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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 29th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. KOUASSI (Togo)

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OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.40 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 71: REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE ISRAELI PRACTICES AFFECTING THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE POPULATION OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES: REPORTS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/41/454, 455 and Add.1, 456, 469 and Add.1, 677, 680, 681, 682)

1. Mr. TSYMBALOV (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that the aggressive expansionist policy of Israel with respect to the neighbouring Arab States, its desire to strengthen its hold on the occupied Arab territories and its refusal to recognize the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people lay at the core of the prolonged Arab-Israeli conflict. Relying on the political, military, economic and financial support of the United States, other Western countries and the forces of world zionism, Israel obstinately refused to implement Security Council and General Assembly resolutions calling for the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the occupied territories and the guaranteeing of the territorial integrity, political independence and security of all States in the Middle East.
2. The report of the Special Committee (A/41/680) stressed that the Arab people of Palestine had been subjected for decades to mass terror, violence and repression. In the past year dozens of Arabs had been killed and hundreds had been thrown into prison, where they were kept in inhuman conditions and were tortured and mistreated. Such practices were in blatant violation of the 1949 Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and other relevant international instruments.
3. The massive and flagrant violations of human rights in the occupied Arab territories increasingly alarmed the international community. The evidence showed that Israel, relying on the support of reactionary and imperialist forces, was ignoring international public opinion and flouting numerous United Nations decisions which set forth the conditions for a just settlement in the Middle East. The Israeli Government was conducting a policy of genocide against the Arab population by driving the Palestinians from their land, destroying their homes and property and torturing and murdering political prisoners. Recently there had been alarming new trends in Israel's policies in the occupied territories. There was direct evidence of an escalation in violence. In accordance with its "iron fist" policy, the Israeli Government had resorted to such inhuman measures as the imprisonment of peaceful inhabitants without trial, exile and deportation. Furthermore, the collective measures of punishment were becoming more widespread.
4. It was obvious that human rights in the occupied territories must be implemented through a comprehensive settlement in the Middle East based on the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the occupied territories, the implementation of the right of the Arab people of Palestine to self-determination and to establish an independent State and a guarantee for the right of all States in the region to an independent and secure existence and development. All parties concerned, including the Palestine Liberation Organization, must participate in such a settlement. The

(Mr. Tsymbalov, Byelorussian SSR)

convening of an International Peace Conference on the Middle East could open the way to a comprehensive settlement, and the five permanent members of the Security Council could constitute a preparatory committee for that Conference.

5. It was obvious that Israel, with the active support of the United States, was continuing its policy of separate deals with neighbouring Arab countries with a view to dividing the united Arab front and perpetuating its rule in the occupied territories. Separate negotiations, however, only blocked efforts to establish lasting peace in the region and endangered the security of the peoples living there. The United Nations must once again firmly condemn Israel's actions in the occupied Arab territories and demand the immediate cessation of the massive and blatant violations of human rights. The world community must take effective measures to put an end to that shameful state of affairs. The Byelorussian SSR reaffirmed its unswerving solidarity with the Arab peoples in their just struggle against the intrigues of the imperialist and Zionist forces in the Middle East.

6. Mr. NASUTION (Indonesia) said that the report of the Special Committee (A/41/680) demonstrated that Israel's occupation of the Palestinian lands had far-reaching socio-economic consequences and that any prospect of improvement in the human rights situation in the occupied territories had become more remote. The large-scale Israeli settlement programme had gone forward, forcing the Palestinians to live in limited areas surrounded by militant settlers and introducing appalling changes in the demographic pattern of the occupied territories. All those measures were clearly designed to deny permanently the national rights of the Palestinian people, especially its right to self-determination, and were aimed at the de facto annexation of the occupied territories.

7. The Israeli settlements were using the limited water and other natural resources of the West Bank at the expense of Arab farmers. The scarcity of those vital resources was already causing grave problems for the indigenous inhabitants, as was evident from the sharp decline in agricultural production and the level of employment. With regard to the overall economic situation, the international community continued to witness the systematic efforts to integrate the economy of the West Bank into the Israeli economy through a variety of measures in the field of taxation, employment, agricultural and industrial production, and trade practices. Normal production and commercial activities were impeded through the closure of Arab businesses and tax collection campaigns directed against Arab enterprises. The entire economy and its infrastructures had been rendered subservient to Israeli dictates and needs.

8. The Palestinians in the occupied territories were also subjected to various restrictions on their everyday life, which further infringed their fundamental rights and freedoms. The frequent curfews, the deliberate destruction of dwellings, imprisonment and incarceration without trial and deportation for political reasons had continued unabated. The situation with regard to education in the occupied territories had also deteriorated because of the systematic Israeli campaign of repression and interference.

(Mr. Nasution, Indonesia)

9. The impact of all those Israeli policies and practices had resulted in a heightened sense of insecurity, deprivation and frustration for the Palestinians. Israel's nearly two decades of occupation of the West Bank had resulted in the subjugation of the Palestinian people, the stagnation of the economy, the dispersal of their communities, massive violations of human rights and the depletion of natural resources. His delegation condemned all the Israeli policies and practices that were in direct contravention of the 1949 Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War. The inescapable conclusion to be drawn from the report of the Special Committee was that the Palestinian people continued to be subjected to humiliating treatment and repression. Indonesia reaffirmed its longstanding commitment to collective action through the United Nations to bring about the withdrawal of Israeli forces from all occupied Arab territories and to ensure the exercise of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, including the establishment of its own national State.

10. Mr. JOUSHAN (Afghanistan) said that, although 1986 was the International Year of Peace, there was no peace in the occupied Arab territories. The Palestinian and other Arab peoples in those territories continued to suffer from the inhuman policies and practices of Zionist Israel. The report of the Special Committee (A/41/680) gave a clear picture of the situation there. Mass arrests, torture, brutality, imprisonment, expulsion and deportation and the closing of schools and medical institutions were common practices carried out by Israel in order to change the legal status of the occupied territories as a prelude to their complete and total annexation. Such measures were in flagrant violation of the relevant Geneva Conventions.

11. The report of the Secretary-General in document A/41/455 showed that Israel continued to refuse to comply with the pertinent General Assembly and Security Council resolutions. In spite of the lack of co-operation by Israel, the report of the Special Committee, nevertheless, provided a clear picture of the deteriorating situation in the occupied territories. His delegation wished the Special Committee every success in carrying out its mandate.

12. Israel was able to carry out its expansionist policies and inhuman practices because of its partnership with the United States. That "strategic alliance" had been condemned by the Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries in Harare. The prolongation of the Arab-Israeli conflict had not only increased tension in the Middle East, but had also threatened international peace and security. Without a comprehensive, just and political solution to the problem, there could be no lasting peace in the region. A peaceful settlement could be achieved only through the total and unconditional withdrawal of all Israeli forces from the occupied territories and the effective exercise by the Palestinian people of its inalienable right to self-determination. The Soviet proposal for the convening of an International Peace Conference on the Middle East, under the auspices of the United Nations, with the participation of all parties concerned, including the Palestine Liberation Organization, provided a good basis for a comprehensive settlement. Afghanistan fully supported the idea of setting up a preparatory committee within the Security Council to carry out the necessary work.

(Mr. Joushan, Afghanistan)

General Assembly resolution 40/96 D called upon the Governments of Israel and the United States to reconsider their negative positions towards the attainment of peace in the Middle East through the convening of the Conference.

13. The Security Council should take effective measures to put an end to the expansionist policies and inhuman practices of Israel and ensure the immediate withdrawal of Israeli forces from all occupied Arab territories. The protection of Israel through the veto power of the United States would only encourage it to pursue further its racist and oppressive policies. Afghanistan supported the just struggle of the Palestinian people for national liberation from Zionist occupation. He was confident that the struggle of the people of Palestine, with the support of the international community, would halt the inhuman policies and practices of Zionist Israel.

14. Mr. AL-SABAH (Kuwait) said that the report of the Special Committee clearly indicated that the countless crimes perpetrated by the Israeli occupying forces in the occupied Arab territories were flagrant violations of the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the 1949 Geneva Conventions and other international instruments. Yet, Israel was continuing arrogantly to occupy those territories, in disregard of the plight of the defenseless civilian population. Invoking national security considerations, Israel was flouting all the United Nations resolutions as well as the most fundamental principles of international relations. Not only was it endeavouring to annihilate the indigenous population of those territories, which was merely demanding its legitimate rights but it was also invoking those pretexts to carry out acts of aggression against countries which did not even share frontiers with it, such as Iraq and Tunisia. Israel's belief that its security took precedence over the security of other countries was but one of the aspects of its arrogant behaviour, which was responsible for the strife in the Middle East.

15. The Zionist record of aggression against Arab territories and occupation in Palestine was well known. Zionist doctrine in that respect could be traced back to Herzl's slogan of "a land without a people for a people without a land", which was later espoused by Golda Meir, who had refused to recognize the existence of the Palestinian people, and later still by Menachem Begin and by Yitzhak Shamir, now Prime Minister of Israel, who had recently declared that Israel would not relinquish any part of its territory. The attitude of those leaders was indicative of the nature of Zionist thought, which was aimed at achieving the objectives of Zionism in total disregard of all human and moral values. In practice, that attitude was reflected in indefinite administrative detention, collective punishment, illegal expropriation, the closure of schools, universities and other educational establishments, the closure of newspapers, prolonged curfews over entire cities and villages, the demolition of homes, deportation and expulsion, arbitrary trials and sentences, the destruction of economic infrastructure, the imposition of exorbitant taxes and many other similar practices. Then there were the means and methods used to obliterate the cultural life of the Palestinian people, such as the imprisonment and deportation of Palestinian thinkers, writers, scholars, religious leaders and poets and the suppression of all Palestinian

(Mr. Al-Sabah, Kuwait)

creative and artistic activity. Former Foreign Minister Abba Eban, had very recently described in public the bleak and repressed existence led by the population of the occupied territories, drawing attention to the fact that there was no reason to believe that the situation could be perpetuated for much longer without exploding. According to Abba Eban, ideologies of Israeli self-assertion and superiority over the Arab population ruled by Israel and other more extremist ideas were already being taken very seriously in circles uncomfortably close to the centres of Israeli political and religious power. The international community must therefore put an end to Israel's expansionist policies and violations of international law. It must also discharge its responsibilities with regard to the alleviation of the injustice and suffering endured by the population of the occupied Arab territories, the withdrawal of Israeli forces from those territories and the granting of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, especially its right to self-determination and to establish a State of its own in its homeland.

16. The representative of the Zionist entity, in a recent statement on the item under consideration, had misquoted a verse from the Koran, in a way which was deplorable and which had shocked the entire Muslim community.

17. Mr. HIELSCHER (German Democratic Republic) said that, although the Arab population of the occupied territories was the main victim of Israel's continuing policy of terror, violence and flagrant contempt of international law, the occupation of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem, the Golan Heights and southern Lebanon was not merely a regional problem but a permanent threat to international peace and security, which jeopardized the very survival of mankind. Collective efforts must therefore be made to settle such regional conflicts by peaceful means in the best interests of all States and peoples, especially in the Middle East.

18. According to the Special Committee's report, the expulsion of the Arab population, the settlement policy, the seizure of Arab land and the plundering of natural and water resources was continuing unabated, in addition to interference with municipal services, education and health care and the undermining of the national culture of the Palestinian people. Paragraph 95 of the report fully illustrated Israel's policy in that regard, which was ultimately aimed at the permanent annexation of the occupied territories through changes in their legal status, geographical nature and demographic characteristics. The same applied to the Syrian Golan Heights.

19. However, it was evident that the legitimate resistance of the local population could not be suppressed. Therefore, the problem could only be effectively settled through an immediate and unconditional Israeli withdrawal from all the territories occupied since 1967 and the granting of the inalienable rights of the Arab people of Palestine.

20. Israel could afford to disregard the decisions of the United Nations and the most elementary norms of international law only because it enjoyed the full political, economic, financial and military support of its strategic ally.

(Mr. Hielscher, German Democratic Republic)

However, imperialist manoeuvres aimed at perpetuating occupation and injustice were not being tolerated as was reflected by the heroic resistance of the local population. The German Democratic Republic reaffirmed its unreserved solidarity with the Palestinian people, under the leadership of its sole legitimate representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization, in its just struggle to secure its inalienable rights, including its right to self-determination and the establishment of an independent State.

21. In view of the immense suffering endured by the peoples of the Middle East, the raids against Libyan towns, the threats against sovereign States and the demonstrations of naval strength in the Mediterranean, which had exacerbated tension in the region, it had become critically necessary to implement collective measures to settle the problem. The German Democratic Republic therefore supported the convening of an International Peace Conference on the Middle East under the auspices of the United Nations, with the participation of all interested parties, including the PLO. As had been suggested by the Soviet Union, a preparatory committee of the United Nations Security Council should be established in preparation for such a Conference, with a view to allowing the Council to discharge its special responsibility under the Charter for the maintenance and strengthening of international peace and security.

22. The German Democratic Republic would continue to support the Palestinian and other Arab peoples in their struggle against Israel's policies of aggression and occupation. It would therefore support all measures aimed at achieving a just and lasting settlement of the Middle East conflict and at strengthening the unity of the PLO and the Arab States, in order to turn the Middle East into a region of security, stability and co-operation.

23. Mr. FARTAS (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, recalled that his country's name had recently been mentioned in connection with terrorism because the Zionist representative had attempted to divert attention from Zionist policies. Indeed, Israel itself was a hotbed of terrorism; in fact, its entire history was based on terrorism and terrorist gangs. All the Zionist leaders from Ben-Gurion to Sharon had risen to power through terrorism. That fact could be illustrated by countless examples such as interception of a civilian aircraft by the Israel Air Force and the interrogation of the civilian passengers, as well as the massacres perpetrated by Israel at Deir Yassin, Sabra and Shatila and countless assassinations. It was indeed the Zionists who had initially brought terrorism to the Middle East, where the history of terror could be traced back to Ben-Gurion's activities in the Zionist Movement in the early 1940s. There was ample written evidence to that effect. As to the existing situation in the occupied territories, Abba Eban himself had recently drawn attention to the inferior status of the Palestinian population.

24. Mr. DOWEK (Israel), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said, with regard to the statement by the Libyan representative, that, if someone in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya had given an interview of the kind granted by Mr. Abba Eban,

(Mr. Dowek, Israel)

he would have been hanged in the central square of Tripoli. In Israel, Mr. Eban was able to express his views freely and remain the head of the Security and Foreign Affairs Committee of the Knesset. Mr. Eban had spoken about the Palestinian Arabs in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip; it was clear that they did not have the right to vote because they were not citizens of Israel.

25. He had a booklet which was based on an 18-year survey by the co-ordinator of Government operations in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip over the period 1967-1985, and he would like to have it circulated to members of the Committee. It contained details of life in those territories.

26. In his statement at the previous meeting, he had referred to United Nations documents and not to materials published by Israel. Life in the territories was not paradisaical, but it was not the hell depicted by Libya. The country where such conditions prevailed was Libya. In that connection, he referred to a world human rights guide, published by The Economist, in which countries were rated on a scale of 100 per cent. Libya was given a rating of 23 per cent, and South Africa, which was universally condemned, was given a figure of 22 per cent. The guide explained that the ideas behind the "popular democracy" in Libya were based on the Islamic religion, socialism and the philosophy of Colonel Qaddafi, as stated in his Green Book. It went on to say that the application of that policy was best summarized by Colonel Qaddafi's statement that it was a matter of honour to jail and liquidate the enemies of the authorities. It was not the Israeli delegation that had said that Libya was a terrorist country: it was the leader of that country himself who had acknowledged that fact by stating that his country's policy included extrajudicial killing or disappearances, physical liquidation of enemies of the revolution and murder squads deployed internationally to kill those considered hostile to the present authorities.

27. Mr. GLAIEL (Syrian Arab Republic), speaking on a point of order, requested the Chairman to call on the Israeli representative to confine his remarks to the agenda item under consideration.

28. Mr. FARTAS (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that, in his statement at the previous meeting, the representative of the Zionist entity had spoken of peace. However, the early Israelis had been more candid. Ben-Gurion, for example, had said that he was in favour of the establishment of the Jewish State even if that meant the partition of Palestine. He had said that he proceeded from the premise that a confined Jewish State would not be the end but the beginning and that it was important to acquire land because that would enable the Jews to strengthen themselves and to recover their country in its entirety. Ben-Gurion had gone on to say that all the Jews that could be accommodated would be brought to the Jewish State and that a first rate army would be established in order to usurp more land either through agreement with their Arab neighbours or by any other means.

29. Ben-Gurion had not believed in borders and had said that it was an open-ended matter and that in the Bible and throughout the history of the Jewish people there had been all kinds of definitions of a country's borders.

(Mr. Fartas, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

30. With regard to the question of sovereignty, it had been said that the Geneva Conventions did not apply to the refugees in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip because no State exercised sovereignty over those territories. However, that kind of logic ignored the presence of the Palestinian refugees. The Zionist entity could not usurp Palestinian land, and those who recognized the idea of the concept of prescription in international law also requested that acquisition should be clear and unaccompanied by violence, which had not been the case in Palestine. The Palestinian people retained its sovereignty over its land. In that connection, he pointed out that the Zionist occupation of Palestine and its expansionist activity did not give it the right to acquire the land in question, since the Palestinian people had never renounced its sovereignty over Palestinian soil. Moreover, the Zionist entity was based on usurpation and violence because a Jewish minority had usurped the rights of the Arab majority, which had constituted 91 per cent of the population. Secondly, the Palestinian people should be granted the possibility of exercising its right to self-determination, a right which it had so far been denied.
31. In response to a point raised by Mr. BURAYZAT (Jordan), Mr. DOWEK (Israel) said that every delegation had the right to request the distribution of materials and that the booklet in question had been published by and under the full responsibility of the Government of Israel.
32. The representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya had drawn attention to old statements by Ben-Gurion. It should be noted that the present Government of Israel extended a hand of friendship to the Arabs and expressed its willingness to hold peace discussions with them. His Government was prepared to negotiate with any Arab country and with elected representatives of the Palestinian people. However, it was not prepared to negotiate with the Palestine Liberation Organization.
33. It was true that Ben-Gurion had established a strong army because Israel had to survive in a hostile environment. In conclusion, he said that the people of Israel wanted peace and thought that it could be achieved.
34. The CHAIRMAN, referring to the point raised by the representative of Jordan, said that it was the responsibility of every delegation to ensure the distribution of any documents or papers that it wished.

The meeting rose at 12.10 p.m.