



Security Council

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PROVIS IONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TWO THOUSAND  
SEVEN HUNDRED AND SEVENTIETH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,  
on Friday, 11 December 1987, at 6.55 p.m.

President: Mr. BEJONOGOV

(Union of Soviet Socialist Republics)

Members: Argentina  
Bulgaria  
China  
Congo  
France  
Germany, Federal Republic of  
Ghana  
Italy  
Japan  
United Arab Emirates  
United Kingdom of Great Britain  
and Northern Ireland  
United States of America  
Venezuela  
Zambia

Mr. DELPECH  
Mr. TSVETKOV  
Mr. YU Meng Jia  
Mr. BALE  
Mr. BLANC  
Count YORK von WARTENBURG  
Mr. GBEH  
Mr. BUCCI  
Mr. TANIGUCHI  
Mr. AL-SHAALI  
  
Sir Crispin TICKELL  
Mr. OKUN  
Miss TRUJILLO  
Mr. ZUZE

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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 Russian): As this is the first meeting of the Security Council in the month of December, I should like, on behalf of the members of the Council and on my own behalf, to pay a warm tribute to my predecessor the Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations, Ambassador Kikuchi, for his successful work as President of the Council for the month of November. I am sure that I speak for all the members of the Council in expressing to Ambassador Kikuchi admiration and appreciation for the great diplomatic skill with which he conducted the Council's business last month.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted.

THE SITUATION IN THE OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES

LETTER DATED 11 DECEMBER 1987 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF DEMOCRATIC YEMEN TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL (S/19333)

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter dated 11 December 1987 from the Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations, which reads as follows:

"I have the honour to request that the Security Council extend an invitation to Mr. Zehdi Labib Terzi, Permanent Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization to the United Nations, in accordance with the Council's past practice, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item 'The situation in the occupied Arab territories'."

That letter will be circulated as Security Council document S/19336.

(The President)

The proposal by the United Arab Emirates is not made pursuant to rule 37 or rule 39 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, but if approved by the Council the invitation to participate in the debate would confer on the Palestine Liberation Organization the same rights of participation as those conferred on Member States when invited to participate pursuant to rule 37.

Does any member of the Council wish to speak on this proposal?

Mr. OKUN (United States of America): Before making my brief remarks, allow me to take this opportunity to welcome you, Sir, in your capacity as President of the Council and to anticipate a good month under your wise leadership, and at the same time to thank the delegation of Japan for Ambassador Kukuchi's and the entire delegation's good stewardship of the Council during the preceding month.

(Mr. Okun, United States)

The United States has consistently taken the position that, under the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, the only legal basis on which the Council may grant a hearing to persons speaking on behalf of non-governmental entities is rule 39. For four decades the United States has supported a generous interpretation of rule 39 and would certainly not object had this matter been raised under that rule. We are, however, opposed to special ad hoc departures from orderly procedure.

The United States consequently opposes extending to the Palestine Liberation Organization the same rights to participate in the proceedings of the Security Council as it would have if that organization represented a Member State of the United Nations. We certainly believe in listening to all points of view, but none of that requires violating the rules. In particular, the United States does not agree with the recent practice of the Security Council, which appears selectively to try to enhance the prestige of those who wish to speak in the Council through a departure from the rules of procedure. We consider this special practice to be without legal foundation and to constitute an abuse of the rules.

For these reasons the United States requests that the terms of the proposed invitation be put to the vote. Of course the United States will vote against the proposal.

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

If no other member of the Council wishes to speak at this stage, I shall take it that the Council is ready to vote on the proposal of the United Arab Emirates.

It is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour: Argentina, Bulgaria, China, Congo, Ghana, Japan, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, Venezuela, Zambia

Against United States of America

Abstaining: France, Germany, Federal Republic of, Italy, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): The result of the voting is as follows: 10 in favour, one against, 4 abstentions. The proposal has been adopted.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Terzi (Palestine Liberation Organization) took a place at the Council table.

Count YORK von WARTENBURG (Federal Republic of Germany): I also should like to begin by paying a very warm tribute to Ambassador Kikuchi as the outgoing President of the Council and to thank him for the excellence and great skill with which he conducted our business. I should like to say that you, Sir, will have our complete co-operation during your presidency, which I think will bring us together on important matters.

My delegation abstained in the vote on the participation of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in the Council's debate. In doing so my delegation was guided by the provisional rules of procedure, which the Council has itself established. The procedure followed today is clearly designed to grant the PLO a status similar to that of a Member State of the United Nations. This does not reflect the true relationship of the PLO to our Organization, and therefore we cannot support it.

This does not mean, however, that my delegation objects to the PLO's being heard by the Council in the present debate.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): I thank the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. TANIGUCHI (Japan): First I should like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your assumption of your very important post in the Security Council. I should also like to take this opportunity to express our deep appreciation for the kind words expressed with regard to Ambassador Kikuchi by you and other representatives. I am very, very grateful for the gracious co-operation extended to me by all Member States.

We voted in favour of the participation of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) because the Government of Japan has repeatedly expressed its considered view that it is essential to the solution of the Middle East question that the Palestine Liberation Organization, which represents the Palestinians, participate in peace talks.

In 1975, Japan, as a member of this Council, expressed the position that the PLO, as one of the major parties to the Middle East question, should be invited to participate when this Council conducted its deliberations on the Middle East question, including the question of Palestine. At this time I should like to confirm that position. Accordingly we supported the participation of representatives of the PLO.

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

I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter dated 11 December 1987 from the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People which reads as follows:

"I have the honour to request that I be allowed to participate in the Security Council's consideration of the item 'The situation in the occupied Arab territories', in accordance with the provisions of rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, in my capacity as Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People".

(The President)

On previous occasions, the Security Council has extended invitations to representatives of other United Nations bodies in connection with the consideration of matters on its agenda. In accordance with past practice in this matter, I propose that the Council extend an invitation to the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.

There being no objection it is so decided.

(The President)

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

The Security Council is meeting today in response to the request contained in the letter dated 11 December 1987 from the Permanent Representative of Democratic Yemen to the United Nations, in his capacity as Chairman of the Arab Group of States for the month of December, addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/19333).

Members of the Council have received photocopies of a letter dated 11 December 1987 from the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, which will be circulated under the symbol S/19337.

The first speaker is the representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). I invite him to make his statement.

Mr. TERZI (Palestine Liberation Organization): At the outset let me tell you, Sir, how glad we are that the representative of the Great October Revolution is presiding over our deliberations, particularly at this time, when Comrade Gorbachev has crossed the Atlantic to take the first steps towards peace. We believe that further contacts between the General Secretary and the President of the United States will give them time to discuss regional conflicts, including - indeed primarily - the regional conflict in the Middle East, and that thus we shall be spared the necessity of coming to this Chamber as often as we do. To you personally, Sir, I would say that we have every confidence that with your prudence and expertise you will lead the deliberations here to a fruitful end.

We also express our gratitude to the representative of Japan, who conducted the Security Council's work during November in an exemplary way, particularly when he represented the Council during the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.



(Mr. Terzi, Palestine Liberation Organization)

I also wish to thank all those who voted for, or even against, our participation, because eventually those who voted against will know that we are a factor and that, as has been said on several occasions, deliberations without the participation of the PLO would be like building on sand.

Before I walked into the Council Chamber I overheard a couple of comments: "Why are we being brought here?" someone asked. "They want to scream" was the reply. No, Sir, we are not here to scream; we are here to bring a very serious issue before the Council. The people I overheard said "If they want to solve the problem, let them fight". I assure them that our people are doing all they can in the way of resistance against the occupying Power, by whatever means they have, whether rocks or empty bottles. We have not given up the fight, the legitimate fight, against the occupation and the denial of our rights.

Why do we come here? First, we know that the Security Council has on many occasions reaffirmed that the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War is applicable to the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967, including Jerusalem. That is a decision taken by the Council vis-à-vis the occupying Power. But we are also here because the Council has a responsibility. The Convention says:

"The High Contracting Parties undertake to respect and to assure respect for the present Convention in all circumstances."

It is here that the responsibility of the Security Council, all the members of the Security Council, is best shown. Will the Council really ensure respect for the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949?

(Mr. Terzi, Palestine Liberation Organization)

We are not here to scream. We are not here to give up our fight. We are here exercising a right, a right that has been admitted through that Convention.

It is rather strange that the Council had to meet last year on 8 December in relation to a violation by the occupying Power of the rights of the Palestinian people living under Israeli occupation. One might say "What is the coincidence? Things simply do not happen like that." We all know that the General Assembly has adopted, by a huge majority, a resolution calling for the convening of the International Peace Conference in conformity with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 38/58 C, which clearly says that the best, if not the only, way to achieve peace is by holding an international peace conference in which the Palestine Liberation Organization will participate on an equal footing and with equal rights. In his report on his endeavours the Secretary-General makes it clear that the major obstacle to those endeavours during the year was the position of the Government of Israel. The Government of Israel, whether as a whole or in part, could not accept the principle of an international conference to achieve peace in the area, and rejected the principle of the international peace conference on the Middle East.

Furthermore, we know that only last week the General Assembly adopted several resolutions in which it condemned Israel for its practices against the people in the occupied territories and condemned

"Israeli policies and practices against Palestinian students and faculties in schools, universities and other educational institutions in the occupied Palestinian territories, especially the opening of fire on defenceless students, causing many casualties". (General Assembly resolution 42/160 G, para. 2)

(Mr. Terzi, Palestine Liberation  
Organization)

The General Assembly adopted that resolution only a few days ago. How does Israel react? It does so by resuming the opening of fire on students, children and women in the occupied territories, totally disregarding its obligations regarding the safety of those people and its obligations under the Fourth Geneva Convention.

The Security Council is responsible for ensuring that Israel respects and implements those provisions. The Security Council has very often taken decisions strongly deploring the opening of fire by the Israeli army, resulting in the death or wounding of defenceless students. The Security Council has called upon Israel very often to abide immediately and scrupulously by the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War.

(Mr. Terzi, Palestine Liberation Organization)

But did Israel heed? Did it respond to the call of the Security Council? No. Why not? Because the Security Council should we feel take stronger action than merely calling upon Israel to abide immediately and scrupulously by the Geneva Convention.

On 8 December an Israeli check-post in the Gaza area stopped a car carrying civilian passengers, Palestinians, most probably workers who crossed the green line in order to earn a few pennies to provide for their families. At that check-point, an army check-point, the Israeli army opened fire. Four persons were killed and nine others were wounded. The Israeli occupying Power then imposed a curfew. But, after all, those four people who had been killed had to be buried and the funeral became a demonstration protesting against the brutalities of the neo-fascists of the occupying Power. The wounded were sent to hospitals. One hospital was the El Shifa Hospital in Gaza. The Israeli army was not satisfied and went to the hospital with its tanks in order to pick up the people from their beds. It dragged them out and took them to detention. The army converted the hospital into some sort of military post.

Palestinians are human beings. They simply cannot accept submission so they demonstrate further against the brutalities of the occupying Power. Those brutalities continue and escalate. On 10 December there were more killings. I will not read The New York Times for members, but on 11 December, that is today, the record of Palestinians felled by Israeli army bullets increased. On Friday, 11 December, four more Palestinians were shot dead, among them a nine-year-old child, who died of wounds that he sustained on 10 December in Khan Yunis. The victims were shot dead in the Balata refugee camp. We are surprised that we have not yet heard from the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East about those incidents in the camp, which is near Nablus, north of Jerusalem. Israeli soldiers opened fire on citizens who were taking part

(Mr. Terzi, Palestine Liberation Organization)

in a demonstration after Friday noon prayer. I do not think I have to explain that the Muslims have their "Sunday mass" or "Sabbath service" on Friday at noon. While they were coming out of the mosque protesting the iron-fist occupation policy they were met with army bullets. A 17-year-old boy, an 11-year-old and a 17-year-old girl were killed as a result of this barbarous shooting. Dozens of Palestinians were hit and wounded in what some sources described as the massacre of Balata refugee camp.

We Palestinians seem to have been chosen for massacres - Deir Yassin, Kafr Kasim, Sabra Shatila - and now it is Balata. At least 20 people at the camp were wounded. The Israeli army forced its way into the Women's Union Hospital in Nablus, arrested relatives of the dead and wounded and cordoned off the hospital with army units. Balata refugee camp is under strict curfew according to the latest report.

The Israeli forces prohibited ambulances from reaching the camp in order to evacuate the wounded. Israeli soldiers were shooting heavy sorties of fire and the people in the camp were appealing to the International Red Cross with the demand that it should intercede and assist in the evacuation of the wounded. Sources in the refugee camp were appealing for aid and assistance. They were appealing for blood donations but the Israeli army prohibited blood donors from entering the hospitals to donate blood. What is worse, the Israeli soldiers forced their way into the hospital compound and fired on people.

There are other hospitals in the Nablus district and they were subjected to the same treatment by the occupation army. Rafidiya Hospital in Nablus and the Women's Union Hospital are considered war zones by many eye-witness accounts.

(Mr. Terzi, Palestine Liberation  
Organization)

At noon today - the latest report that we received - which would be 8 o'clock in Nablus, the Israeli forces were still prohibiting ambulances from reaching the hospitals and the Fire Department units were not allowed to pass through in order to evacuate the wounded. That is what is happening today. If I were to read all those criminal acts and report on every single one we might spend the rest of the evening here, but let me read out only a few.

On 27 November the Israeli Military Governor in the Jabalya Camp summoned the imams - priests or pastors of the mosque - and warned them not to make any political speeches during prayers. The imams answered that the speeches followed the Holy Constitution and the Koran. The warning is seen as an attempt to quell unrest after the deportation order on Sheikh Odeh. The Israelis deport or expel the sheikh of the mosque and expect the people just to say "thank you" to them. We assure everybody here that they will not but will continue to fight, using their own means.

On 30 November it was reported that students from schools and colleges in Ramallah and El Bireh went on strike. Why? After all, the United Nations was observing the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People so at least the Palestinians themselves would have to observe that International Day of Solidarity. Those students were carrying out a decision of the General Assembly and responding to their national obligations and duties. The Israeli soldiers took positions at the entrances to a number of schools. In Hebron, the demonstrations broke out at the polytechnic and students chanted slogans in favour of their struggle and of their representative, the PLO of course.

(Mr. Terzi, Palestine Liberation  
Organization)

The Israeli Army placed the college at Hebron under siege and threw tear gas at the students.

In the Gaza Strip - and this is still on 30 November - student demonstrations broke out at several locations. Israeli forces arrived, opened fire and beat up students.

On 1 December, about 100 residents from Bethlehem were summoned by the Military Governor of Bethlehem. They were interrogated individually by the Deputy Chief, Civil Administration.

In Gaza, the Military Appeals Committee confirmed an administrative detention order against a number of persons.

In Nablus - and I am still referring to 1 December - a military force broke into Rafidiya Hospital and arrested two youths who had been admitted to the hospital after having been wounded by bullets fired by the Israeli army in the Balata refugee camp. The hospital doctors protested that if the youths were arrested their lives would be endangered. The protests were to no avail. Of course, for those neo-fascist, racist Zionists, Arab blood is cheap. But the Arabs simply will not heed their wishes.

On 3 December, the Israeli commander of the central region issued an order to deport a resident of the Jenin camp and a student at Najah University.

I mention these criminal, brutal activities by the occupying Power to show that there is a limit to the patience of those under foreign occupation.

Israeli Radio today announced that the resistance is increasing in the Gaza area, in Nablus and in the suburbs of Jerusalem. Sources in the occupied Palestinian territory have reported that the situation is very critical and that a curfew has been imposed on refugee camps - particularly the one near Nablus, where there are 15,000 refugees. Our people use primitive arms - rocks and empty

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Organization)

bottles - but they fight; they do not merely scream.

What is really inhuman is that the occupying Power forbids the relatives of the dead Palestinians to bury them. So what do the relatives, the families of the dead victims do? They sneak into the hospitals and "steal" the remains of their beloved ones in order to give them a proper funeral. But the Israeli occupation forces, with their tanks, break into the houses in the refugee camps and look for the bodies of the dead victims. If they find any, they impose a certain hour and a certain place for the burial of the victims.

All this is not accidental. The commander of the occupation forces in the central region, a certain General Amran, made it very clear in one of his statements that he would continue to send instruments of death to confront the Palestinians. He made the threat that his troops would open fire on anyone who demonstrated against the occupation.

But why should we not have recourse to what the Israeli media themselves say?

The newspaper Ha'aretz reported that a certain Yussi Beilin, who is the Political Director in the Israeli Foreign Ministry, had said this: "I feel more than ever before that we are reliving the same experiences, that the present stage is similar to a great extent to the stage that existed on the eve of the 1973 war". The newspaper went on to report that the psychological security situation and the political tension might cause a new war in the area. So here we have a warning in the Israeli press that all this might lead to a new major confrontation in the area. This is confirmed by the fact that the occupying Power has sent more troops into, particularly, the Gaza region in order to quell the revolt of the people.

According to Davar, another Israeli newspaper, huge numbers of forces from the Israeli army have entered the Gaza area, and they are expecting to confront with



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violence any uprising that might take place in Gaza or other areas of the West Bank.

Al Hamishmar, yet another Israeli newspaper, reported that a senior Israeli military source had said: "We are facing a very serious situation. We have to realize that we are facing a very acute and complex situation and that we are sitting on a barrel of gunpowder".

From all that, it will be understood that we have come to the Security Council with the intention of drawing the attention of everyone here to the situation as it is - but also with the intention of indicating what the results could be.

It is only natural for occupation to engender resistance. Such resistance has varying degrees of violence. But I would say that, primarily, the cause of this chain of violence - I shall not call it a cycle - is the perpetuation of the occupation. Of course, it is easy to specify the cure and the remedy: End the occupation and there will be no resistance, and therefore there will be no violence. But the question we are faced with here is: what do we do in the meantime?

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Organization)

Resistance against occupation has been unanimously accepted and considered legitimate by decision of the General Assembly. I refer to General Assembly resolution 40/61. By the same token, that resistance increases when the hopes for a peaceful settlement diminish. Here we have to put the question: cannot our people have some hope of a peaceful settlement? Because, given their frustration and the arrogance of the occupying Power, we definitely will face violence, which will, we are sure, mean that the mandate given to the Secretary-General will have to be viewed from a different perspective.

The process should be expedited; it is incumbent upon those who reject the efforts for peace, and who constitute the major obstacle to them, to respond in a positive way. Of course there are political ramifications. But the resistance is a derivative of the occupation, and our situation is a derivative of the occupation.

What is to be done? That is the question the Council has to face. Should the Council satisfy itself with strongly deploring, with appealing and asking Israel to rescind or desist? Or does the Charter of the United Nations provide for other remedies? I am sure that the wise forefathers of this Organization envisaged a situation in which Members would not carry out decisions taken by the Security Council. I refer to specific chapters of the Charter on the imposition of sanctions.

For how much longer can the United Nations, which created the monster called Israel, that spoiled brat called Israel - for how much longer can the Security Council and the United Nations permit those criminal acts reminiscent of neo-fascism? The blood of our children and our women is sacred to us; it is very much treasured by us. It should not be spilled for nothing.

Again I repeat that we hope and expect that the Council will take immediate action to put an end to the current brutal activities. It should also shoulder its

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responsibility and end the situation of occupation and bring us closer to a comprehensive peace, as prescribed in a General Assembly resolution.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): I thank the representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker is Mr. Massamba Sarré, of Senegal, Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. SARRE (Senegal) (Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People) (interpretation from French): Allow me at the outset, Sir, to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of December. Aware of your qualities as an experienced diplomat well versed in international affairs and your devotion to the ideals of our Organization, I am convinced that your work will be crowned with success, all the more so because your country has just signed, together with the United States of America, a historic agreement which I am convinced will constitute a step forward in the consolidation of international peace and security.

On this occasion we should pay a tribute to your predecessor, Mr. Kikuchi, the Permanent Representative of Japan, for the exemplary fashion in which he presided over the work of the Council in November.

Lastly I should like to thank all the members of the Council for authorizing me, in my capacity as Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, to take part in its debate with respect to the grave events of recent days and Israeli practices against the population in the occupied Palestinian territories.

(Mr. Sarré, Chairman, Committee  
on the Exercise of the  
Inalienable Rights of the  
Palestinian People)

The deterioration of the situation in the occupied territory is all the more disturbing because it directly affects not merely the future of the Palestinian population but also international peace and security. In a letter I have sent to the Council I have provided information on the incidents which have just taken place in the occupied Arab territories.

According to United Press International (UPI) and the Associated Press (AP), on 9 December 1987 Israeli troops in the Gaza Strip opened fire on young Palestinians, killing two and injuring 12. The students were demonstrating following the killing of four Palestinians in a road "accident" in which, apparently, an Israeli truck had been used to avenge the death of an Israeli businessman stabbed on 6 December. The critically injured were taken to El-Shifa hospital, where demonstrators were subsequently attacked by Israeli helicopters, which dropped tear-gas bombs on the crowd. Several members of the police force were injured in the demonstrations. Schools and shops remained closed in the Gaza Strip, and hundreds of Palestinians did not go to Israel to work because of the demonstrations.

According to The New York Times and the UPI, widespread demonstrations on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip resulted in clashes with Israeli troops. On 10 December a young Palestinian was killed and a dozen people were injured. According to the same sources, in the refugee camp of Kalandia, north of Jerusalem, 23 students who had raised a Palestinian flag during a demonstration were arrested. Twelve others were injured during a clash with the police, and many students who had inhaled tear-gas subsequently had to be hospitalized.

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A Reuters report states that a 11 year old Palestinian from Khan Yunis, in the Gaza Strip, died after being hit on the head by Israeli troops during demonstrations against the Israelis. According to Reuters and UPI, on 11 December Israeli troops opened fire on demonstrators in the Balata refugee camp on the West Bank, killing four Palestinians and injuring 30 others. Reuters also reports that in Jerusalem the military authorities held the head of the Arab journalists' trade union in prison without trial for six months and prohibited the distribution of the daily Al-Fajr on the West Bank.

(Mr. Sarré, Chairman, Committee  
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It will be recalled that during the debates at this session delegations referred to the question of Palestine and the need to find a comprehensive, just and lasting solution. It is striking to observe, furthermore, that the strong emotions and subjectivity to which we had become accustomed yielded to reason and objectivity. This new approach to the question should lead us henceforth to translate into specific action the common denominator on which we all agree, namely organizing an international peace conference on the Middle East.

The Secretary-General of our Organization in his report calls upon us to do so, when he states that

"in the light of the widespread agreement on the part of the international community ... the convening of such a conference, under United Nations auspices, offers the best chance of successfully negotiating a comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Moreover, my decision to make a special effort this year was endorsed by leaders of all parties to the conflict. These two factors - international backing and the support of the parties - have provided an important basis for several rounds of consultations that have been held thus far and will undoubtedly be crucial to future progress.

"... I am encouraged by the fact that the past year has seen favourable developments in the political environment, both in terms of the level and frequency of contacts between the permanent members of the Security Council and between them and the parties. I am also encouraged by the fact that the idea of an international conference under United Nations auspices has been given high priority among the Arab parties to the conflict, and has been the subject of lively debate within Israel. These positive trends, combined with

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the growing international consensus in favour of the early convening of a conference, demand of us that we consolidate and build on the foundation that has so far been established." (A/42/714, paras. 32 and 34)

On the basis of those assessments, which represent the end of a lengthy process, and on the basis of the principles and purposes of our Charter, nothing should prevent us at last from attaining our objective: the establishment of peace in the Middle East through the restoration of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, namely their right to self-determination and independence. With respect to those who might raise the question of the right to existence of all the States of the region, I would refer them to paragraph 3 (f) of the Geneva Declaration, which stipulates the right to existence of all States in the region within secure internationally recognized frontiers, with peace and justice for all.

Only a few hours ago the General Assembly overwhelmingly adopted four resolutions on the Middle East. We note in them, in particular, an appeal for reason, moderation, renewed dedication to the principles and objectives of the United Nations Charter, with a view to achieving a just, lasting and comprehensive solution to the situation in the Middle East and the question of Palestine.

With that approach in mind, the convening of an international peace conference on the Middle East is advocated. As I said earlier, this conference - the outcome of a lengthy process of negotiations among the Members of our Organization - has just been reconfirmed by 129 votes during the consideration of the question of Palestine. It will also be recalled that in presenting our Committee's report to the General Assembly I stated that, if the United Nations delayed in finding a solution to the question of Palestine, violence would worsen and come to threaten

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peace and security in the region, if not world wide. Unfortunately, recent events in the occupied territories only bear this out.

In the absence of a just and lasting solution to the question of Palestine, tension and violence will only increase in occupied Palestinian territories and in the other Arab occupied territories, including Jerusalem. Thus, our Committee has continued to emphasize that the situation will continue to worsen as long as the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people have not been exercised.

The United Nations has an undeniable responsibility for ensuring the enjoyment of the rights of the Palestinians and their protection in the occupied territories. We consider that it is now up to the Security Council to implement the findings of the 1983 International Conference on the Question of Palestine held in Geneva, endorsed by growing majorities in the General Assembly, in particular, by calling for the convening of an international peace conference on the Middle East.

We wish once again to recall that these recommendations are objectively founded upon the underlying internationally accepted principles relating to the Palestinian problem and the Arab-Israeli conflict. The international community considers that the convening of such a conference is now an urgent necessity. This view has been expressed not merely within the United Nations but also in decisions of a growing number of other intergovernmental bodies, such as the League of Arab States, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, as well as in the declaration of the European Economic Community (EEC) and, more recently, the recent Summit Conference of Arab countries held in Amman.

Hence on behalf of the Committee, I should like to underscore that the



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question of Palestine has reached a critical stage. We urgently appeal for increased efforts to achieve a just and lasting solution to this question and to put an end to the intolerable situation of the Palestinian people.

In this respect, the Committee is convinced that the International Peace Conference on the Middle East, which enjoys near unanimous support, offers to all the parties concerned broad possibilities for participation in negotiations resulting in a just and lasting solution of the question. Given the increasing worsening of the situation in the occupied territories, as just described by Ambassador Terzi, we should step up our efforts. We therefore appeal to the Security Council to take appropriate steps to restore the policy of dialogue between all the parties concerned in order to put an end to this tragic state of affairs which has prevailed for more than 40 years.

As I said last week, the time has come for peace of the valiant. It should not be an exclusively Arab or Israeli peace; rather, it should be an Arab-Israeli peace, a peace founded on sincere and objective negotiations under the auspices of the United Nations. We are duty-bound - especially the Security Council, the guarantor of international peace and security - to seize this opportunity, a sad but promising one, to foster the convening of this international conference, the only appropriate and timely way of ensuring a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

I am convinced that events in the past week - which was characterized by the international community's steadfast commitment to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations as demonstrated by the statements we heard on the question of the Middle East during the holding of the Day of International Solidarity with the Palestinian People, as well as during the debates on the question of Palestine and

(Mr. Sarré, Chairman, Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People)

the situation in the Middle East - should be of particular concern to the Security Council.

On behalf of the committee, I once again, in all humility, appeal to the members of the Security Council to see to it that peace in the Middle East is restored.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): I thank the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People for the kind words he addressed to me.

I should like to inform members of the Council that I have just received a letter from the representative of Israel in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice and with the consent of the Council, I propose to invite the representative of Israel to take part in the discussion, without the right 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. Netanyahu took the place reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): I invite the representative of Israel to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. NETANYAHU (Israel): I should like to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council. I am confident that you will perform your duties in the exemplary way that your predecessor, Ambassador Kikuchi, performed his.

I am holding the letter from the Permanent Representative of Democratic Yemen, who requested, in his capacity as Chairman of the Arab Group for this month, an immediate meeting of the Security Council. It is Friday night, 8 o'clock, and the first question that I know is on everybody's mind is: why is the Security Council, the supreme and most important body of the United Nations, suddenly convened, and with such haste? It is true there are major wars going on in the world right now, but it is not to deal with them or to try to resolve them that the Council is meeting. Perhaps it is because of loss of life - loss of life has, indeed,

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occurred. But I did not recall a similar convening - in fact, by the representative of Democratic Yemen - when over 10,000 people were slaughtered in his own country in December of 1985. I do not recall a hasty - or even an unhasty - convening of the Security Council by another member of the Arab League, Saudi Arabia, when riots broke out in Mecca and 402 people were killed and 640 injured. I do not recall a meeting of the Security Council when there were riots in Yarmuk University in Jordan and students were killed - not a word.

Nor, for that matter, was there word from the PLO, the very PLO that raises so much of this. This is the PLO that had thousands of its own members slaughtered in massacres in refugee camps - "massacre" is a word that has kept coming up here - thousands massacred, first by Syria - I do not recall a Security Council meeting - and in the war camps, the intramural war camps between the various factions of the PLO themselves and the Lebanese. I do not remember a Security Council meeting, hasty or unhasty.

So we have to ask: why has this meeting been convened with such abruptness today? I think we can glean some understanding from the timing. Today is not an accidental day. It is important to understand a series of dates that have led up to today, and today's date as well, to understand how ludicrous the basic idea of spontaneity supposedly behind the recent violent incidents is. The last thing they are - I emphasize the word "last" - is spontaneous. You will recall that a year ago, exactly the same thing happened: there was a relative period of quiet, a beginning of tensions in the month of November and violent incidents and the calling of a Security Council meeting on the last day of the deliberations in the General Assembly.

Now, the reason the month of November is important is because three dates occur in the month of November. The first date is 2 November: that is the

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anniversary of the Balfour Declaration. The second date - and this year it is a new one - is 8 November: that is the convening of the Arab summit meeting at Amman. And the third date - which, again, is an annual anniversary - is 29 November, the date of the partition resolution. Why do I cite those dates? Because, for each one of those dates the PLO issues specific orders, commands, calls for incitement, to Palestinian Arabs and asks them, and calls upon them, to incite riots and violence and terror. And I may add the fourth date, that is today's date, which is the twentieth anniversary - and "anniversary" is a peculiar word to use for an organization devoted to murder - the twentieth year to the day marking the establishment of the PFLP led by Habash. It too called for the inciting of violence and terror and riots.

It is important to understand that in the month of November, leading into December, there has been an escalation. We recently had bombs placed on the Tel Aviv-Haifa railroad - luckily, no one was hurt. We had an Israeli civilian by the name of Schlomo Saker, a civilian who was shopping in an Arab market, stabbed to death just a few days ago. We have had many, many incidents of terror that are not reported because they are interdicted; they are simply aborted before they take place - not for lack of trying, for they try, but they do not succeed so you do not hear very much about them. But the attempts are there.

Beyond and above all that there are, of course, the calls for mobs, violence and incitement, especially incitement directed against a very receptive young population of teen-agers, organized and orchestrated to a T. Some spontaneity!

Now, even so, I must say that sometimes even the PLO can be helped in this grisly campaign, and the help that they received in the series of events we are discussing here was a boost in the form of a traffic accident. A few days ago, in Jabaliya an Israeli truck driver swerved off the road, lost control of his vehicle,

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and the vehicle killed four bystanders - Palestinian Arabs. As you can imagine, these kinds of accidents occur on all of Israel's roads, and we have, I regret to say, a high incidence of casualties.

What the PLO let out at that date was the extraordinary canard, which, I must say, caught like wildfire in Gaza, in Judea-Samaria, that this was not a traffic accident but a deliberate act of murder.

(Mr. Netanyahu, Israel)

This facilitated the heating up of a campaign of incitement already under way. It was a stroke of luck, if you want to call it that.

We have, and any country, has under international law, a very simple and clear rule. The first responsibility of any Government, military or civilian, is to enforce law and order. That responsibility is particularly important because many of these attacks have been directed and are directed against innocent bystanders, Jews and Arabs alike. In fact yesterday we caught the terrorist who was responsible for slaughtering - no, let us be specific, for burning alive - a family. This particular terrorist threw a Molotov cocktail - we are not talking about empty bottles here - a bottle filled with explosives, at a car that passed by. The car had in it the Moses family, a husband and wife and their children. The wife and a child were burned alive. We caught that man. He was also trying to set off a car bomb. So we have a real problem inside the borders of Israel and inside the territories. We are facing a deliberate campaign of terror, which we have generally been successful in keeping down, but the PLO has been trying to use the last six-week period to make it flare up.

The descriptions of events here have relied on unsubstantiated press reports and other undocumented information. We are dealing with this at rather short notice, but I can tell the Council, after a cursory glance, that there are some wild fabrications in the material presented to it.

Let me give an example. With regard to the question of hospitals, that is simply a flat lie. Regrettably, in the course of maintaining law and order, there are casualties. Our troops are under strict instructions not to fire, in fact not to use their weapons, until they have absolutely no other resort or unless they are already injured or their lives are threatened. When you are surrounded by several hundred people armed with crowbars, Molotov cocktails and various other weapons

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your life occasionally is threatened. Israel regrets any loss of life that has been taken place, and Israel will continue to do what it can with its security forces to ensure that there is as little loss of life as possible. But when, occasionally, such unfortunate things happen, we do take care of people. In fact, in these incidents we took the casualties to the local hospitals and to two other hospitals in the vicinity: the hospital in Ashkelon and the Sirocka hospital in Beersheba. So what the Council has heard, among other things, is simply flat lies.

What I have described here, which I think explains what we are witnessing tonight, is a very simple pattern. It has been repeated for more than a year; that is, it is being repeated for the second year. I have not had time to check, but I shall look back to see whether there is already a three-year pattern. In any case, here is the two-year pattern. The PLO incites violence. The violence produces Arab and Jewish casualties. The PLO then asks for the Security Council to be convened to discuss not merely the violence but the ills of occupation. This is the natural progression. Presumably the question of the political status of Gaza and Judea-Samaria would not warrant a meeting, hasty or unhasty, late on Friday night, but, since the matter has been raised, let me deal with it very briefly.

The problem of achieving such a settlement is indeed a complex one, it is not simple, and it is a desirable end. To achieve a peaceful resolution, a peaceful political settlement, is exactly what we want. The reason we have not had it has nothing to do with the grievances involved. The grievances can be settled. They are difficult, even complex, but they are not impossible. There is nothing in the Arab-Israeli dispute that is beyond resolution - not refugees, not borders. All these things could be negotiated. Matters of much greater complexity have been negotiated successfully in the last century, particularly in the last half



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century. Fifty million refugees have been settled under far more difficult conditions.

The reason we are not settling these problems is that the PLO, like its predecessors under the Mufti, who made a pact with Hitler, were not interested in a solution; they were interested in liquidation. The problem from the start was not that the Palestinian Arabs lacked a State but that the Jews had one. This was and remains the source of the conflict. That is the first reason why the PLO will stand up and refuse and resist and obstruct and subvert any attempt at peace, because their commitment is not to peace but to the destruction of the Jewish State.

The second reason is a monetary one. The PLO is big business; it is good business. Many people are living off the hundreds of millions of dollars they get annually from the Saudi Arabians and others who pay monies into the coffers of the PLO. By now there is a cast of people, groups and leaders who belong to the richest terrorist organizations in history and who have a vested interest in keeping alive the cause they are fighting for. It is for their own good. A solution would summarily end that.

The third reason is something that Dostoevski understood a hundred years ago. He said that if you have a group of five terrorists together and you persuade four of them that the fifth is a renegade to the cause, they will kill him; and once they kill him they are all locked in a circle of blood and they cannot escape. That is exactly what we are seeing here. It is not only Jews that are victims of this terrorism. In fact many more Arabs than Jews have been killed by the PLO. Most recently, for example, a man like Safa Al Mazri, the mayor of Nablus, was murdered by the PLO, because he was thinking of a political settlement.

(Mr. Netanyahu, Israel)

The matter of a political settlement has been raised here. The PLO is not interested in a political settlement. It is not interested in peace. It is interested in anything but settlement and peace. It is interested in something far more concrete: in preventing even the improvement of the refugees' status. I am not referring to the legal status but to the status in physical terms. The Israeli Government has put forward many proposals to rehabilitate refugees, to make vast improvements in the quality of housing and so on. Who resisted them? The PLO: it said, "This is an unacceptable change in the quality of life". We went ahead and made a few of those unacceptable changes, such as electrification, new housing, new roads, improvements in agriculture and in fishing, improvements in the banking system, improvements in the way people live, in their educational and health conditions. The PLO opposes any improvement in the status quo. It encourages every opportunity to upset it, because what it wants is conflict and dispute and violence and terror.

Recently we thought there was a glimmer of hope that there would be a change in this condition, this stranglehold by the PLO and its ilk on the political process that has tied down the Arab-Israeli conflict since the beginning of this century. We thought there was some opening. That thought emerged as a result of an indication at the Amman summit conference, where we saw that the PLO was for the first time being put on the sidelines, where it deserves to be, by the Arab countries.

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It is clear that what we have been seeing in the past six weeks from the PLO's own exhortations and incitements is that what it is trying to do is escape the conclusion that so many of the Arab leaders apparently reached in Amman, whether they say so directly or indirectly. What recent events and, more important, this Council meeting tonight are all about is an attempt by the PLO to bail itself out of a condition of irrelevance, powerlessness and lost prestige. The question really is: should this be the business of the Security Council - to bail them out of their irrelevance? I think there is no question that that is the last task for which this body is suited.

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

I call on the representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization, who has asked to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

Mr. TERZI (Palestine Liberation Organization): It is sometimes difficult to understand how shooting by the Israeli Army at students could have been incitement by the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). We have heard a great deal about what is happening in the occupied Palestinian territory being in response to calls by the PLO. I would think that members of the Council would wonder if the PLO really has such support from the Palestinians under occupation. If it does, then why not deal with it? Our people in the occupied territories have made it very clear that they do support and recognize the PLO as their sole, legitimate representative.

We did not plan the convening of the Council this evening. It was the criminal and brutal acts of the Israeli Army that resulted in the cold-blooded murder of a number of students and women that made it necessary. We would have preferred that such a thing had not happened. But, since the Israeli Army showed

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its teeth in implementing an "iron-fist" policy against our people, as I said in my opening statement, we felt that it was the duty of the Security Council to address the situation, in view of the position taken in the Council that the Fourth Geneva Convention applies to those areas and that the parties are under an obligation to respect and ensure respect for the provisions of that Convention. That is why we came here.

That Israel has a real problem, we agree. We know that it has a major problem. Israel still cannot decide whether it is a Jewish State, a State of the Jews, and who is a Jew. At the end of the twentieth century Israel is still engaging in Byzantine discussions to establish who is and who is not a Jew; who belongs to the State of Israel; whether he should be a Sephardi or an Ashkenazi. They have those problems, we know.

But Israel's one major problem is that it is an occupying Power. An occupying Power has some obligations arising from its being an occupying Power. I think Israel knows that it is the only State Member of this Organization which has been labelled an occupying Power. That is the problem that faces Israel. That is the problem that keeps almost 30 per cent of the Israeli prime-age population constantly under arms. Occupation is really a costly thing. The only solution is to end it. The life of any soldier who is a member of an occupying Power is threatened. After all, the people under occupation are not going to give him red-carpet service; they are not going to fraternize with an occupying officer.

I recall that during my service in the Second World War we had instructions not to fraternize with the people under occupation in Europe. I would just say to the Israelis that they should not hope to fraternize, because the resistance against their presence in their own country is the primary task.

(Mr. Terzi, Palestine  
Liberation Organization)

We cannot conceive of any Israeli civilians in the occupied territories. After all, an occupying Power is prohibited from transferring any of its civilian population into the occupied areas. Besides, every single Israeli citizen of prime age is a member of the armed forces, whether in uniform or in the active reserve, so one can say that there are no civilians. They should not be there, in the occupied territories, in the first place. One cannot really permit such provocation.

Some may be thinking, do the Palestinians living in the occupied territories seek better dog food or do they want to be in gold cages? They want to be free to exercise their political rights. How many Palestinian refugees have been enabled to return to their homes? There are more than 2 million of us who are denied the right and the possibility to return and live in peace in our own homes. If a tent is changed into a hut, that is not what we demand. We demand that we return to Palestinian territory and live in peace there.

The PLO does not need to be bailed out.

I wonder whether we should believe the Secretary-General when he informs us that the major obstacle to peace is the Government of Israel? There was a challenge there. The Secretary-General had endeavoured to bring all the parties to the negotiating table for a comprehensive peace. Who rejected that? The PLO, at the meeting of our National Council in April, unanimously accepted that approach. We would very much have preferred to use this Council to start the negotiations for peace. I repeat: this is a challenge. If anybody wants to negotiate peace, this table is available to him. We fully endorse that.

(Mr. Terzi, Palestine Liberation Organization)

We want peace to spare our children and those children living in our houses from the threat of elimination, from the threat of being the fourth generation to live in a garrison State named Israel, or being the fourth generation to live in Palestinian refugee camps. We want them all to live in peace and harmony in their own homes.

The PLO is not looking for a way out. The PLO has shown every single sign that we want the process of a peaceful solution, a political settlement. As a matter of fact, it was at Amman that the PLO insisted on bringing this issue to the summit, which was originally meant to be an extraordinary summit to deal with only one item, namely, the Iraq-Iran war and the situation in the Gulf.

We just would not like to open the books about collaboration with the Nazis. The Irgun Zvai Leumi, which is the party of Mr. Begin and his likes, was openly and in public making statements that they should ally themselves with Hitler, because they had mutual and common interests. And the renowned and respected Professor Albert Einstein and others like him did not hesitate to put a big advertisement in The New York Times asking that Begin and his likes, who were Nazis, not be permitted to desecrate the soil of the United States.

We are here to address an immediate issue, which is a derivative of prolonged occupation. We hope that this Council will convene one day, the sooner the better, to consider ways and means to bring about comprehensive peace and convert the discussion at this table from accusations to positive negotiations.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): There are no further speakers on my list. The next meeting of the Security Council to continue consideration of this agenda item will take place on Monday, 14 December 1987, in the afternoon, at a time to be announced later.

(The President)

I should like to remind members that we have already agreed to meet on Monday to consider the question of the continuation of the mandate of the United Nations Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus.

The meeting rose at 8.35 p.m.