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GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PROVIS IONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE EIGHTY-SECOND MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 25 November 1987, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. FLORIN (German Democratic Republic)
later: Mr. MOUMIN (Comoros)
(Vice-President)
later: Mr. FLORIN (German Democratic Republic)
(President)

- Question of Palestine [38] (continued)
 - (a) Report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable REights of the Palestinian People
 - (b) Report of the Secretary-General
 - (c) Draft resolutions
- Organization of work

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The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 38 (continued)

QUESTION OF PALESTINE

- (a) REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE EXERCISE OF THE INALIENABLE RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE (A/42/35)
- (b) REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/42/277)
- (c) DRAFT RESOLUTIONS (A/42/L.33 to A/42/L.35)

Mr. AL-KAWARI (Qatar) (interpretation from Arabic): The Palestine question continues to be the focus of attention of all countries which are anxious for peace and which support justice and right in international relations. The continuation of this problem without a solution threatens a conflagration in the Middle East and constitutes a persistent challenge to the United Nations and its decisions. This question originated with the United Nations, which thus bears a special ethical responsibility for this problem. During the period between the consideration of this item at the last session and at the present session of the Assembly, numerous signs have appeared which indicate the attention accorded by the countries of the world to this basic question of peace, justice and security. Among these signs is the declaration of 8 December 1986 issued by the plenary meeting of the non-aligned countries concerning the question of Palestine, in which those countries once again demanded a speedy resolution of this question, reaffirming that such a solution depends on the ability of the Palestinian people to practise their right to self-determination in their homeland and to determine their own future, as well as the need promptly to begin preparations for an international peace conference on the Middle East under United Nations auspices, and in accordance with relevant resolutions. The non-aligned countries also called on all the parties to co-operate so as to arrive at a just and comprehensive settlement of the Palestine question.

(Mr. Al-Kawari, Qatar)

On 29 January 1987, the Fifth Islamic Summit Conference, which met in Kuwait, adopted resolutions on the Palestine question, all of which reaffirmed the need to terminate the occupation of the Arab territories, including Holy Jerusalem, as well as to enable the Palestinian people to exercise their right to self-determination on their national soil within the framework of an independent State. In the resolutions, the Islamic countries expressed their support for the idea of holding an international peace conference under United Nations auspices, including all the parties and the PLO, the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, so as to arrive at a solution based on the principles of the Charter and relevant United Nations resolutions, all of which support the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

Furthermore, the Foreign Ministers of the 12 member States of the European Community adopted a Declaration on the Middle East on 23 February 1987, in which they referred to the strong bonds which link their countries to the Middle East, and expressed their continued interest in arriving at a solution to the Palestine question and their anxiety at the loss of momentum to such a solution. They also reaffirmed that the international peace conference, to be held under United Nations auspices, constituted the ideal path towards a comprehensive and just solution. They also expressed their readiness to undertake all necessary measures for the holding of such a conference.

During the period between the two sessions, there were many comments about a just and prompt solution to the Palestine question from various NGOs in different parts of the world, such as the Journalists Meeting of the Americas, held under United Nations auspices in Argentina, in January 1987, the periodical issued by the International Co-ordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine

(Mr. Al-Kawari, Qatar)

and the North American Regional Symposium on the Question of Palestine held in New York in June 1987, organized by the North American Co-ordinating Committee for NGOs under the auspices of the United Nations. These are mere examples.

The lesson to be drawn from all these expressions is that enlightened public opinion in all the countries of the world, regardless of their political inclinations, has become anxious to resolve the Palestine question comprehensively and in a just manner, without delay. All the above-mentioned manifestations reflect the support for the Palestinian people in their struggle to realize their legitimate objectives.

While the methodology and ideas held by the international community as a whole concerning the right of the Palestinian people are clear, the obstacles to translating such methodology and ideas into reality is attributed to the fact that one party to the conflict persists in an expansionist racist philosophy and in rejecting all attempts to arrive at a just solution. In this regard, the party has unconditional support. We hope that those who lend such unconditional support realize that they are preventing the implementation of United Nations decisions and prolonging the plight of the Palestinian people, thereby threatening international peace and security and undermining one of the basic principles of the United Nations, the principle of self-determination.

The question of Palestine is the central question of destiny for the Arab nation. The decisions of the Extraordinary Arab Summit Conference, held at Amman at the beginning of November, have reaffirmed anew that the Palestine question is the core and crux of the Middle East question, that peace in the region will never be restored without the restoration of the occupied Arab territories, including Holy Jerusalem, the attainment by the Palestinian people of their national legitimate rights and the solution of all the aspects of the Palestinian question. The Arab

(Mr. Al-Kawari, Qatar)

Summit expressed its conviction that increased Arab capabilities and enhanced Arab solidarity with respect to Israel are the ways and means to confront the Israeli menace threatening the future of the Arab nation.

Finally, the Arab summit decided to support the idea of holding an international peace conference under United Nations auspices, to be attended by all the concerned parties, including the PLO, and the permanent members of the Security Council, in order to arrive at a just and comprehensive solution.

Any acceptable solution to the Palestinian question must take into account the rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to self-determination and to establish their State on their national soil. The time element has become crucial and we feel that we cannot tolerate any delay in exerting effective efforts to resolve promptly this question; the international community can no longer stand by as a mere spectator. We hope that we can soon remove the obstacles that are obstructing the convening of the conference, which the international community has unanimously decided should be held in order to restore the rights of the Palestinians and to remove the constant menace that imperils peace and security.

Mr. DOST (Afghanistan): The question of Palestine lies at the core of the Middle East problem. It is also a great human tragedy affecting a whole nation. Through aggression and occupation, Israeli Zionists have deprived the Palestinian people not only of their homes and property but of their territory and ancestral land. As a result, hundreds of thousands of Palestinians having been living for four decades now in refugee camps in neighbouring and other Arab countries. Unfortunately, however, they have not been immune from Israel aggression even in their refuge. The bloody and cruel massacre in the Sabra and Shatila Palestinian refugee camps in Beirut was an affront to the human conscience.

In the occupied Palestinian and Arab territories Israeli Zionists have resorted to the most inhuman forms of repression and tyranny. Palestinians are deprived of their elementary human rights. Detention, deportation, forced transfer, demolition of houses and other forms of brutal suppression have become routine under the so-called iron fist policy of the Zionist occupation forces. In addition, the confiscation of Palestinian land and water resources to serve the establishment of an ever increasing number of Israeli settlements on occupied territories continues.

The Palestinian people are not the only victims of Zionist aggression and expansionism. Israel has also occupied Arab lands, the Syrian Golan Heights and south Lebanon through armed aggression.

It is regrettable that in its acts of aggression, occupation and brutal repression of Palestinian and other Arab peoples in occupied lands Israel enjoys the support of a member of the Security Council, that is, the United States. It is with American money and weapons as well as political and moral support that Israeli Zionists are continuing their occupationist policy and denying the Palestinian people their legitimate rights. It is also because of this support that Israel can

(Mr. Dost, Afghanistan)

afford to neglect the verdict of the international community as reflected in numerous General Assembly and Security Council resolutions.

Recently, the United States Government has resorted to a number of hostile acts against the Palestine Liberation Organization, the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. The State Department has decided to close down the Palestine Liberation Organization's Information Office in Washington, and the United States Senate has passed an amendment to a Bill which would deny the Palestine Liberation Organization the right to operate its Mission to the United Nations. Such an act, which clearly violates the provisions of the host country Agreement, is in our view an open challenge to the United Nations, to which the Palestine Liberation Organization is legally an Observer. This move must be resisted forcefully by all the members of this world body.

The elements of the solution of the question of Palestine are very obvious. Israel must withdraw unconditionally from all occupied Palestinian and Arab lands, including the Golan Heights and Jerusalem, and the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to return to their homes and property and to establish their own independent sovereign State, must be fully restored. No just and durable solution of the Middle East problem is conceivable unless the question of Palestine is solved and the right of the Palestinian people to statehood is recognized by all.

We are convinced that the proposed international peace conference on the Middle East is an effective means through which a durable peace in this sensitive region could be established. Today, there exists a world-wide consensus on the need for the convening of this conference, and the International Conference on the Question of Palestine elaborated its outlines. This has been approved by the General Assembly and is supported by the Non-Aligned Movement, the League of Arab

(Mr. Dost, Afghanistan)

States and the Organization of the Islamic Conference. However, in this connection, it is regrettable that the Security Council has so far failed to take the necessary action on the recommendations of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.

The position adopted by the Arab countries in this regard is commendable. The constructive decision of the Fez summit in Morocco, reiterated at subsequent Arab summits and most recently in Amman, Jordan, has paved the way for the convening of the international conference. We also commend the positive and constructive disposition of the Palestine Liberation Organization concerning the convening of the conference, in which, we are convinced, the Palestine Liberation Organization must participate on an equal footing. Without such participation by the Palestine Liberation Organization, the conference would be meaningless and would prove a failure.

Israel stands alone in its non-acceptance of the proposed international peace conference on the Middle East. So far the Government of Israel has refused to accept even in principle the need for the convening of this conference. We are of the opinion that every pressure must be exerted on Israel to make it stop blocking the convening of the international conference. Otherwise, the explosive situation in the Middle East will deteriorate further, endangering world peace and security. In this connection, I would like to express our appreciation of the efforts of the United Nations Secretary-General. He has the full support of my Government in his endeavours to pave the way for the convening of the conference.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate the full support and solidarity of the Government and people of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan for the heroic Palestinian people in their struggle under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization, their sole, legitimate representative, for the restoration

(Mr. Dost, Afghanistan)

of their inalienable rights, including the right to statehood. We have always supported their noble cause in all international forums and we are determined to continue to do so in the future as well.

Mr. MOUMIN (Comoros) (interpretation from French): Two years have elapsed since our Organization assembled the greatest number of Heads of State in all its history to celebrate its fortieth anniversary. In the statements made on that occasion before the General Assembly each Head of State reaffirmed that his dearest desire was the maintenance of world peace and the growth of international co-operation in order to drive back the demons of war and limit the areas of tension in the world. Two years later we are entitled to ask whether that goal has been achieved, whether there have been tangible improvements in international efforts to maintain peace and security in the world. The answer to that question, unfortunately, is a definite "no". As can clearly be seen from our discussion here for the last four weeks, no improvement along those lines has taken place. Indeed, in recent weeks the General Assembly has again been focusing its attention upon extremely dangerous and depressing situations threatening peace and security.

We began with the situation in Kampuchea; then moved on to Afghanistan, followed by Namibia and South Africa; and today the question of Palestine is under discussion. Tomorrow it will be the Middle East. All of these situations are dangerous and constitute a threat to world peace and security.

The question of Palestine is nearly as old as the United Nations itself. For more than 40 years our Organization has addressed this issue. For more than 40 years our Organization has been debating the question and putting forward solutions; and all that can be said, all that can be stipulated to arrive at an acceptable solution, has been said. Resolutions have been adopted year after year and yet there have been no tangible results. The Zionist authorities, in their arrogance, deaf to all international appeals for a just settlement of the Palestinian question, respond by defying all United Nations resolutions relating to the question.

(Mr. Moumin, Comoros)

The year 1987 is of particular significance in the history of the Palestinian situation. This year marks the seventieth anniversary of the Balfour Declaration of 1917; the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations resolution of 1947 which approved the partition of Palestine into two States, a Jewish State and a Palestinian State; the twentieth anniversary of the war of 6 July 1967 which led Israel to occupy all of the Palestinian territories; and, finally, the fifth anniversary of the invasion of Lebanon by Israel and the massacres of Sabra and Shatila of 1982.

In 1947 the United Nations General Assembly adopted resolution 181 (II), which called for the partition of Palestine into two independent States, a Jewish State and an Arab State. The State of Israel was created but unfortunately the State of Palestine has to date not been realized. Had the Zionists respected resolution 181 (II) on the future government of Palestine, the problem would have been resolved long ago.

However, we know that the Zionists are not peace-loving people. They have violence in their blood. They prefer to use violence rather than diplomacy to resolve problems. The history of the creation of the State of Israel is written with the blood of Arabs; it is a series of terrorist acts, beginning with the activities of the Stern gang, which killed Lord Moyne, resident Minister of State of Britain in Cairo on 6 November 1944; the assassination of the United Nations mediator, Count Bernadotte, in 1948; the infiltration in 1948 by terror at Deir Yassin; the 1967 invasion; and the unjustified invasion in 1982 of Lebanon, where Israeli forces continue to pursue their aggression, stepping up violence and terror, inflicting heavy human and material losses upon the Palestinians and other Arabs - not to mention the shameful infamy of Sabra and Shatila. All of this proves that the Israelis are not a peace-loving people.

(Mr. Moumin, Comoros)

The Palestinian people has the legitimate right to possess its own State upon the land of its ancestors, and peace cannot prevail in the Middle East so long as Israel does not withdraw from the lands it has illegally occupied since 1967 and so long as it has not facilitated the creation of a Palestinian state in Palestine.

The Palestinian people has suffered too much. It would be a crime against mankind to make it suffer still more. We must find a solution, and to do so we must clearly understand the cause of the Arab-Israeli conflict, which is essentially the question of Palestine. No solution can be envisaged that does not fully reflect the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people, its inalienable right to return to its home, to recover its property and to achieve self-determination, national independence and sovereignty.

It is likewise indispensable that the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the sole representative of the Palestinian people, be able to participate on an equal footing with all others in all efforts, debates and conferences about the Middle East. The question of Palestine is the question of a struggle for the freedom of a people seeking to protect itself from the atrocities inflicted upon it by an occupying Power that seeks to legitimize aggression and state terrorism against an entire people whose sole crime has been to struggle for the recovery of its rights. Increasing concern is expressed about the situation in the Palestinian occupied territories, which is constantly deteriorating as a result of the negative attitude of Israel, which continues to confiscate lands belonging to Arabs in the occupied Palestinian territories, and its policy of increasing the size and number of its settlements in violation of United Nations resolutions. At the same time Israel continues its policy of Judaization of occupied Palestinian territories through their economic and administrative integration into the national system of Israel, and the creation of conditions that compel the Palestinian people to emigrate.

(Mr. Moumin, Comoros)

Yes, the situation that prevails in Palestine is a scandal and more than ever demands our full and immediate attention. It is entirely unacceptable that we should have debated this question for so long with such meagre results. We must act, and do so at once, and the Assembly is the place where such action can be planned and undertaken.

In this regard, we are convinced that the most appropriate action to take is the immediate convening of an international peace conference under the auspices of the United Nations, with the participation on an equal footing of all the parties, including the PLO and the five permanent members of the Security Council.

I cannot conclude my statement without expressing the gratitude of the Comoros delegation to the United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, which, under the chairmanship of Ambassador Sarré of Senegal, has presented to us a very lucid report. My delegation hopes that the conclusions and recommendations of the Committee will win the support of the entire international community.

Mr. JAYA (Brunei Darussalam): The United Nations assumed a responsibility to the people of Palestine in 1947. However, the question of Palestine still remains on the agenda of the General Assembly. This body cannot be blamed for not finding a solution to the problem. Despite the efforts made over the past years and the various resolutions adopted by this Assembly, it is disappointing to note that little progress has been made towards a solution.

The question of Palestine is undeniably the core problem of the Middle East conflict. The root cause of tension in the region is Israel's seizure and acquisition of Arab and Palestinian territories through its wars of aggression since 1967. We believe that Israel's adamant position in pursuing its policy

(Mr. Jaya, Brunei Darussalam)

of aggression, occupation, annexation and settlement in Arab and Palestinian lands further exacerbates the situation in the region.

It is no surprise to my delegation that, as was also mentioned yesterday by my colleague Ambassador Shihabi of Saudi Arabia, the former Prime Minister, Golda Meir stated in an interview published on 15 June 1969 in the Sunday Times of London that there was "no such thing as Palestinians". The truth of the matter, however, is that Palestine is undeniably an independent entity. Despite the attempt to deny the legitimacy of the Palestinian existence, despite the awesome ferocity of Israel's military might repeatedly unleashed against these people, the people of Palestine have steadfastly refused to disavow their common heritage as Palestinians. Indeed, the Palestinian people have proved beyond any reasonable doubt that they are a people with a history and a culture, and therefore entitled to their own homeland. Israel cannot deny this basic right to the Palestinian people nor can it deny the reality of their existence.

Israel's policies in the occupied Arab and Palestinian territories show clearly its intention to annex the land. A number of coercive measures showing its complete disregard for the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people are aimed at forcing the Palestinian population to emigrate from its land. The Assembly has before it a report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories, dated 15 October 1987, in which, on the basis of the information and evidence before it, the Special Committee concludes that

"the general policy of the Government of Israel continues to follow the same lines as in the past. The basic principle of the policy is that the territories occupied by Israel constitute a part of the State of Israel. This

(Mr. Jaya, Brunei Darussalam)

policy has led to various measures to establish settlements, to expropriate property, to transfer Israeli citizens to the occupied territories and to encourage, directly or indirectly, the Palestinian population to leave their homeland." (A/42/650, para. 206)

The Special Committee further concludes that:

"the situation in the occupied territories denotes a continuing deterioration of human rights and fundamental freedoms by the civilian population. The relevant provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention continue to be disregarded. The persistent policy of annexation of the occupied territories, which meets with fierce resistance on the part of the civilian population, and the cycle of tension and repression that the implementation of such a policy involves, have led to an explosive situation that seems bound to provoke yet more dramatic events in the future." (para. 216)

Out of this persistent and continuing aggression against the Palestinian people Palestinian nationalism arises even more strongly. The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), which my country and the majority of the Member States of the United Nations recognize as a legitimate national liberation movement, must be reckoned with.

In this connection, Israel is responsible for the continuing conflict in the region. Its deliberate refusal to acknowledge and recognize the sole representative of the Palestinian people, the Palestine Liberation Organization, has made the route harder to any acceptable solution. Israel does not stop there, as it goes on to depict the PLO as a terrorist organization, despite the fact that the PLO has repeatedly denounced terrorist acts. The irony is, however, that Israel itself tries to intimidate by bombing and destroying Palestinian camps and settlements, which action has frequently resulted in loss of life among the

(Mr. Jaya, Brunei Darussalam)

innocent women, children and civilians who reside in them. These acts are clearly an unwarranted and aggressive mode of conduct and have been repeatedly condemned by the Assembly in resolutions over the past years.

With regard to the convening of the international peace conference on the Middle East, my delegation supported this noble idea by voting in favour of resolution 41/43 D. At this point I wish to underline the importance of the participation of all the parties concerned, including the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, the PLO. In a recent development Israel proposed an international conference on peace in the Middle East, which would evidently not include official participation by the PLO. Here I wish to state that it is the opinion of my delegation that the PLO, the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, must be allowed to participate fully in any such conference on an equal and equitable footing with the other parties, in the pursuit of a just and lasting solution.

(Mr. Jaya, Brunei Darussalam)

This Organization must remain resolute. Despite the military might of Israel we should continue to call for Israel's total and unconditional withdrawal from all Palestinian and Arab territories based on the principle of the inadmissibility of acquisition of territory by force. The inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to their own homeland must be restored and the Palestinian people, through its sole and legitimate representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization, must not be prevented from playing a central role in deciding its own future.

Mr. MAKSIMOV (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): The edifice of peace, especially in the nuclear age, cannot be lasting if even a part of it remains outside a system of security. Therefore, our country vigorously advocates resolving situations of conflict and settling regional conflicts through political means. This holds equally true for the Middle East, which has become an arena of endless military and political upheavals fraught with danger for comprehensive peace and security. Six wars in less than four decades; a situation where constant domestic in-fighting and contradictions have earned for the Middle East an unenviable reputation as the lengthiest and most explosive hotbed of tension in the modern world.

In his article "Reality and Safeguards for Secure World", the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev, has emphasized that "the world cannot be regarded as safe if human rights are trampled underfoot". That is especially true with regard to the matter we are discussing. We are talking about the trampling underfoot of the inalienable rights of an entire people deprived of its country and forced to wander in foreign lands or to languish under the oppression of Israeli military occupation.

(Mr. Maksimov, Byelorussian SSR)

It is no accident, therefore, that the General Assembly has time and time again returned to consideration of the Palestinian question. Moreover of course we must take into account the incontrovertible fact that the question of implementation of the legitimate national rights of the Arab people of Palestine is fundamental to a complete Middle East settlement. Nor should we forget that the United Nations bears special responsibility for the fate of the Palestinian people and for the restoration of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

Forty years have passed since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 181 (II), which brought an end to the British mandate in Palestine and contained a decision on the formation there of two independent States, an Arab State and a Jewish State. That resolution has been implemented only with regard to one people. Everything must be done to implement the resolution with regard to the Arab people of Palestine.

It must be said that the United Nations has done a great deal of work in preparing the international legal, political and humanitarian basis for a Middle East settlement. In General Assembly resolutions, including those of the forty-first session, there is confirmation of the need to enable the Palestinian people to exercise their inalienable rights, including the right of return, the right of self-determination and the establishment of an independent State. Those resolutions demand the withdrawal of Israeli forces from all Arab territories occupied since 1967 and confirm of the need for the participation of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) as the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people in all efforts to achieve a Middle East settlement.

(Mr. Maksimov, Byelorussian SSR)

There has, however, been no real movement towards solving this problem. Israel continues to carry out a rapacious colonizing policy with regard to the occupied Palestinian territories. It is encroaching upon the territorial integrity and sovereignty of neighbouring - and not only neighbouring - Arab States and it opposes the holding of an international conference on the Middle East.

Daily publications and newspapers throughout the world, releases from information agencies and official United Nations documents contain abundant material showing the criminal policy of the ruling circles of Israel with regard to the Arab people of Palestine. They continue harsh terror and repression, extremely crude violations of elementary human rights and mass expulsion of the native Arab population from its original lands. According to data given to us by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), more than 2.1 million Palestinians are now wondering in various countries. The report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People emphasizes that the policies and practices carried out by Israel "have continued to pose obstacles to the efforts towards a comprehensive, just and lasting solution, and to exacerbate tension and conflict in the area, further endangering international peace and security." (A/42/35, para. 5)

Undoubtedly no small share of responsibility for this is borne by the senior partner in the strategic alliance, whose comprehensive political, military and economic assistance encourages Israel to carry out a policy of aggression and expansion in the region. Today it is quite clear that reliance on military force to settle the conflict has been completely discredited. The need for constructive consideration and solution of the Palestinian problem is acknowledged today even by those States and political leaders of Western countries who until quite recently felt this problem to be of little significance in the overall package of matters

(Mr. Maksimov, Byelorussian SSR)

involved in a Middle East settlement and artificially restricted the problem to solving the question of Palestinian refugees. Attempts by the opponents of the Palestinian cause to find an alternative to the PLO as the Palestinians' representative to agree to negotiations on the fate of the Palestinians within the framework of the Camp David formulas for a Middle East settlement, have failed one after another. Nor has Israel's aggression in Lebanon led to a political movement satisfactory to it. The PLO has managed to maintain its status as the sole, legitimate representative of the Arab people of Palestine.

The delegation of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic again confirms its solidarity with the just struggle of the Palestinian people for its freedom and independence under the leadership of the PLO. We commend the results of the eighteenth session of the Palestine National Council, which demonstrated the determination of the Palestinians to act energetically and together to ensure their own legal national rights. That session created real pre-conditions for strengthening the role of the Palestinian resistance movement as an effective and independent factor in Middle Eastern affairs.

It is clear that the continuing conflict and the attempt to impose a settlement through separate deals contradict the correctly understood interests of all parties, including the people of Israel, both in the short term and, especially, in the long term. Israel's lengthy occupation of the Arab territories has not made the world forget the Palestinian problem and the legitimate right of the Arab people of Palestine to self-determination. In our view we now have an objective possibility to halt the dangerous developments in the Middle East. What is most important under present conditions is to begin practical movement towards a comprehensive settlement which should provide for the withdrawal of Israeli forces

(Mr. Maksimov, Byelorussian SSR)

from all Arab territories occupied by them since 1967 and call for the exercise by the Arab people of Palestine of their inalienable national rights to self-determination and the establishment of their own independent State. Provision should also be made for ensuring the right of all States of the region to a secure and independent existence and development.

(Mr. Maksimov, Byelorussian SSR)

The main road to this is, as proposed by the Soviet Union, the convening of a plenipotentiary international conference under United Nations auspices, with equal participation by all interested parties, including the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. The permanent members of the Security Council should also participate.

Last year the General Assembly, by an overwhelming majority, adopted resolution 41/43 D, which endorses the convening of an international peace conference on the Middle East and the establishment of a preparatory committee, with the participation of the five permanent members of the Security Council. Participants in the summit meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement, in Harare, and in the meeting of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, in Kuwait, unanimously advocated the holding of such a conference. The consultations in the past year between the Secretary-General and the members of the Security Council have shown that, as distinct from past years, no member of the Council opposes the convening of such a conference in principle.

Recently the participants in the meeting of the Heads of State or Government of Arab States, in Amman, also came out in favour of an international conference on the Middle East. A single Arab policy on the matter will undoubtedly strengthen the positions of those who favour a comprehensive, just settlement in the Middle East through the convening of such a conference. The confirmation of a single Arab position on the matter particularly highlights the unconstructive position of those forces, especially Israel, that continued to block international efforts to convene a conference.

The delegation of the Byelorussian SSR feels that it is now necessary to get on with a careful preparation for the conference, in order to ensure that it will be fruitful. The preparatory work before the convening of the conference has a useful role to play. We are convinced that the General Assembly at its current

(Mr. Maksimov, Byelorussian SSR)

session should make serious collective efforts to reach an effective resolution of the situation in the Middle East, with a view to guaranteeing the inalienable national rights of the Arab people of Palestine, which would be a concrete contribution to the development of a comprehensive system of international peace and security.

Mr. VALDERRAMA (Philippines): On 5 July this year there was an article on the question of Palestine in The New York Times Magazine which might very well have been a statement for delivery before, and worthy of note by, the Assembly. Entitled, "My Neighbor, My Enemy ... A Report from Israel," it is a thought-provoking article by Thomas L. Friedman, Chief of the Times bureau in Jerusalem.

Mr. Friedman calls the Palestinian-Israeli conflict a twilight war. He talks of life in two communities - the Palestinian and Israeli - in the occupied territories of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip which do not enjoy the blessings of peace. It is a life lived in constant fear and suspicion and a growing hatred between the occupying Power and the occupied.

It is story of "two equally legitimate communities fighting a war over the same home". Hence it is not surprising that, while they are neighbours, they are also enemies. There is the West Bank Palestinian journalist whose nightmare is having a flat tire on the Tel Aviv-Haifa highway and being checked for identification by the Israeli police. His nightmare ends when his car goes over the hump into the Arab side of Jerusalem. There is the Israeli professor who as a boy danced in the streets of Jerusalem on Independence Day, but who now has to deny his own son the same joyful exuberance. The streets are the same, but now there is uncertainty. Now killings, bombings and reprisals are a part of daily life.

(Mr. Valderrama, Philippines)

Life in these two communities is best summed up in the photograph of a Jew, holding his son in one hand and a gun in the other, and of an Arab, walking past each other in the tense streets of Hebron, without even a glance at each other, but with deep suspicion in their hearts.

This is the tragedy of the Palestinian question. Neither the occupying Power nor, least of all, the occupied is at peace. Indeed, as Mr. Friedman says, the last 20 years of Israeli occupation "have been nothing more than the seventh day of the Six-Day War," and I hasten to add, each seventh day grows even more intense and more unbearable for the victims of this war.

Even more tragic, Mr. Friedman concludes:

"The danger is that by the time both sides wake up and agree to recognize each other, it will be too late ... At some point it will no longer be a conflict on the way to a resolution, but a way of life - or, more appropriately, a way of death."

It need not be "too late" nor "a way of death." The danger can be averted. It is not too late to take the first step on the road to peace. The Philippines is convinced that the time has come for the parties in the Arab-Israeli conflict to accept the fact that there must be a recognition of each other's rights and an understanding of each other's concerns. A hardening of positions, in which the rights of one are negated to the advantage of the other, only serves to divert both parties from the elusive road to peace. After 40 years of conflict, surely everyone must hanker for the ways of peace; surely everyone is tired of the wages of death.

That is why the Philippines maintains the view that a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict can be achieved only on the basis

(Mr. Valderrama, Philippines)

of the following fundamental principles: the withdrawal of Israel from the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied since 1967, including the Holy City of Jerusalem; recognition of the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, including their right to establish an independent State in Palestine; the participation of the Palestinian people in the peace process, through its sole and legitimate representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO); and the recognition of the right of all States in the region, including Israel, to live in peace and within secure and recognized boundaries, free from threats or acts of force, in conformity with Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973).

(Mr. Valderrama, Philippines)

Those are the principles that must be respected if a negotiated settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict is to be achieved. They are principles that call for an accommodation of views and mutual trust by the parties concerned, and for observance of the Geneva Convention of 1949 relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The picture is not entirely bleak. We are encouraged by the report of the Secretary-General that there is

"... increased interest on the part of the international community in the idea of a conference that would be convened under United Nations auspices on a basis acceptable to all."

and

"... greater flexibility on this issue amongst the parties ..." (A/42/277, para.6)

The most recent assurance comes from the summit meeting of the Arab League leaders in Jordan who expressed support for the idea. We commend the Secretary-General for his efforts and determination despite "very deep differences" between the parties concerned.

We also commend the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and its Chairman, Mr. Massamba Sarré of Senegal, for their dedicated efforts in heightening the international community's awareness and understanding of the question of Palestine.

Until the day the independent and sovereign State of Palestine is established, the international community must do everything to alleviate the sad lot of the Palestinian refugees. They must be assisted in every possible way through multilateral agencies like the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and on a bilateral basis. The

(Mr. Valderrama, Philippines)

Commissioner-General of UNRWA has informed the General Assembly about the Agency's successful educational programmes and other undertakings for Palestinian refugees. UNRWA has done commendable work in preparing young generations of Palestinians for a life of peace and independence and it deserves the international community's continued support.

My delegation expresses the hope that all the parties involved in the Arab-Israeli conflict can, through the good offices of the Secretary-General, reach a meeting of the minds that will lead them to a comprehensive, just and lasting, solution of the Palestinian question and eventual peace and stability in that region that once upon a time was the cradle of human civilization.

Mr. SATHIAH (Malaysia): The United Nations has failed to discharge its responsibility to the Palestinian people, a responsibility which was assumed in 1947 from the determination of Palestine's status as a territory in the Mandate system of the League of Nations, under the terms of the League's covenant. Our failure to stand by our commitment to Palestine has had serious repercussions for the Palestinian people, as well as for the world community. For 40 years, the Palestinians have undergone untold human suffering. They have been denied a fundamental right, that of living in an independent homeland. A vital region, the Middle East has lived in insecurity. The international community has been confronted with a major threat to international peace and security. There has been violence, continuing conflict and potential for expanded conflict which could impact on the whole world and has, in fact, done so.

And yet, it is not from want of discussion, debate, negotiations and efforts to resolve the situation. No issue has been subject to closer scrutiny by the world body, other international organizations, regional bodies and individual

(Mr. Sathiah, Malaysia)

States. Innumerable resolutions, declarations, recommendations and other diplomatic devices have been drawn up, proposed and placed on the table.

The fact is that this situation persists because of the cruel injustices that were inflicted on the Palestinians, an ancient and historic people, as a result of the accommodation of Zionist ambitions by certain Powers, first with the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 and the occupation of the remaining Palestinian territory 20 years ago.

Israel has absorbed Palestine and occupied other territories in the Middle East for the past 20 years, in defiance of Security Council and General Assembly resolutions. It has done so with impunity coupled with arrogance and disregard for the suffering it has caused and for international opinion because it believes, in fulfilling its ruthless expansionist policies, that might is right. The Zionists have succeeded in their campaign of terror because they have been sustained by a super-Power, the United States.

We have before us the latest report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, chaired by the highly-esteemed Ambassador Sarré of Senegal, whose tireless and exhaustive efforts deserve our commendation. Malaysia is proud to be a member of this Committee. The Committee has worked hard to fulfil its mandate. The Chairman has actively responded to continued actions by Israel in contravention of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, in the context of its continued occupation and gradual annexation of Palestinian and Arab territories which, according to the report "resulted in a growing spiral of conflict, tension and violence in the region". (A/42/35, para. 19)

The irrefutable information made available to the Committee confirms that the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories has further deteriorated. It

(Mr. Sathiah, Malaysia)

shows that Israel continues to violate the 1949 Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, as well as United Nations resolutions, by confiscation of Arab-owned land in the occupied Palestinian territories and expansion of its settlements. The Committee's attention and concern is again focused on Israel's iron-fist policy aimed at neutralizing the opposition to its occupation and the support for the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). Demonstrations and protests have met repeatedly with armed force involving brutalities and deaths inflicted on unarmed civilians, including children. Opposition activists are dealt with through arrest, restriction of movement and deportation. There have been repeated reports of torture, beatings and ill-treatment of Palestinian prisoners by Israeli security forces. Repressive actions by the Israeli authorities, such as collective punishment and other measures against the Palestinian population in the occupied territories, are compounded by acts of settler vigilantism, further heightening tensions.

The conditions under which the Palestinian people live have further seriously declined because of Israeli policies and actions to entrench its control over occupied territories. The Palestinians continue to be effectively constrained from developing their own resources, forcing them to become more dependent on the Israeli authorities. Conditions of health, labour and education have worsened dramatically.

(Mr. Sathiah, Malaysia)

The Chairman of the Committee has had to express repeatedly the Committee's deep concern over continued and intensified fighting in and around Palestinian refugee camps at Beirut and near Tyre and Sidon, which has prevented the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) from being able to deliver supplies to the camps. On 7 May 1987 the Chairman drew urgent attention to air raids by the Israeli Air Force against Palestinian refugee camps near Sidon which resulted in 22 killed and 65 wounded. The attack was perceived as an integral part of Israeli actions against the Palestinian people in the occupied territories and of the escalation of military activities in southern Lebanon, adding fuel to an already explosive situation.

There have been many other provocations by Israel, including violation of human rights, the use of armed force against civilians, arrests, expulsion, the closing down of universities and raids on refugee camps, leading to loss of life and injury - for women and children, among others.

The unbridled and inhuman Israeli actions against the Palestinian people are analogous to those undertaken by the racist Pretoria régime against the black majority in South Africa, motivated as they are by the objective of eradicating the opposition and dominating through the use of terror. The similarity in the policies of Israel and the South African racists has been further underlined by their co-operation in the economic, military and nuclear fields.

My delegation urges all Member States fully to support the comprehensive recommendations of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian people. The key elements of the recommendations are the following.

First, the grave deterioration of the situation of the Palestinians has heightened concern that tension and violence will escalate, with disastrous

(Mr. Sathiah, Malaysia)

consequences for the region. Renewed and intensified collective efforts are needed to achieve a comprehensive, durable and just solution on the basis of relevant United Nations resolutions, particularly resolutions 38/58 C and 41/43 D.

Secondly, urgent positive action is required from the Security Council on the recommendation formulated in the Committee's first report and those adopted by the International Conference on the Question of Palestine held in Geneva in 1983, which this Assembly has repeatedly endorsed.

Thirdly, the international peace conference on the Middle East is the most comprehensive and widely accepted proposal and the convening of the conference would constitute a major contribution by the United Nations to the attainment of a solution as outlined in resolutions 38/58 C and 41/43 D.

We greatly appreciate the Secretary-General's commitment and efforts to convene the international peace conference. We note with interest that, in his report of 7 May, the Secretary-General states the following:

"All members of the Security Council were concerned about the Middle East problem, and all expressed support for a continuation of the Secretary-General's efforts to bring about a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. Moreover, in contrast with the experience of recent years, none of the Council members opposed in principle the idea of an international conference under United Nations auspices." (A/42/277, para. 3)

According to the report, wide differences still remain on the format of the conference, on issues of procedure and of substance, and on the proposal for the establishment of a formal preparatory committee. The Secretary-General observes that

"sufficient agreement does not exist to permit the convening of the International Conference as called for in resolution 41/43 D..." (para. 6)

(Mr. Sathiah, Malaysia)

We are, nevertheless, encouraged by the Secretary-General's determination to continue with his efforts despite the difficulties.*

My delegation calls on all Member States, especially those which still have reservations, to be supportive of the Secretary-General's efforts to convene the international conference on the Middle East. The permanent members of the Security Council have a particular responsibility and duty in the exercise to resolve the core issue of the Palestinian question and to promote peace in the Middle East.

We especially urge the United States to recognize that great injustices have been done to the Palestinian people, injustices for which it shares responsibility through its vicarious support for Israel. We appeal to the United States not to be wedded to partial or piecemeal approaches, and fully to endorse the comprehensive approach that the international conference offers. It is fundamental that the United States accept that the Palestinians, represented by the Palestine Liberation Organization, their sole and legitimate representative, must participate, on an equal footing with all the parties concerned in the process of finding a workable settlement of the Middle East issue.

There is no time for diplomatic niceties or for attempts to protect what is mistakenly perceived as justifiable self-interest. Further delay threatens additional complications in an already complex situation. There is a real danger that Israel is creating a major problem in its annexation of the occupied territories through the settlement of large numbers of Israelis there. Its continuing actions against the Palestinians have heightened tensions and created a cycle of violence that it may prove impossible to reverse.

* Mr. Moumin (Comoros), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Sathiah, Malaysia)

No, we do not have the luxury of time. Already too many innocent people have suffered too much. The human and political cost to the international community is already far too high. There is only one clear path and that is the international conference on the Middle East, for which there have been long and extensive preparations. For the many of us who have had to endure the agonies of the Palestinian people, the international conference promises respite. It offers the only real hope for the Member States to discharge their responsibility to the people of Palestine. We ask those that hesitate to search their consciences, to ask themselves why they hold back in bringing an end to the tragedy that should never have been allowed to happen to the Palestinian people and for which we must all, ultimately, share responsibility.

Mr. ABBAS (United Republic of Tanzania): I wish to begin by paying a tribute to the United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People for its comprehensive report (A/42/35). Since its establishment in 1975 the Committee has done a lot of useful work in accordance with its mandate. It has kept under review the situation relating to the question of Palestine by sponsoring conferences and seminars on the issue. We also wish to congratulate its Chairman, the Permanent Representative of Senegal, on his unceasing efforts in seeking a just and lasting solution to the Palestinian question, which is at the core of the problem of the Middle East.

It is now 40 years since the General Assembly adopted resolution 181 (II) on the partition of Palestine, which, in principle, laid down the modalities for the creation of two independent States, Israel and Palestine. The creation of the State of Israel materialized, but not that of Palestine. The expulsion of thousands

(Mr. Abbas, United Republic of
Tanzania)

of Palestinians from their homeland forced them to flee to neighbouring Arab countries and such places as the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Since then, the situation of Palestinians has continuously deteriorated owing to Israel's denial to the Palestinians of their inalienable right to self-determination and independence.

The Israeli occupation of Arab and Palestinian lands during the 1967 war and Israel's refusal, to date, to withdraw has caused an already bad situation to worsen. The continued refusal by Israel to withdraw from the occupied Arab and Palestinian lands, contrary to the principles of the United Nation Charter and the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly, has confirmed Israel's total disdain for our Organization. Unfortunately, Israel has received backing for its defiance from a permanent member of the Security Council. We regret this collusion and hope that wisdom and far-sightedness will prevail; For, without a fair and permanent solution to the Palestinian question, there cannot be peace in the Middle East.

(Mr. Abbas, United Republic
of Tanzania)

However, instead of seeking such a solution, Israel continues to oppress Palestinians in the most inhumane ways imaginable. We thus deplore the harassment, arrests and deportation of Palestinians in the occupied territories on which Israeli settlements have been established. We regard the alteration of the geographic nature and demographic composition of Palestinian and other Arab lands as being a major source of tension in the region. The Palestinian people, who have endured the most miserable and inhuman treatment for generations, do not need any more humiliation and suffering. We call on Israel to begin, out of sheer self-interest, a new chapter - which could ensure its own continued existence within secure and internationally recognized boundaries - by recognizing and granting the Palestinians their legitimate rights.

My delegation wishes to reaffirm that a just and lasting solution to the Middle East problem as a whole could be found if the parties to the conflict could muster the necessary political will. We firmly believe that the only peaceful solution to the Palestinian question would be through a negotiated settlement by all the parties concerned. In this regard, Tanzania fully supports the convening of an international peace conference, under the auspices of the United Nations, with a view to finding lasting and durable peace in Palestine and in the Middle East as a whole. For that conference to be successful, we urge that all the parties to the conflict be involved in its preparation, including the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the sole and authentic representative of the Palestinian people. The permanent members of the Security Council, especially the United States and the Soviet Union, should be fully involved as guarantors of the implementation of what would be agreed upon by the Conference. We sincerely hope that all obstacles to the convening of the conference will be removed soon.

(Mr. Abbas, United Republic
of Tanzania)

The 1983 International Conference on the Question of Palestine adopted the Geneva Declaration on Palestine and Programme of Action for the Achievement of Palestinian Rights. That Declaration contains the essential issues which need to be addressed by the proposed conference on the Middle East. It is the sincere hope of my delegation that all the parties to the conflict will use that Declaration for a meaningful dialogue during the conference.

In this regard, we regret the refusal of Israel to accept the principle of holding the conference. We regard this attitude as an obstacle to a negotiated settlement of the Middle East question and the Palestinian problem. Unfortunately, Israel's refusal is backed by a permanent member of the Security Council, which compounds the problem. However, we urge both Israel and its major backers to rethink their negative attitude towards the convening of the conference, for the alternative to dialogue is continued violence in the Middle East. The oppressed Palestinian people cannot be expected to accept permanently the injustice perpetrated on them, and Arab countries cannot be expected to accept the permanent occupation of their lands by Israel.

The situation in Palestine is further compounded by Israel's constant aggression against Lebanon. As a result, the people of Lebanon have not known any peace throughout the last decade. We appeal to the Government of Israel to exercise restraint and to address itself more seriously to the question of Palestine with a view to finding a lasting and peaceful solution to the problem. My delegation does not believe that sheer force will ever solve the problem. We remain convinced that the problem will linger on as long as the rights of the Palestinian people are ignored. For many years, the international community has realized that the self-determination of the Palestinian people and their right to

(Mr. Abbas, United Republic
of Tanzania)

an independent State is the prerequisite to durable peace between Israel, on the one hand, and the Palestinian and Arab people, on the other. Pretence or refusal by Israel to recognize this basic truth will not help. However, Israel can help the peace process in the Middle East by withdrawing from all Arab lands it occupied in 1967, by ceasing to establish settlements on Arab and Palestinian lands, and by supporting the convening of an international conference on the Middle East. If Israel did so, it would find that the international community would be more than ready and willing to contribute further towards the realization of peace and security in the Middle East.

Mr. FERNANDO (Sri Lanka): The question of Palestine is completing its fourth decade on the United Nations agenda as several speakers have pointed out. The question is in fact the problem which keeps Arabs and Israelis at conflict. It has focused upon a region of the world creating in its wake an imbalance leading to stress and tension, it has erupted in three wars, and is on the boil again. This problem is exacerbated as a result of the partial implementation of United Nations resolution 181 (II) of 1947 to set up two States, one Arab and one Jewish. There has been no follow-through on that resolution to establish the promised Arab State, and as a result there is an imbalance which has not been addressed to the satisfaction of the Palestinians.

The Palestine question no doubt has its own historic dimensions on which claims and counter-claims have been built. Palestine has been inhabited for more than 3,000 years by various tribes, some of them Semitic, others Philistine and later, as we know, Assyrian, Greek and Roman. We find that when Arabs conquered the territory in 632 AD, they had to negotiate with the Christians of Jerusalem. This merely indicates how difficult it is to place these claims and counter-claims in correct perspective. However, we get a proximate view if we deal with the

(Mr. Fernando, Sri Lanka)

recent history of these lands, beginning in our own century. We see that through a process of imperial behest the demographic configuration of the area has undergone change in this century starting with the Balfour Declaration in 1917 and culminating with United Nations resolution 181 (II) of 1947, when the State of Israel was created without implementing the right, inherent in that resolution, of the Arabs also to have their own State.

The creation of the State of Israel, without that being balanced simultaneously with an Arab State, has led to the disturbance of checks and balances in the region, and in that situation peace has been the victim.

By recognizing the right of the Palestinian people to their own State within the territory on which they live, we should not be doing any injustice to others already established within the territorial and sovereign confines of their States. The three wars in those territories fought in 1948, 1967 and 1973 and the cold war that has pervaded the situation between wars, are evidence that unless this problem is addressed and resolved at the international level, we shall in the future also a casus belli which could at any moment take horrendous proportions, especially given the stage of technology and the military capability now in the hands of the parties concerned in the region.

(Mr. Fernando, Sri Lanka)

As the Deputy Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka, I should like to appeal to this annual gathering to cogitate on the question of Palestine and address it once and for all. We must progress without delay to an international peace conference, as was envisaged in the Geneva Declaration of 1983 and in General Assembly resolutions 38/58 C and 41/43 D. Those resolutions have called for an international conference on the Middle East, which must assure a comprehensive, just and durable settlement of the problem of Palestine. Such a conference, held with the international participation of the five permanent members of the Security Council, the countries immediately concerned in the area and the Palestine Liberation Organization as the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people must sit down to confer, with a well-prepared agenda.

It would be important to see on that agenda a few basic and salient matters of international concern and importance, such as the following: first, the withdrawal of all foreign occupying forces from the territories occupied after the 1967 war; secondly, an international guarantee of the right of both Israel and Palestine to exist as States, which in fact resolution 181 (II) of 1947 provided for and which the Member States at the time the resolution was adopted all endorsed; thirdly, the guaranteeing of the right of Palestinians expelled from their homes to return to their homes and lands, as required by General Assembly resolution 194 (III) of 1948; fourthly, the assurance to the Palestinians of the right of self-determination, to determine in free and democratic elections their form of government and economic structure; and fifthly, the putting together of confidence-building measures which will ensure to all the States concerned that they can live in peace and security with the blessing of the international community.

(Mr. Fernando, Sri Lanka)

On the basis of 19 reports presented by the Special Committee to Investigate the Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories - under the chairmanship of my own country - my delegation sees no way for an abatement of violence and tension in the occupied territories unless and until the question of Palestine has been resolved. Annually there is a noticeable increase in the frequency and intensity of incidents which the occupying Power represses with ruthless measures, far in excess of the offences, in a determination to stamp out the national spirit of the Palestinian population. The result of these violent, demonstrative and repressive measures is that the civilian population finds itself enmeshed in situations and under pressures that permanently impede progress and production, denying opportunities for development which only peace can assure. That observation is equally true of cultural and educational progress, and unless those handicaps to development are resolved by setting right the basic claims of the people of Palestine to their rights, there is no assurance that there will be an end to this conflict between Arabs and Israelis, which not only threatens to bring the region and its immediate participants to ruin and destruction but also serves to destabilize the entire Middle East with ramifications spreading far and near, threatening the peace of other regions situated well outside the immediate area of conflict.

Mr. MOUSHOUTAS (Cyprus): It is sad that certain international problems remain on the agenda of the General Assembly on a permanent - as it seems - basis. It is most unfortunate that the international community, while recognizing the gravity of those problems, fails to proceed with adopting the necessary measures to solve them. We seem to be entangled in a vicious circle, whereby year after painful year, event after painful event, we return to this forum to repeat our

(Mr. Moushoutas, Cyprus)

arguments, recall our pronouncements and make the same appeals, while the agony and suffering of the peoples involved persist.

The question of Palestine, which constitutes the core of the Middle East problem, is undoubtedly the most prominent of those problems and constitutes one of the most dangerous hotbeds of crisis in the world, as a result of the denial of the legitimate and inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. The General Assembly, having considered this problem repeatedly and exhaustively has supported through a series of resolutions the just aspirations of the Palestinian people; yet not only have these resolutions not been heeded but on the contrary the rights of the Palestinian people are being denied with even more defiance and intransigence.

Our failure to act with determination in line with those resolutions in the search for a just and lasting solution to the problem endangers not only peace in the region but also international peace and security.

For 40 years now the Palestinian people have been struggling to recover their legitimate rights to return to their homeland, to exercise self-determination and to establish an independent State. For almost as many years the question of Palestine has remained an unresolved problem the continuation of which means untold human suffering and a continuous threat to international peace. The right to return to one's home is inalienable and no force, no injustice, can frustrate or deny it. The numerous statements we have heard on the subject, expressing the positions of various Governments, leave no doubt as to the importance attached to it and the urgency of its solution.

The Palestinian people, a historic and proud people, have been uprooted and millions are now refugees dispersed in the Arab countries, in spite of United

(Mr. Moushoutas, Cyprus)

Nations resolutions, the United Nations Charter and international law and in utter contempt for their rights.

Long denied national existence in their own State, the Palestinian people, under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization and through a tenacious struggle and sacrifices, have been acknowledged by all to be a dynamic reality that must be dealt with if peace and justice are to come to this much tormented land.

Thus, the Non-Aligned Movement has on every occasion reaffirmed its "firm support for the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people".

Moreover, the Movement has consistently

"affirmed the right of the PLO to participate on an independent and equal footing, in accordance with international law, in all endeavours, international conferences and activities whose objectives are to ensure respect for and attainment of the exercise of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people". (A/41/697, chap. I, para. 178)

(Mr. Moushoutas, Cyprus)

The position of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus on the question of Palestine has been consistent and based on principle. With regard to a comprehensive solution of the problem, we fully subscribe to the position of the members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries on the question of Palestine, which stresses:

"the necessity for the early convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East, emphasizing the major responsibility shouldered by the Security Council in facilitating the convening of the Conference and providing the appropriate institutional arrangements to guarantee the implementation of the expected agreements of the Conference". (A/41/697, p. 87, para. 182)

We believe that the Palestinian people must be enabled to exercise their inalienable and fundamental right to self-determination and national independence in their homeland, Palestine. We believe that the Palestine Liberation Organization, the sole and legitimate representative of the heroic Palestinian people, must be a party to any negotiations concerning the solution of the problem. And we also believe that Israel must withdraw from all Arab and Palestinian territories occupied after 5 June 1967.

Cyprus, as a country close to the Middle East region, with traditional links of friendship to those countries and peoples, and as a member of the United Nations Committee on Palestine, will continue to exert every effort for the promotion of the legitimate interests of the Palestinian people and to help bring about a just and lasting solution to the Middle East and Palestinian problems.

Mr. ZENENGA (Zimbabwe): The Assembly has before it the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (A/42/35). We should like at the outset to place on record our profound appreciation of the very important work being carried out by that Committee, as well as by the United Nations Division for Palestinian Rights, in bringing to the

(Mr. Zenenga, Zimbabwe)

attention of the international community events in the Middle East affecting the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and developments relating to the situation in the Israeli-occupied Palestinian territories.

Barely a month after last year's debate in the Assembly on the item before us today, the Security Council was meeting following a sudden deterioration of the situation in Israeli-occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories, and the serious situation that prevailed in Palestinian refugee camps. Israeli forces, on 4 December 1986, murdered innocent and defenceless students at Bir Zeit University and committed acts of brutality against the Palestinian civilian population in and around Ramallah. Palestinian refugee camps in southern Lebanon were also attacked, resulting in heavy casualties among Palestinian and Lebanese people.

This was the beginning of yet another cycle of Israeli atrocities against the Palestinian population in the occupied territories that was to continue throughout 1987. Thus we were later to see the air raids of 1 May against the Palestinian refugee camp of Mieh-Mieh, in which 14 civilians were killed and 47 wounded, to be followed by another on 6 May against the refugee camp of Ein el-Hilweh which also resulted in heavy casualties among Palestinian men, women and children. Ein el-Hilweh has been raided again as recently as 5 September 1987. The month of June, which marked the twentieth anniversary of the 1967 war, which resulted in the Israeli occupation of the West Bank, including east Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip, witnessed the launching by Israeli authorities of a massive campaign of detention of Palestinians in the occupied territories following demonstrations and protests which spread throughout the territories. The protests were also met with armed force by Israeli troops on many occasions. The report before us records that numerous atrocities and brutalities were meted out to the Palestinian people

(Mr. Zenenga, Zimbabwe)

that closely resemble what we are witnessing in South Africa today, which was the subject of debate in the Assembly last week.*

In addition to intensifying their "iron-fist" policy in the occupied territories, the Israeli authorities have continued to take administrative and economic measures to reinforce their control over these territories, clearly demonstrating their unwillingness to withdraw. These measures, together with the policy of establishing Jewish settlements in the occupied territories, are aimed at altering the political, cultural, religious, demographic and other features of the occupied Arab and Palestinian territories. Security Council resolution 465 (1980), of 1 March 1980, declared those measures to be null and void and that they constituted a flagrant violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War.

Israel's persistence in instituting administrative, economic and other measures to entrench its control over the occupied territories demonstrates that the Zionist State does not consider those areas to be occupied territories. This dangerous policy is pursued in order to satiate Israel's hunger for more land, needed to settle new Jewish immigrants at the expense of the attainment by the Palestinians of their inalienable rights. As long as that hunger for land persists, Israel will continue to disregard the pertinent resolutions and decisions of the United Nations, particularly Security Council resolution 465 (1980). That is why the Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, at their eighth summit Conference, in September 1986, requested the United Nations to take effective steps against Israel, including the imposition of sanctions under Chapter VII of the Charter, with a view to enforcing the immediate and total

* The President returned to the Chair.

(Mr. Zenenga, Zimbabwe)

withdrawal of Israel from the occupied Palestinian and Arab territories, including Jerusalem.

This week marks the fortieth anniversary of the coming of the Palestinian question before the United Nations. For 40 years now the international community has been striving to find a just, peaceful and lasting solution to this unique issue. Last year, the adoption by the Assembly of resolution 41/43 D resulted in an increase in momentum in the international community in favour of the convening of an international peace conference on the Middle East under the auspices of the United Nations. At the beginning of this year the Secretary-General took the initiative in exploring the possibility of setting in motion the preparatory process for the convocation of the international peace conference. The Movement of Non-Aligned Countries welcomed these efforts of the Secretary-General and worked, through its Committee of Nine on Palestine, to urge all parties concerned to co-operate with the Secretary-General in order to facilitate the early convening of the international peace conference, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 38/58 C.

In our view, the purpose of the conference would be to achieve a just, comprehensive solution to the Middle East problem based essentially on the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and their right to establish an independent and sovereign Palestinian State in conformity with General Assembly resolutions 3236 (XXIX), of 22 November 1974, and ES-7/2, of 29 June 1980. The participation on an equal footing of all the parties directly involved in the Middle East problem, including the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), and all the permanent members of the Security Council, is an indispensable factor for the attainment of the objective sought by that conference, which is the comprehensive resolution of the Middle East crisis, taking into account all United Nations resolutions and decisions pertinent to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

(Mr. Zenenga, Zimbabwe)

The initial results of the Secretary-General's efforts were most encouraging. Last May in his report on the Middle East contained in document A/42/277, the Secretary-General observed that none of the Security Council members had opposed in principle the idea of an international peace conference under United Nations auspices, and that there had been, in recent months, indications of greater flexibility in attitudes towards the negotiating process.

We all happily felt things were moving in the proper direction. The Palestine National Council had met in Algiers in April and rendered its unequivocal support to the convening of the conference and the establishment of a preparatory committee within the framework of the Security Council, with the participation of the permanent members of the Security Council; the Nordic Foreign Ministers had also issued a statement in support of the peace conference during their meeting at Reykjavik in March; and previously a joint Declaration by the European Economic Community (EEC) member States in February had also expressed their support for the peace conference. The atmosphere of optimism that resulted from these important developments could not be more gratifying. We were also pleased that following these very positive developments the Secretary-General had intensified his efforts and dispatched a mission to the Middle East to explore further the positions of the parties involved.

However, in spite of the strong consensus that still prevails within the international community in favour of the peace conference under the aegis of the United Nations, Israel and its friends have continued to place obstacles in the way of the initiation of the preparatory process. Hence, the Secretary-General's subsequent report on the work of the Organization, document A/42/1, dated 9 September 1987, is less optimistic than his May report. The latest report informs us that it has not yet proved possible to obtain the agreement of all the

(Mr. Zenenga, Zimbabwe)

parties to the principle of an international conference and that this has hindered the Secretary-General's efforts to make progress on the procedural issues. Israel's record of disrupting United Nations efforts to find a just and durable settlement to the question of Palestine are not new. They date back to the very early years of the existence of Israel.

We call upon the influential friends of Mr. Shamir, who again last week renewed his international campaign against the international peace conference, to urge him to accept the convening of the peace conference, under the aegis of the United Nations, and we also appeal to them to desist from toying with new formulas such as those that have been referred to as a "condensed" form of the international peace conference in which only some members instead of all members of the Security Council would participate and in which the PLO had no role. This could only encourage Mr. Shamir and his ilk.

We in the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries are committed to the convening of the international peace conference because we believe that it is the best way to go forward in seeking a political solution to the Middle East question and that the question should be resolved in a comprehensive and just way. Partial and piecemeal agreements cannot be helpful as they would ignore the core of the Middle East problem, the question of Palestine. It is for this reason that the Movement, through its Committee of Nine on Palestine, has worked tirelessly to promote the idea of the conference. The Committee met four times at ministerial level in Harare, Pyongyang and New York this year.

As the Palestinian question is the core of the Middle East problem the Palestinian people have to participate at the Conference in their own right. We wish, therefore, to emphasize once again that the PLO alone, which is the sole and

(Mr. Zenenga, Zimbabwe)

legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, has the full right to represent the Palestinian people and to participate at the conference on an independent and equal footing.

We have recently witnessed the stepping up of the campaign to destroy the infrastructure of the PLO and to discredit and distort the Palestinian people's struggle for national liberation. In the light of the very positive results of the eighteenth session of the Palestine National Council convened in Algiers last April, and the very constructive consultations between Chairman Arafat and the Secretary-General's envoy to the Middle East held in Tunis, this campaign can only be viewed as an attempt to place serious obstacles in the way of international efforts towards achieving a comprehensive, just and durable solution to the question of Palestine.

The PLO office closed down by the United States recently in Washington was strictly an information office that had legally operated there for the last 10 years as a duly registered foreign agent. No charges had been levelled against it alleging illegal activities. Having succeeded in securing the closure of the Washington offices, the friends of Israel in the United States Senate are now seeking, through Amendment No. 940 of 8 October, to get the PLO Observer Mission to the United Nations closed. The Co-ordinating Bureau of Non-Aligned Countries, meeting on 16 October, determined that this move by the United States Senate constituted a denial of the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to present and defend their cause in international forums, particularly here at the United Nations. In addition to being a flagrant violation of the Headquarters Agreement between the United Nations and the United States as host country, the move is also

(Mr. Zenenga, Zimbabwe)

a clear attempt to obstruct the search for a comprehensive, just and durable peace in the Middle East.

Finally, we wish to endorse the recommendations of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People contained in section VI of its report. We wish, in particular, to underline its call for the Security Council to take urgent positive action on the recommendations presented by the Committee in its final report and those adopted by the International Conference on the Question of Palestine held in Geneva in 1983. We also wish to associate ourselves with the recommendation to renew the mandate of the Secretary-General to continue his efforts in consultation with the Security Council with a view to convening the peace conference.

Mr. RAJAIE-KHORASSANI (Islamic Republic of Iran): I shall begin my statement by reciting the first verse of the Sura of Al Isra from the Holy Koran. It reads as follows:

"Glory to (Him) Who did take His Servant for a Journey by night from the Sacred Mosque to the Mosque of Al Aqsa, Whose precincts We did Bless, - in order that We might show him some of Our Signs: for He is the One Who heareth and seeth (all things). (The Holy Koran, XVII:1)

(Mr. Rajaie-Khorassani,
Islamic Republic of Iran)

The land of Palestine is the platform of mirajh; it contains the first keblah of the holiest Moslem sanctuaries. Its occupation by the Zionist forces is therefore a grievance for all the Moslems of the world and its liberation from the hand of the Zionist usurpers is a great religious obligation.

In spite of that, the occupation of Palestine by the Zionist infiltrators has continued for a period as long as the age of this Organization. Today we are deliberating the same perennial international problem which was cut, shaped and then vested on the innocent people of Palestine by a General Assembly resolution about 40 years ago. Since that time, the Zionist usurpers have been expanding their usurped territories, and the United Nations has continued with the process of gradual legitimization of the occupation. All that has been done under the guise of the maintenance of international peace and security. No one knows how many other crimes have been perpetrated for the "sake of international peace and security".

At the beginning the policy of partition was recognized by the world body; later on the establishment of an illegitimate artificial State; even later further expansion of the Zionist base of terror to the Jordan River; and still later the occupation of more territories in 1967. That occupation, too, has been condoned in United Nations documents as all the objectives in recent years are addressed to the occupation of Palestinian territories which have been occupied since 1967, and there were no objections to the occupations prior to that date.

The pattern of events indicates that the international conference that has been speculated about, approved and is about to gain the support of many "concerned" parties may be another incident that is consistent with the pattern of the past and will simply provide for the legitimization of the occupation of some

(Mr. Rajaie-Khorassani,
Islamic Republic of Iran)

important territories that have been usurped since 1967. May God prevent such recognition.

I therefore believe that there is no need to tolerate the same mistakes over and over again. Any step leading to the recognition of the Zionist entity by the people of Palestine is nothing but a device for further betrayal of -

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): I call on the representative of Israel on a point of order.

Mr. BEIN (Israel): The representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran has just made several references to my country, Israel, as a "Zionist entity". I wish to stress that I do not in any way oppose being called a Zionist; on the contrary, I am very proud of it. As representatives know, Zionism is the national liberation movement of the Jewish people; it is a positive movement striving only for constructive development. It is the legitimate national movement of my people and it is not directed against any other people or individual.

I have in my hand a copy of a letter to the Secretary-General in document A/42/789 of 20 November 1987, signed by this same Said Rajaie-Khorassani, who represents Iran. The letter, inter alia, refers not to Israel, but to Iraq as "the Zionist régime of Iraq". I do not understand this expression, because, as I just explained, Zionism is the national liberation movement of the Jewish people, not the Iraqis.

What I do oppose, however, is that a State Member of the United Nations is being called a "Zionist entity" or "Zionist régime". We too could resort to calling the Islamic Republic of Iran a fundamentalist, dictatorial, aggressor, terrorist and racist entity, but we would rather not. We would prefer that the General Assembly refrain from these repetitious name-callings. I repeat: States

Members of the United Nations have names. I would suggest, even if only to avoid a misunderstanding, such as confusion between Israel and Iraq, that representatives be asked to use only these names, even when criticized or criticizing, and that we all refrain from name-calling and dedicate ourselves to constructive deliberations only.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): The comments of the representative of Israel will be included in the records of this meeting.

I believe representatives know United Nations established practice with regard to the names of States and I would ask them to abide by it. In the interest of our basic discussion, I hope there will be no more interruptions of the debate.

I call on the representative of Iran to continue his statement.

Mr. RAJAIE-KHORASSANI (Islamic Republic of Iran): To comment on the point of order just made, I reiterate that I did not name any State at all. I referred only to the gang of Zionist people who have occupied Palestinian territories. I also continue to name that gang, particularly after I have heard that the Zionist movement is not something of which they are ashamed. If they are proud of it, then let us all call them by a title of which they are proud. That is nothing but a device for further betrayal of the Palestinian cause, which will be noted by the people of the region as such, and which further complicates the issue.

The land of Palestine is part and parcel of the Islamic territories and the Moslems of the region will by no means forgive or forget its illegal occupation by the Zionist invaders. In this context, the passifying, formalistic decisions of this or any other international body will remain absolutely irrelevant. Such decisions will only expand the gap that already exists between the puppet reactionary régimes in the region and their own people, who find only further evidence in such decisions for the servility of the former to the foreign forces.

(Mr. Rajaie-Khorassani, Islamic Republic of Iran)

For Palestine, only Muslim people of the region will decide, not those régimes that cannot survive without the support of foreign forces in their victimized countries. Therefore, what the international body does by prolonging the occupation of Palestine is simply to further defame and discredit itself in the eyes of the peoples of the world. The result for the region would be only more bloodshed, more homelessness and more revenge and counter-revenge. If there is any sincerity and honesty on the part of those Powers that exercise great influence not only in this body but on the Zionist forces occupying Palestine, they should force the Zionist agents to permit all the Palestinians to return to their homeland before it is too late, so that they can decide their own political destiny.

The people of Palestine remember very well that the occupation of their holy Islamic land materialized only after secular nationalistic feelings were already dividing the Muslim world into impotent national entities, each a delicious prey for imperial Powers. The national entity of Palestine could then be hunted so easily by the terrorist agents of Zionism. It is therefore imperative to recognize that a national approach to the problem of Palestine will reinforce and strengthen that aspect which has been conducive to occupation.

Therefore, any attempt to liberate the occupied land on a nationalistic basis would be counter-productive. Liberation of Palestine is an Islamic obligation incumbent upon the entire Muslim ummah; it must be carried out in accordance with their Islamic commitment. We also believe that the struggle of the Palestinian people in the context of an Islamic united front is the only reliable means for liberating Palestine.

My Government strongly condemns the occupation of the Palestinian land by the Zionist usurpers and those policies and practices that have contributed to this illegal and inhumane occupation. The people and Government of the Islamic Republic

(Mr. Rajaie-Khorassani, Islamic
Republic of Iran)

of Iran will spare no effort to ensure the liberation of Palestine and remain firmly at the side of the Muslim nation of Palestine. We consider the struggle of the Palestinian people our own struggle and we are prepared to mobilize all our political and material resources for the liberation of the occupied land of Palestine. We hope that the Palestine Liberation Organization will remain in the mainstream of Islam and enjoy the full support of the entire Muslim ummah in its holy struggle for the emancipation of the occupied land of Palestine.

Muslims of the world believe that peace and stability can be restored to the Middle East only after the flag of Palestine is rehoisted over the entire land of Palestine, which is now under the occupation of the Zionist non-entity.

Mr. BENNOUNA (Morocco) (interpretation from French): The General Assembly is once again nearing the end of a debate on the question of Palestine, more than 40 years after that tragedy began, without any sign on the horizon of clear or specific prospects of peace and justice for a people that has endured suffering, destruction and humiliation that cannot be described in words and speeches. Yet, the determination and the courage of the Palestinian people remain unshaken, as does its commitment fully to shoulder its responsibilities within the community of nations.

The wanderings of an entire people deprived of its land and denied the fundamental human rights and fulfilment of its legitimate aspirations to dignity and its own national life constitute an inadmissible challenge to the conscience of mankind and the most sacred values enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

Our Organization has made tireless efforts throughout past decades, increasing the numbers of resolutions, decisions, reports and appeals of every kind. But all these gestures of goodwill, all these expressions of wisdom and political logic

(Mr. Bennouna, Morocco)

have, unfortunately, been met with the intransigence of Israel, which has pursued its policy of occupation, nurtured by outmoded expansionist designs.

After the Arab summit meeting in Rabat in 1974 the Arab world opened the way to peace with honour, recognizing the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) as the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, with the corollary right to establish its own State on the territories which must, in accordance with Security Council resolution 242 (1967), be liberated. The Fez plan, adopted unanimously by the Arab countries in 1981, completed that initiative by recognizing the right of all peoples of the region to enjoy statehood as nations and recalling the inescapable requirement of an independent national life for the Palestinian people in all the territories under Israeli occupation, including Al Quds Al Sharif - Jerusalem).

The peace plan was endorsed by the entire international community, which has since come to regard it as the sole means of arriving at a just and lasting settlement of the Palestine question, in a spirit of respect for the fundamental principles of the United Nations. All that remained was to determine the most appropriate ways and means of implementing such a plan, through a peaceful settlement based on dialogue and common agreement. This procedural aspect of peace now exists, since our Organization and the League of Arab States are urging the convening of an international conference, with the participation of all the parties concerned, in which all the permanent members of the Security Council would be directly involved as guarantors of respect for all the negotiated solutions ultimately adopted.

(Mr. Bennouna, Morocco)

The Kingdom of Morocco has consistently called for the implementation of the Fez Plan and the holding of the peace conference, which, we are convinced, would be the prelude to a new era of co-operation and prosperity for all the peoples of the region, whose creative genius has permanently enriched the civilization and cultural heritage of mankind.

(Mr. Bennouna, Morocco)

Thus why does Israel obstinately block this peace process, at the risk of aggravating the threats and dangers to international peace and security which the continued occupation of Palestinian lands and the oppression of the population increasingly create? Appeals have been made for constructive and honest dialogue and hands extended in gestures of peace, so that this inadmissible carnage might at last end and we might finally save from distress and despair generations of Palestinians that are entitled to the normal realization of their potentials and to justice, as are all the children of the world.

Nothing can justify this situation, certainly not the propaganda of various kinds that one encounters. Everyone knows that the Arab world has always been the first to express indignation about the sufferings and the treatment of the Jewish people in other circumstances, but that cannot in any case hide the inhuman deprivations and denial of justice faced by millions of innocent Palestinians.

The successive reports submitted on the question of Palestine and on the Middle East bear witness to the deterioration of the situation in the occupied Arab and Palestinian territories.

The most recent report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories (A/42/650) states that the already tense atmosphere has worsened and that there has been an increase in the number and gravity of incidents.

The report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (A/42/35) indicates that the occupying authorities have not given up their "iron fist" policy, which is aimed at the repression of all expressions of opposition to Israeli policy or of support for the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Thus, to put an end to the violence that prevails in the occupied Arab and Palestinian territories, to put an end to the massive violations of human rights of

(Mr. Bennouna, Morocco)

the Arab populations, the international community should persevere in its efforts. It would thus be doing justice to the Palestinian people, ensuring the triumph of right over might and restoring peace, concord and co-operation in a region which from time immemorial has been the land of coexistence and mutual tolerance among all the sons of Abraham.

My delegation takes this opportunity to congratulate Ambassador Sarré of Senegal, who presided masterfully over the proceedings of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, thus making an invaluable contribution to the defence of human rights and the cause of peace.

I should like also to pay a tribute to the tireless efforts of the Secretary-General, Mr. Perez de Cuellar, who is unsparing of time and energy in his efforts to initiate a dialogue among all the interested parties, thus encouraging the holding of an international conference on the question of Palestine.

It is high time we went beyond acrimony and short-term considerations and finally took a clear look at the future. It is time to restore the faith and hope of the Palestinian people and to open up new prospects of prosperity and tranquillity in that part of the world, so that it may continue its invaluable contributions to the spiritual progress of mankind.

Mr. FARTAS (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (interpretation from Arabic): Once again we are meeting here to discuss the question of Palestine, which has been a recurring item on the agenda of the General Assembly for the past four decades - more specifically, since the British delegation, in a letter addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations on 2 April 1947, requested the inclusion of the question of Palestine on the agenda of the second regular session of the General Assembly.

(Mr. Fartas, Libyan
Arab Jamahiriya)

Although our debates throughout those decades did not contribute and were not meant to contribute to the achievement of a settlement of the question of Palestine, they were not a completely futile exercise. They at least reminded us and the rest of the world year after year that there was an item on one agenda entitled "The Question of Palestine". It is a strange and sad paradox that the mere existence of that item on our agenda should be a source of jubilation to us, for were it not for that oblivion would have engulfed this question thanks to the present Arab options and the indifference that characterizes the position of the international community - so much so that this annual review has become an integral part of those options.

In the light of those Arab options, there remains nothing for us but to celebrate annually the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, on the understanding that that celebration is a symbol of the international community's increasing conviction of the fairness of the Palestinian cause and the legitimacy of the struggle of the Palestinian people for their inalienable rights, particularly the right to self-determination and the establishment of an independent State on their own national soil.

So, every year, we are content to discuss this question in the United Nations General Assembly and celebrate the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, on the premise that both the debate and the expression of solidarity reflect the emotional and political commitment of the international community to supporting the Palestinian people's struggle for survival in camps where their physical existence is at risk, and to defending their cause, which is threatened with liquidation in international forums.

(Mr. Fartas, Libyan
Arab Jamahiriya)

The Palestinian cause, its origins and developments are clear and well known to everyone; there is no need to expound the political, national, regional and international dimensions of the problem.

(Mr. Fartas, Libyan
Arab Jamahiriya)

Do we really need to reaffirm at every session that no other question in the world has been made the target of such a campaign of distortion and indifference - and determination to bury in oblivion vis-à-vis the international community - as has the cause of Palestine?

Is there really any need for us to stress at every session that the question of Palestine is the cause of an entire people that has been displaced from its country by violence and terrorism, whose land has been usurped by force and oppression and whose rights have been usurped by coercion and deceit? Do we need to alert anyone that the people of Palestine, both in the occupied territories and in the Diaspora are the target of policies of mass murder, extermination, repression, exile and forced migration?

Do we really need to remind ourselves at every session that the Arab people of Palestine constituted 90 per cent of the inhabitants of Palestine and owned 97 per cent of the land?

Is there any need for us to remind the international community every year of the massacres which forced the Palestinian people to flee and abandon their homes and farms? Do we really need to remind anyone of the massacres of Deir Yassin, Kafr Qasim, As-Samu', Qibya, Nahalin, Qalqilya and Al-Kazama, all of which had the aim of emptying Palestine of its original inhabitants?

Who among us has not heard of the opinion of Menachem Begin in his 1965 book "Revolution", in which he said:

"Israel's establishment would not have been possible without the incident of Deir Yassin, for whereas the Hagana were making advances on every front, the Palestinians were running and fleeing, crying and lamenting 'Deir Yassin, Deir Yassin'".

(Mr. Fartas, Libyan
Arab Jamahiriya)

The French thinker Roger Garaudy, on page 50 of his book "The Case of Israel", described that massacre, as "an operation which was styled and executed on the Nazi model". Aharon Sizing confirmed Garaudy's view by declaring in an official meeting of the so-called Israeli Cabinet on 17 November 1948:

"At any rate, and after reading this message, I was unable to sleep all night. I felt that the things that are unfolding are hurting my soul and hurting the souls of members of my family and the souls of those present here. I cannot imagine where we have come from and where we are heading. Usually I used to object when the word 'Nazi' was used of the British, and I do not like using this word, although the British had committed Nazi crimes. But today the Jews have got their Nazi methods. My whole being was shaken. It is clear that we have to hide these acts from public opinion, and I agree we must not reveal our achievements in these acts, but we must investigate them anyway."

Moshe Sharett, when he had the portfolio of what was called the Foreign Ministry, sent a telegram to Nahum Goldmann on June 15, 1948 wherein he described the massacre as:

"the most magnificent event in the current history of Palestine and what is more prominent than the establishment of the Jewish State is the depopulation of Palestine entirely of its Arab inhabitants."

That is according to Tom Segev's book 1949: The First Israelis.

The Zionist occupation of Palestine, at the outset, took the form of agricultural settlements, then it took the form of what was called "a national home for the Jews", which international Zionism pretended was no more than a limited cultural and religious grouping. Thereafter, in 1948, this grouping took another

(Mr. Fartas, Libyan
Arab Jamahiriya)

shape - that of a warrior entity - and, with assistance and support from other colonial Powers, it was able to take advantage of resolution 181 (II), adopted by the General Assembly on 29 November 1947, known as the partition resolution, by which the United Nations conferred legitimacy on one of the most striking manifestations of colonialism in the entire history of mankind. Thus was created a colonialist situation which compared with the attempts of Emperor Cyrus, Napoleon and Lord Palmerston: the situation initiated by Lord Balfour.

At the beginning, the Zionist entity pretended to accept the partition resolution, but that was its way of gaining a foothold in Palestine and from that initial step which the international community had legitimized it intended to proceed to occupy and annex more of the Palestinian and neighbouring Arab territories.

David Ben-Gurion was very frank in this respect. He wrote the following to his son Amos on 5 October 1937:

"I am one of the enthusiastic advocates of the Jewish State, even though that means the partition of Palestine, because I work on the premise that a limited Jewish State would not be the end, but the beginning. For when we achieve 1,000 or 10,000 dunums we shall be happy, because acquiring land is important not only in itself but because through acquiring land we would be strengthening ourselves, and every increase of our power would help us usurp the whole land. Therefore, establishing a State, albeit a limited one, would be an increase in our strength that we can have today and will be a pivot and a strong pillar that we can rely on in our historic struggle to regain the entire land. And we shall bring to this State all the Jews we can absorb, and we are confident of our ability to bring in more than 2 million people. We

(Mr. Fartas, Libyan
Arab Jamahiriya)

are confident that we shall be able to do that, and we shall establish a diversified Jewish State at the agricultural and industrial levels, and we shall start building a defence force, a first-class army. We have no doubt that our army will be the best in the world and therefore we shall be able to settle all the other parts of the country either by agreement and understanding with our Arab neighbours or in any other way."

It is that "other way" to which Ben Gurion alluded more than four decades ago which the Israeli entity is now using against the Palestinian territories and the adjacent territories. The Zionist dogma is based on the premise that all the Jews of the world must establish a national existence in the historic land of the twelve tribes of Israel. This idea of the ingathering of the Jews is the quintessence of Zionism. Hence there can never be an end to the temptation to expand. The Zionist entity, which was established in known circumstances of illegitimacy and terror, could not, even if it so desired, give up its search to entrench and expand itself. After it had acquired legitimacy, in 1947, it turned to expansion. So at the outset it occupied Um-al-Rashrash and then annexed a passage to the Gulf of Al-Aqabah, following which, in collusion with others, it invaded Egyptian territory to obtain concessions in the Red Sea. Then it launched its 1967 aggression, the third stage of Greater Israel. In 1967 it was able to wipe Palestine off the map, giving the Palestinian territories Hebrew names such as Judea and Samaria. In addition to Palestine, its expansion has reached the Syrian Arab Golan Heights, southern Lebanon and the Egyptian area of Taba. Those are Arab territories it still occupies by using the "other way" referred to by David Ben-Gurion in his letter to his son Amos.

(Mr. Fartas, Libyan
Arab Jamahiriya)

In implementation of that expansionist strategy, the Zionist entity has always refused, and still refuses, to define any boundaries for itself. At an early stage there was a dialogue between David Ben-Gurion and the then Minister of Justice, Rosen on the necessity of defining boundaries for the Zionist entity. Rosen said "This question of boundaries is something that we cannot ignore." Ben-Gurion replied "Everything is possible. If we decide here that there will be no reference to boundaries, then there will be no reference to boundaries. There is nothing here which is compulsory." Rosen said "It is not a question of obligation or compulsion; it is a legal question." Ben-Gurion replied "The law is anything that people decide upon."

(Mr. Fartas, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

The source of the above is the book entitled 1949 - The First Israelis, written by Tom Segev. In that book, the following statement is attributed to David Ben-Gurion:

"As for delimiting the borders, this is a question that could be changed. In the Holy Book and in our history, there are all sorts of definitions of borders. Therefore there is no real geographical limit and there are no absolute borders."

And Moshe Dayan says:

"If you have the Torah, and if you are the People of the Book, therefore you have the land of the Torah and on the basis of these principles, borders become flexible."

Moshe Dayan says, in another quotation:

"The American Declaration of Independence, for example, does not refer to any specified borders. Therefore we too do not find it necessary to indicate any borders for ourselves."

In yet another quotation, Moshe Dayan says:

"For the past 100 years, our parents have been in the process of the establishment of our country and our people through expansion and by bringing in more Jews and more settlements in order to expand those borders. Therefore it is not possible for any Jewish person to say that this operation has come to an end and to say 'we have achieved the end of the road'."

The Zionist enemy was not content with usurping land and displacing the people. It resorted to the iron-fist policy in dealing with the Palestinian citizens who are languishing under occupation. It even pursues those who have escaped its brutality with raids from the air and the sea on their refugee camps. The plan is to liquidate them physically and thus obliterate the symbol of their cause.

(Mr. Fartas, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

Article 49 of the Geneva Convention on the Protection of Civilians in Time of War, dated 12 August 1949, states clearly that:

"Individual or mass forcible transfers, as well as deportations of protected persons from occupied territory to the territory of the Occupying Power or to that of any other country, occupied or not, are prohibited, regardless of their motives."

Article 47 states that:

"Protected persons who are in occupied territory shall not be deprived, in any case or in any manner whatsoever, of the benefits of the present Convention by any change introduced, as the result of the occupation of a territory, into the institutions or government of the said territory, nor by any agreement concluded between the authorities of the occupied territories and the Occupying Power, nor by any annexation by the latter of the whole or part of the occupied territory."

Despite straightforward provisions, despite all the resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly, especially Security Council resolution 465 (1980) and General Assembly resolution 194 (III), and notwithstanding the objections by the international community, we find that the rulers of the Israeli entity vie with each other in election campaigns in pledging more annexation of Arab lands and the building of more settlements for the Jewish immigrants. The result is more displacement of Palestinian citizens in the West Bank and in Gaza, and the displacement of Syrian citizens in the Arab Syrian Golan. The Israeli occupation authorities no longer find any embarrassment in confiscating or transferring the ownership of Arab lands, and forcing their Palestinian owners, by overt or covert means, to leave their homes and their land. This policy is no longer a secret and the occupation authorities do not feel any compunction in making it public.

(Mr. Fartas, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

Itzak Shamir has declared that:

"Nothing will change the policy of the Israeli Government on the settlement of the Western land of Israel up to the river Jordan. Settlement will continue in all parts of the land, and nothing will change it or reverse its direction."

In another statement, Itzak Shamir said:

"The number of Jewish settlers in the West Bank will rise to double the current number of 50,000 within two or three years."

That statement was made two years ago. It is easy to guess the number of Jewish settlers who have settled now the West Bank in line with the plans of the occupation authorities.

Chaim Herzog has stated:

"The Jews have the right to settle any part of the land of Israel".

The occupation authorities have imposed on the Palestinian citizens of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip a reign of terror and violence in application of the "iron-fist" policy. It was with that purpose in view that the "Law of Return" was enacted. Under that law, only Jews can come to Palestine to live. The Palestinian refugees, the real inhabitants and legitimate owners of the country, cannot do so. Count Folke Bernadotte, in one of his reports as Personal Representative and an international mediator, said:

"This is an act of aggression on the merest and simplest principles of justice if we deprive the victims of the conflict of the right to return to their land at a time when the Jewish immigrants are flowing into Palestine. That immigration in itself constitutes a grave threat aimed at the permanent and perennial expulsion of the Arab refugees who have their roots in these lands, who have had their roots there for years, for centuries".

(Mr. Fartas, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

We all know the high price that Count Bernadotte paid for his impartial and courageous stance.

The well-known Jewish thinker Erich Fromm said:

"Since when is a person punished by the confiscation of his territory, by being prevented from returning to the land on which his parents and his grandparents have lived for generations before?"

Sir John Bagehot Glubb said in affirmation of the fact that the flight of the Palestinians was the result of the engineered panic and terror generated by the planned massacres perpetrated by the Irgun Zvai Leumi gang:

"He who abandons his home by choice does not leave his land with only the clothes which he has on his back".

The occupation authorities have promulgated the "Law of Absentees", concerning the property of absentee landlords. Under that law, the property of the expelled Palestinian refugees have been confiscated under the pretext that they are absentee landlords or that they have left Palestine voluntarily.

The occupation authorities have also brought out of the archives a number of the emergency regulations which were issued by the British Mandate authorities in 1945 in occupied Palestine especially those laws which allow the occupation authorities to order administrative detention and expulsion.

Then the occupation authorities issued Military Order 854, which stipulates that the military occupation authorities have the right to decide the school and university curricula with the aim of reducing the level of education and academic achievement in the Palestinian universities to the level of elementary and secondary schools.

(Mr. Fartas, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

The media circulate news reports from the occupied Arab territories which tell of the violence and terrorism practised by the occupation authorities in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. That terrorism over the past three weeks alone has resulted in the death of five schoolchildren and two women, in addition to a large number of wounded who have been taken to hospitals in critical condition. The occupation authorities have unleashed horrifying reprisals against citizens who participated in a series of demonstrations, which began on Saturday, 10 October. Occupation troops in Gaza opened fire on students, workers, craftsmen, housewives and schoolchildren who were protesting at the murder of four of their number at the hands of those troops. On the West Bank, occupation forces fired on demonstrators who were marching in solidarity with their bretheren in Gaza.

(Mr. Fartas, Libyan Arab
Jamahiriya)

The Israeli soldier, Rafik Halabi, says in his memoirs:

"When I visited Al-Shaat refugee camp in 1975 I could see the fiery glances aimed at us. Insults were heaped upon us as we walked in the dark alleys. I believe that the memory of all the lives exacted by the Israelis continues to haunt our minds."

As for Ariel Sharan, he says:

"We must strike them everywhere - in this country, in the Arab countries, across the seas. This can be done easily, and in this respect I have seen hopeless positions that have eventually been resolved. We must work against them after they hit us. We must strike them every day, everywhere. If we know that they are in some European country, we must strike them there, in spite of difficulties and obstacles, not in an all-out war, but by means whereby one will suddenly disappear, another will be found dead and a third will be discovered stabbed in one of the night clubs in Europe."

This is the tragedy of the inhabitants of Gaza and the West Bank. It is an extension of the plight of the Palestinian people, which has continued on for four decades. There is not a glimmer of hope on the horizon that they will ever return to their homes, exercise their right to self-determination or set up an independent State on their national soil, regardless of the fact that the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, international law and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights provide for such rights and protect them.

A group of Arabs, in the context of the options to which I referred at the beginning of my statement, have accepted all United Nations resolutions, including those which refer to the Palestinian question as merely a refugee question, even though the refugee question is but one aspect of the Palestinian question. They

(Mr. Fartas, Libyan Arab
Jamahiriya)

have accepted every initiative of the East, the West, the North or the South. They have even contributed a few initiatives of their own.

In spite of all this there has been absolutely no response from the Zionist side. The Zionist entity continues to reject all the relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions, especially General Assembly resolution 194 (III), which calls for the return of the Palestinian refugees to their homes.

The Zionist entity continues to refuse to recognize the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, and has rejected every initiative on the subject. We have even heard a call from this rostrum for an initiative, and then in the next session have heard a rejection of such an initiative. Every initiative is rejected, regardless of the source. If there is any merit to the Arab options - which we leave it to history to judge, although it is not difficult to foresee what that judgement will be - it is that they have exposed to world public opinion and the international community the true face of the Israeli entity, as well as its expansionist settler nature. They have also unmasked its recalcitrance, intolerance, extremism, racism and persistent defiance of the United Nations and disdain for Charter and the principles of international law, as well as its reneging on all agreements and international customs and covenants. This has been possible because of the unlimited economic, financial, military and technological support given to the Israeli entity by the United States. The strategic alliance between the Zionist entity and the United States has allowed the former to pursue its expansionist, aggressive policy and to flout all relevant international decisions with impunity.

(Mr. Fartas, Libyan Arab
Jamahiriya)

Mr. Uffe Ellemann-Jensen, the Foreign Minister of Denmark, in his statement to the General Assembly on behalf of the 12 member States of the European Community, stated the following:

"The Twelve are increasingly concerned about the situation of human rights in the occupied territories. We renew our call on Israel to fulfil its obligations as the occupying Power, pending its withdrawal, to lift restrictions on political and economic activities and, as we have reiterated recently in our declaration of 14 September, to put an end to the illegal policy of settlements." (A/42/PV.6, p. 71, 72)

These are, in brief, the developments in the Palestine question, which we discuss at every session. At the end of the debate a number of draft resolutions will be adopted which will never be implemented, because the Israeli entity flouts General Assembly resolutions, disregards Security Council decisions and defies the principles of the Charter.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item. The voting on the draft resolutions on this subject will take place at a later date, to be announced in the Journal.

I call now on representatives who wish to speak in exercise of the right of reply. I remind members that, in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, statements in exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to 5 minutes for the second and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. NISSIM-ISSACHAROFF (Israel): Now that we have come to the end of the debate, I feel obliged to react in particular to the statement made yesterday by the representative of Saudi Arabia. That statement contained so many fanciful distortions that it would be impossible in 10 minutes to lower oneself to the

(Mr. Nissim-Issacharoff, Israel)

depths of the falsehoods contained therein. Beyond this, the statement was one of the most racist and bigoted that we have heard in this entire General Assembly, and was made in a manner bordering on the surreal. I thought that no other representative would have delved into such racism until, of course, I heard the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran. It seems that those two types of obscure régime have a lot more in common than I had thought, beyond their unconditional hostility to my country.

In addition, in his statement yesterday the representative of Saudi Arabia stated that Israel had rejected the Fez plan which, in his words, was "a historic opportunity" for peace. I should like to ask the representative of Saudi Arabia, through you, Mr. President, where, in this historic opportunity for peace, is mention made of any negotiation, direct or otherwise, between the Arab States and Israel. I should also like to ask where in this plan is there mention of the attainment of peace treaties between Israel and its neighbours and the normalization of their relations. Indeed, the plan does not even admit to any mutual recognition between Israel and the Arab States. None of these basic and fundamental elements are even mentioned in this so-called peace plan, and it is for this reason that Israel cannot regard it as serious effort to address the resolution of the conflict.

By the way, I should also like to ask why there is talk of implementating the Fez plan now. The Arab States could have implemented the main thrust of the plan concerning the Palestinians between 1948 and 1967, before the territories came under Israeli control. It is a strange and curious historical fact that the Arab States needed Israel in order to discover their new-found sensitivity to the rights of the Palestinians, which they trampled and ignored before 1967.

(Mr. Nissim-Issacharoff, Israel)

In any event, those States not genuinely interested in furthering the peace process continued to push the Fez plan and dress it up in United Nations language in the guise of General Assembly resolutions 38/58 C and 41/43 D. Regarding these resolutions, I would merely like to direct the attention of representatives to the Secretary-General's report on the situation in the Middle East, in which we find the following:

"The discussions with the parties and the Council reconfirmed what had been reported by the Secretary-General in his report, namely, that sufficient agreement does not exist to permit the convening of the International Conference as called for in resolution 41/43 D. There was no apparent change in the positions of those of the parties and the members of the Security Council who do not regard the guidelines contained in resolution 38/58 C as an acceptable basis for the convening of a conference." (A/42/714, para. 25)

(Mr. Nissim-Issacharoff, Israel)

If this is so, why do we persist in discussing obsolete ideas which can in no way bring the peace process nearer, but, rather, do the exact opposite? There have been lately certain positive developments in the Arab world regarding peace in our area, and yet they are not reflected in this debate.

A French statesman and thinker once said, "Man is not what he appears to be; he is what he hides." By analogy, the underlying aim of this debate is to perpetuate the conflict, and not to solve it. This is what the Arab régimes, not interested in peace, hide. Worse still, this debate also conceals the desire of certain Arab States which generally have some disposition to make peace with Israel.

Israel has never shirked the challenge of peace and will always do its utmost to pursue every possible avenue genuinely leading to the expansion of the peace process. Thanks to the persistent efforts of certain countries - including, I might add, Israel - the peace process is today a reality in the Middle East, a reality that will not be blurred or undermined by this debate. Any progress which has been achieved in the peace process has been achieved in a manner conspicuously unconnected with General Assembly resolutions and debates such as these.

Accordingly, the perpetuation of this antagonistic debate in the manner in which it has been conducted over the past three days is a pursuit of continued hostility and human misery, and a denial of reality. The reality will remain for Israel, and, we hope, for others, the attainment of peace.

Mr. HOSSEINI (Islamic Republic of Iran): My delegation deeply regrets that yesterday the representative of the defeated aggressor Iraqi régime once more tried to mislead and deceive the Assembly by introducing baseless allegations and notorious lies against my country. This is not the first time that the Iraqi representative has introduced such extraneous issues to divert the attention of the Assembly from the crimes committed by the Zionist non-entity base of terror in Palestine.

(Mr. Hosseini, Islamic Republic of Iran)

The logic behind the purpose of this mischevous behaviour is clear to all. They are helplessly trying to hide their own war of aggression against the Islamic Republic of Iran since 22 September 1980. The Iraqi conduct in the course of the imposed war has indeed been an open challenge to the raison d'être of the fundamental rules of law governing armed conflicts. The repeated use of chemical weapons by Iraq clearly illustrates the acts of lawlessness and the brutalities of the Iraqi régime.

However much we wish to expose the defeated criminal Iraqi régime, we think that the issue of Palestine is too important to be abused. My delegation thinks that agenda item 38, "The question of Palestine", has to be devoted only to the important issue of containing Zionist aggression against Palestine and not to the Iraqi aggression of 22 September 1980 against the Islamic Republic of Iran. We deeply regret that Iraq refers to my country as having distracted the focus of the deliberation from our common concern about the occupation of Palestine. Had it not been for his improper remark, my delegation would have kept strictly to the item under consideration.

On the other hand, the representative of the Zionist non-entity base of terror occupying Palestine tried again this morning to hide his face of deception. Everyone here remembers that according to General Assembly resolution 3379 (XXX), of 1975, Zionism is equal to racism. So Zionists are racists, and the Zionism of which the gentleman is so proud is, indeed, racism.

It is the conviction of my delegation and of all the Moslem ummah and people: that the creation, existence and presence of the Zionist base of terror occupying Palestine is totally illegal. It has been created by force and terror. It is a terrorist, inhuman régime. The killing, bombing, torture, massacre of thousands of innocent Palestinian people clearly demonstrate the real nature of that blood-sucker régime. The Zionist aggressor régime invaded Lebanon and committed

(Mr. Hosseini, Islamic Republic of Iran)

crimes. We can never forget what the Zionist entity did in Lebanon, in Sabra and Shatila.

I want to reiterate once more the position of the Islamic Republic of Iran and all the Moslem immah. We believe that the root of the present conflict in the Middle East is the presence of the Zionist base of terror. In order to solve the problem we have to annihilate that cancerous régime, that cancerous entity, and eliminate it from the Middle East.

Mr. SHIHABI (Saudi Arabia): Yesterday, the Israeli representative stated the following:

"But repetition of blatant lies and distortions does not turn them into

truths. Facts cannot be rubbed off the pages of history." (A/42/PV.80, p. 62)

He certainly does not practise what he preached. He did not even practise it in the rest of his statement, which was full of blatant lies and distortions.

However, today he chose to answer my statement of yesterday and to call it racist and anti-Israeli. We are not racist; the Arabs are known not to be racists. We are against Zionism and its intrigues, designs and plans; we are not anti-Jewish. But he would be well advised to read the special report of the Special Committee against Apartheid (A/42/22/Add.1), of 26 October 1987, entitled "Recent developments concerning relations between Israel and South Africa". That report shows who are basically racist, who are the partners of racism, of whose existence racism makes up a basic component. Zionism is racism in its ugliest form.

(Mr. Shihabi, Saudi Arabia)

He did not choose to respond to some facts and realities in the rest of my statement concerning their racist practices, arrogance and aggression. He did not choose to respond to the quotations I made from the report of the United Nations Special Committee concerning their practices. The repetition of blatant lies and distortions does not transform lies into truths: that applies to him more than to anybody else.

Saudi Arabia and every other Arab State base themselves on facts when they speak of Israeli Zionist practices. Everybody in this Hall today knows who is against peace. But they know that they will never have capitulation; the Fez plan was the historic opportunity for them. Every sensible person knows that; their best friends know that. But they do not want to hear the truth, but the truth is knocking at the door.

Mr. AL-RUBAIE (Iraq) (interpretation from Arabic): It seems that the representative of the Tehran régime insists on his pretence of extreme hostility towards Israel. But it is very clear how much co-operation and co-ordination has taken place between those two régimes in their conspiracy against the Arab world in general and the Palestinian people in particular.

The continued war of aggression against Iraq is a strategic objective of both the régimes of Tel Aviv and Tehran, and the continued inflicting of wounds on Lebanon is yet another of their common objectives. Therefore, while the Israeli Air Force shells Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon, gangs of Khomeini guards encircle and isolate those camps from the world, preventing food, medical supplies and even drinking water from reaching the besieged camps. We have read detailed press reports about the daily suffering of the inhabitants of those camps.

What is also ludicrous is that Tehran's rulers insist on their hostility towards Israel despite all that. They have launched a war against Iraq using

(Mr. Al-Rubaie, Iraq)

weapons supplied by Israel. Perhaps Iran's rulers have found and established a new goal, namely, to liberate Jerusalem with Zionist weaponry.

Many senior staff members of the United States White House have resigned their posts because of the Iran gate scandal, and for a number of months now the United States Congress has been occupied with the details of that scandal, which started with an Israeli initiative to supply the Tehran régime with United States weapons. Perhaps the name of Colonel North has become better known than that of any Hollywood actor. Documented information is available of the consignments of artillery that left Israel for Tehran and we now know of the continuous bargaining between the régimes of Tel Aviv and Tehran in all fields to divide the Arab world between them. However, it seems that the representative of the Tehran régime has not heard of all that, has not read of it, and has not participated in it.

This fiction of hostility between Tel Aviv and Tehran has proved to be one of the worst theatre plays - in its production, direction and acting. I offer free advice to the representative of Tehran: he should announce his real hostile objectives against the Arab world and its leaders - objectives that are no different from those of the Tel Aviv régime.

The PRESIDENT: Before calling on the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, I wish to remind representatives that the second statement in exercise of the right of reply is limited to five minutes.

Mr. HOSSEINI (Islamic Republic of Iran): I did not want to say more on the Iraqi allegations because, as I have said, we believe that agenda item 38 concerns only the question of Palestine. Apparently, the representative of the defeated Iraqi régime insists on diverting the Assembly from that important question.

(Mr. Hosseini, Islamic
Republic of Iran)

One fact is clear to us all but the Iraqi representatives try to hide it - and facts cannot be hidden - namely, the Iraqi invasion of the Islamic Republic of Iran on 22 September 1980. That is a fact; let us not dispute about it.

Our real objective, our strategic policy, is not to fight with our Arab brothers, our Muslim brothers; the objective and strategic policy is the removal of the Zionist entity from the region. In execution of that policy the Islamic Republic of Iran closed the embassy of the Zionist base of terror in Tehran and offered it to our Palestinian brothers, who now operate it.

I think that the representative of the Iraqi régime did not elaborate on the Iraqi policy towards our Palestinian brothers and how they themselves have betrayed the Palestinians. It is known to us all that the Islamic Republic of Iran has always supported the cause of Palestine and the struggle of our Palestinian brothers against the Zionist usurpers. That is a fact that cannot be hidden.

Mr. NISSIM-ISSACHAROFF (Israel): Far be it for me to interfere between two colleagues over there, but I should like to refer to the words of the Saudi Arabian representative.

The Saudi Arabian representative was, of course, unable to answer the questions that I raised just now on the Fez plan and persisted in the hollow rhetoric which characterizes his statement and the historic opportunity he talked of yesterday. One thing is clear also. The Saudi representative totally rejects that the Jewish people are entitled to any homeland whatsoever. That position reveals a fundamental misconception of Zionism.

(Mr. Nissim-Issacharoff, Israel)

Zionism is the Jewish people's answer to racism levelled against it in the past and also the answer to the racism exemplified by the Saudi representative's statements yesterday and today. Zionism is the defeat of racism and its complete antithesis.

As for links with South Africa, perhaps the Saudi representative would like to inform us how much Arab oil continues to fuel the apartheid régime in South Africa.

Mr. AL-RUBAIE (Iraq) (interpretation from Arabic): I wish also to repeat, but in other words, that the continual convergence strategically between the two régimes of Tehran and Tel Aviv is not only evidenced by the co-operation between them in armaments, but also by the war of aggression they continue to wage against the Arab nation.

While Israel continues its diversified warfare against Palestinians and Arabs, Iran continues its war against Iraq and the Arabs. While Israel rejects implementation of United Nations resolutions and Security Council resolutions with a view to resolving the question of Palestine, the rulers of Tehran do likewise in refusing to implement United Nations decisions and Security Council resolutions to put an end to the aggressive war being waged against Iraq and Arab Gulf countries. While Israeli bombs fall upon the camps in Lebanon, Tehran's bombs fall upon Baghdad and other capitals in the Arab Gulf region. While Israel defies the world at large, Tehran's rulers do the same.

Finally, there is one thing that is indisputable, and it is the following question: Who benefits from the continuation of the Iran-Iraq war? Is it the cause of the Palestinian people and their just struggle for the liberation of their land? Does the continuation of this bloody war for over eight years help liberate Arab territories, including the Holy City of Jerusalem? Who is benefiting from the continuing war against Iraq? It is certainly Israel. There lies the link between what we are discussing today, the question of Palestine, under the item under consideration, and the question of the war between Iraq and Iran.

Israel is the party that benefits from this war.

This has been declared by the Zionists on each and every occasion. This is what they express all the time, thereby encouraging the rulers of Tehran to pursue their war and reject any peaceful solution, especially Security Council resolution 598 (1987). The continuation of the war means occupying Iraq and the Arab world

(Mr. Al-Rubaie, Iraq)

and diverting their attention from the threat facing them from Iran, and this is indeed exploited by Israel, which strives to perpetuate the situation. This certainly harms the Palestinian resistance, as well as the Arab resistance against the Zionist menace. This was expressed in the Final Declaration adopted at the Extraordinary Arab Summit Conference, held in Amman in November. This is a fact well known to all.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): The Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) has asked to be allowed to make a statement in reply. I call upon him in accordance with General Assembly resolution 3237 (XXIX).

Mr. TERZI (Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO)): Shedding crocodile tears over their victims, the Israeli perpetrators of the crime against the Palestinian people are trying to sell something here that is not saleable. A great effort is being made by Israel to distort and misrepresent history and the facts.

Israel did not regain its independence: Israel was created through atrocities, brutality and conquest, presumably on the basis of resolution 181 (II), adopted by this Assembly in 1947.

The representative of Israel is better advised to read and study the minutes of Israeli cabinet meetings, the diaries of Ben-Gurion and others. In 1948, the then Foreign Minister of Israel, Sharett, informed Nahum Goldmann, President of the World Zionist Congress, that

"The most spectacular event in the contemporary history of Palestine, in a way more spectacular than the creation of the Jewish State, is the wholesale evacuation of its Arab population".

In that same year, the head of the Jewish National Fund, Yosef Weitz, had even proposed a series of measures that would drive the Palestinian refugees from the

(Mr. Terzi, PLO)

border area deep into the Arab hinterland and a so-called Transfer Committee was created.

Despite the efforts of the United Nations and decisions taken here, Israel stuck to its stand:

"What happened, happened and there is no bringing back the past".

But then, why did the Palestinians flee? A member of the Israeli Cabinet, Aharon Cizling, is on record stating that he had received information on reports of atrocities committed in 1948 by the Israeli army and suggested:

"Obviously we have to conceal these actions from the public...", and he added:

"Now Jews, too, have behaved like Nazis and my entire being has been shaken". But that same Cizling warned, when referring to the Palestinian refugees:

"We still do not properly appreciate what kind of enemy we are now nurturing outside the borders of our State. Our enemies, the Arab States, are a mere nothing compared with those hundreds of thousands of Arabs who will be moved by hatred, hopelessness and infinite hostility to wage war on us, regardless of any agreement that might be reached."

Cizling must have had the foreknowledge of what happens to people deprived of all their rights, including the right to life. He did foresee the inevitable Palestinian fedayeen.

Now let us consider the Zionist-Nazi co-operation. It is a fact that the Irgun Zvai Leumi, the party of Menachem Begin, who received a peace prize - world peace prize, whatever it is - the former Prime Minister of Israel, advocated in the 1930s that:

"The co-operation of the Israeli liberation movement would be along the lines of the last speeches made by the German Reich Chancellor, Herr Hitler, and

(Mr. Terzi, PLO)

those are based on the community of interests between the requirements of a new order for Europe according to the German concept and the aspirations of the Jewish people being represented by the Irgun Zvai Leumi."

Here I wish to recall that honourable people like Albert Einstein publicly denounced Begin and his party, even in The New York Times, as being akin in its organization, methods, political philosophy and social appeal to the Nazi and Fascist parties and that Begin's party is a terrorist, right-wing, chauvinist organization in Palestine". So enough talk about Nazis and Nazi-collaboration.

But then again, on the issue of refugees, why the racist approach? Why should Palestinian Arabs and Jews in different countries be compelled to exchange homes and be transferred when they can and should be enabled and helped to live in peace in their own homes, on their land in peace and harmony? The world must have come to an age of prudence, magnanimity and, more important, human relationships untarnished by racist ideologies and policies.

We Palestinians insist that there is no place like home, and our home is Palestine. Our struggle to return to our homes is an inalienable right. This is what we believe in, this is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and it is our duty to struggle by all means to attain and exercise this right. For me Jerusalem, where I was born and raised, is my home; and together with all Palestinians, we shall not rest until we return home to live in peace, enjoying all our political and social rights, including our right to self-determination without external interference.

Finally, the United Nations is here to try to bridge differences and seek agreements on the basis of the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and relevant resolutions, not in a vacuum. Let us all work for the achievement of the long-overdue peace in the land of peace, Palestine.

(Mr. Terzi, PLO)

The commitment of the Palestine Liberation Organization to the best venue for the achievement of peace, namely, the United Nations, is in conformity with the relevant resolutions. Our commitment was clearly stated by the head of our political department, Mr. Kaddoumi, in his statement here on 23 November. Let us give peace a chance and work together for it using the vehicle and the organs of the United Nations.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): I should like to propose that the list of speakers on item 40, entitled "United Nations Conference for the Promotion of International Co-operation in the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy", be closed on Friday, 27 November, at 11 a.m.

It was so decided

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): I request representatives who wish to participate in the debate on this item to put their names on the list of speakers as soon as possible.

The meeting rose at 1.50 p.m.