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SIXTH COMMITTEE

57th meeting

held on

Wednesday, 25 November 1987

at 10 a.m.

New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 57th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. AZZAROUK (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 136: REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON RELATIONS WITH THE HOST COUNTRY
(continued) (A/42/26 and A/C.6/42/L.20 and L.23)

1. Mr. AL-KILWA (Observer for the Palestine Liberation Organization) recalled that an amendment to the State Department authorization bill placed before the Senate of the United States on 8 October 1987 described the PLO as a terrorist organization and was aimed at rendering it unlawful for the PLO to establish and maintain office premises or other facilities in the territory of the United States. The amendment also contained other provisions which were contrary to the Constitution of the United States and to the right of peoples to freedom of expression. According to information reaching the PLO, it seemed likely that the amendment would be approved. It would be most unfortunate if the United States legislative authority were thus to flout its international obligations and to capitulate before the demagoguery of pressure groups when the Executive, invoking international agreements it had entered, had repeatedly expressed its opposition to the amendment. Those who sought its adoption clearly wanted to infringe the Palestinians' national identity and to stand in the way of efforts aimed at establishing a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. It was difficult to see how such a manoeuvre, which would have serious consequences, could be in the interest of the United States.

2. The amendment in question, which provided, inter alia, for the termination of the PLO's work at United Nations Headquarters, flagrantly violated the Charter of the United Nations, the Headquarters Agreement and international law. It represented an act of aggression against the United Nations as a whole, and had aroused protests on the part of the great majority of Member States and, in particular, of the Group of Arab States, the Group of Islamic States and the Group of Non-Aligned States. The PLO wished to thank all the above, as well as the Secretary-General, the Legal Counsel and the members of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country for the very clear position they had adopted. It would take all measures in conformity with international law to preserve its rights and those of its friends who might become the next target if such a precedent were allowed to occur. In particular, it was contemplating placing the matter before the General Assembly meeting in regular or special session, resorting to arbitration in accordance with the Headquarters Agreement, or even, if necessary, bringing the case before the International Court of Justice. It hoped, however, that reason would prevail and the manoeuvres designed to ensure the amendment's adoption would fail.

3. Draft resolution A/C.6/42/L.20, which clearly defined the legal status of the Permanent Observer Mission of the Palestine Liberation Organization to the United Nations, should contribute positively to efforts being made to avoid problems of that kind in future. The PLO and the Group of Arab States were willing to discuss any suggestion that might help to ensure the success of the draft resolution, which they urged delegations to adopt unanimously. The draft would not undercut efforts being made on the part of the United States to prevent the adoption of the amendment by the Senate, which had been informed by the United States delegation

(Mr. Al-Kidwa, Observer, PLO)

that the General Assembly would take the appropriate steps under international agreements. The PLO wished to thank all the draft resolution's sponsors as well as those who would vote in its favour.

The meeting rose at 10.55 a.m.