracy and its usual terrorism and to force it to land in Israel, and to arrest the freedom-fighters, the fighters for liberation, aboard it under the pretext of defending Israel's security and self-defence?

(Mr. El-Fattal, Syrian Arab  
Republic)

This is destruction of the provisions of the Charter. This is perversion of the role of the Security Council.

Faced with such serious matters, particularly international crimes such as that perpetrated today by Israel against a civilian aircraft, we must ask who gave Israel the right to be the judge, the beneficiary, the occupier who persecutes millions of Arabs, whose designs will have no end, except as a result of an Arab victory.

As for the theory of "assumptions" put forward by the representative of Israel, under what law does a human being depend on assumptions, on what he called probability? Israel would destroy the whole world - sea, land and air - on the sole basis of probability. There is no probability. Every Arab is a fighter. The representative of Israel must understand that. Every Arab is a fighter. And we dare Israel to touch another Arab aircraft, to violate Syrian air space again under the pretext of self-defence. It has bombed and destroyed southern Lebanon and even Beirut under the pretext of self-defence.

Is Israel more precious than any other country in the whole world? Can the same be said of any country here in the Security Council or outside it that espouses the fascist, Zionist theory that the right of self-defence permits it, by virtue of its American fleet and warplanes and its alliance with the United States to capture, destroy and occupy in the name of security and self-defence? That would mean that Israel has seized the whole world. Can the Security Council stand idly by when such bloody theories are introduced here?

We are men of law. No country can be allowed to practise the law of the jungle against everybody else. The Zionist entity cannot be both judge and a party to the conflict in defiance of the will of the Security Council. If Israel goes to such lengths in pursuit of its policy of terrorism barbarity, the blame rests with



(Mr. El-Fattal, Syrian Arab  
Republic)

those who have prevented the Council from taking any action. We hold the United States fully responsible in that regard.

We have come to the Council today to say that this is an act of aggression not against Syria but against the entire international community, against the freedom of international aviation, against the safety of passengers - and not just Syrian passengers. What Israel did today it will do again, against other aircraft - not necessarily against Arab aircraft the next time. Aviation in the Middle East is threatened by Israel and the United States fleets that protect it.

The Israeli air force, which is provided with all kinds of arms by the United States, has committed aggression against us. Have we forgotten the raid on Tunisia? Have we forgotten the barbarism of Israel in its occupation of Lebanese territories - territories it still occupies?

We come to the Security Council and we are asked why we do so; Israel is innocent, we are told.

Israel was founded on terrorism. Israel brought terrorism to the heart of the Arab world. We are all nationalists and patriots; we all believe that. We have come to the Security Council to defend an international interest: the freedom and safety of aviation.

There are dozens of resolutions, dozens of agreements that protect passengers and airliners, but Israel arrogates to itself the right to seize any plane and force it to land in Israel because it suspects there is a "terrorist" on board - a "terrorist" we call a freedom fighter, be he Palestinian, Lebanese or Egyptian.

We cannot countenance such "laws" enacted by the "settlers", the occupiers of Arab territories; it is intolerable that the international community should be forced to accept them.

(Mr. El-Fattal, Syrian Arab  
Republic)

What if South Africa were to do the same thing? And it would! South Africa, under the pretext of self-defence, is occupying Angola, striking at Botswana, attacking Lesotho - all under the pretext of self-defence, of defending Western civilization, which it supposedly brought to the area. Instead of bringing civilization to the area, it brought destruction, and it would bring more destruction to the area. Yet the United States continues to supply Israel and South Africa with money, arms and encouragement - as though it were all right for them to spill Arab blood under the pretext of self-defence.

The "message of the white man", the "divine message", the "chosen people": we have to accept all those insults, all the acts of aggression by Israel, all the acts of terrorism. Israel has elevated terrorism to an art. We have to accept all this so that the settlers imported from all over the world can feel comfortable in occupied Palestine, the occupied Golan Heights and occupied Lebanon.

The situation cannot be addressed by the Security Council save through a firm resolution condemning Israel's acts. First, it must proclaim that Israel bears sole responsibility for this act of international air piracy. Secondly, Israel must be obliged to cease all acts of piracy and terrorism - everywhere: whether in the occupied territories, outside the occupied territories or far away from the occupied territories. Today it has engaged in piracy in the air; tomorrow it may be on the seas.

The Security Council must act in the interest of the international community. The aggression against the Libyan airliner is just the beginning of a new terrorism that could destroy the concept of the freedom and safety of international aviation.

(Mr. El-Fattal, Syrian Arab Republic)

If the Security Council does not adopt a strong resolution against Israel including the imposition of sanctions against it, Israel, like South Africa, will not be deterred and will continue its terrorism against the Arabs, killing our children, our women and our elderly and importing hundreds of thousands of Jews from all over the world to settle them in the occupied Arab territories, leading to continued tension in the region.

We the Arabs and the Arab countries have no choice but to liberate our occupied lands. We are all committed to the cause of liberation. Therefore we are all terrorists in the view of Israel.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I now call on the representative of Israel, who has asked to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

Mr. NETANYAHU (Israel): I shall not engage in an historical discourse, if that is what I can call what we have just heard, because the representative of Syria has given us a précis of the way he views the problem: Israel was conceived in original sin, the mere creation of the State was a sin, and therefore anyone acting to correct that sin - essentially to wipe out Israel - cannot be guilty of sin himself. Therefore whatever means he pursues - and it could be any means - are by definition legitimate. That, however, is not subject to the representative of Syria's interpretation, or for that matter mine - that is, the choice of means regardless of ends - and I would submit that the destruction of Israel is an end that should be debated at least in this Council. But the choice of means is proscribed by international law; it is totally unrelated to ends. There are certain ways of waging war which have been ruled out of international conflict, or which we have at least tried to rule out. One of them is terrorism - and this is not my definition but an objective definition - that is, those who for whatever reason deliberately attack civilians; murder them; blow them up; blow up civilian aircraft; blow up boats; massacre tourists in passenger areas. That is what

(Mr. Netanyahu, Israel)

terrorism is. It does not make any difference who practices it. Of whatever religion, of whatever nationality, those who perpetrate such acts are engaging in terrorism. Nothing absolves them.

The question then really is: What does one do against such people? After all we are finding ourselves faced with an increase of such activity as I have defined it. It is growing, it has been growing for the last 10 years; it is growing in the scope of violence, in its ferocity, in the means employed, in the number and frequency of people killed; it is growing this year and it will grow further unless we take certain actions.

Now this is not done by itself; there are people who perpetrate such actions. These people are assisted, indeed are launched, by Governments. Two of those Governments are involved in this case. One of them is Libya - I have spoken about Libya briefly; I did not, and I shall not now, detail the whole record of support, the tens of millions of dollars it provides these groups, and the embassies, and the sanctuary, and the weapons, and the training which is confirmed by satellite photos and other evidence. The other is Syria. Syria harbours terrorists; Syria sends terrorists, including those who attack airlines.

The representative of Syria talked about the destruction of civil aviation. He said we must - perhaps I am paraphrasing it, but I think he implied it - punish the perpetrators, that that was the function of the Council: to punish the perpetrators, those who would destroy international civil aviation. Well one of the people who was at that conference planning additional attacks against my country - and not only against my country but against many countries around this table - is George Habash. George Habash happens to reside in Syria, along with Abu Nidal, who until recently resided in Syria for a fair chunk of the five years since he was expelled from Iraq and who has part of his force in Syria or, rather,

(Mr. Netanyahu, Israel)

in the Syrian-controlled Bekaa valley in Lebanon. But Habash, who has a long record with civil aviation, claims responsibility for the blowing up of the Swiss airplane. I think 120 people were blown to smithereens in mid-air. He claimed responsibility for the Sabena hijacking. He claimed responsibility for the Mogadishu raid. He claimed responsibility for Entebbe. He has destroyed civil aviation. If one had to choose a single figure who over the last decade was responsible for the wanton, terrorist attacks, by anybody's definition here it would be George Habash. George Habash is sitting in Damascus - well, he shuttles back and forth between Damascus and Tripoli.

So if we are to take action against such people, who are now planning their next attacks, then we must understand that we cannot allow them to hide behind their definition of international law, nor should we allow them the ultimate victory, which is to arrogate and to assign the term "terrorist" to those of their victims who dare fight back.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): The representative of the Syrian Arab Republic has asked to speak in exercise of the right of reply, and I now call on him.

Mr. EL-FATTAL (Syrian Arab Republic) (interpretation from Arabic): I shall be very brief in view of the lateness of the hour.

Who is the terrorist? Is the terrorist somebody who liberates his land from Israeli occupation through his struggle or is he somebody who comes from anywhere in the world financed by the United States and enters Palestine to uproot the indigenous population and replace them? How could there be settlements, be they in the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, southern Lebanon or the Golan Heights, had it not been for Israeli terrorism? - a terrorism that was practised even before the establishment of Israel and was expanded and increased after the establishment of Israel.

(Mr. El-Fattal, Syrian Arab Republic)

Israel was established through force and terrorism and not by a resolution of the United Nations, and the people of Palestine and the population of the Golan Heights would not have given up their territory had it not been for United States tanks and aircraft and the protection of the United States Sixth Fleet. We warn against the twisting of ideas and concepts by a representative to whom no one accords credibility, for we know the record of Israel's filthy and dirty occupation of the Gaza Strip, the West Bank and the Golan Heights.

Facts cannot be founded on the imagination of the representative of Israel, who represents a group that considers itself racially superior, that is closed in upon itself and is against everybody else, a group that does not even consider itself belonging to the Middle East but rather considers itself in the Middle East to control the destiny of our Arab peoples and nations.