

# UNITED NATIONS



GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY



SECURITY  
COUNCIL

Distr.  
GENERAL

A/33/311  
S/12896  
17 October 1978

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
Thirty-third session  
Agenda item 30  
THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

SECURITY COUNCIL  
Thirty-third year

## Report of the Secretary-General

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## I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report is submitted in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 32/20 of 25 November 1977, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its thirty-third session a comprehensive report covering the developments in the Middle East in all their aspects. A summary of that resolution appears in paragraph 91 of section VI below.

2. It may be recalled that, on 18 May 1973, the Secretary-General submitted a comprehensive report to the Security Council (S/10929) in which he gave an account of the efforts undertaken by the United Nations since June 1967 to deal with the various aspects of the situation in the Middle East. A similar pattern is followed in the present report. Emphasis is given to the search for a peaceful settlement in the Middle East and to the status of the cease-fire which has a direct bearing on the efforts towards such a settlement. The other aspects of the Middle East problem are dealt with more briefly since they will be the subject of separate reports to be submitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-third session in pursuance of the relevant decisions of the Assembly.

3. The present report is based mainly on information available in United Nations documents. In view of the decisions of the General Assembly on the control and limitation of United Nations documentation, reference will be made to the comprehensive report of 18 May 1973 and to other reports of the Secretary-General and official United Nations documents concerning the Middle East, whenever appropriate, in order to avoid duplication.

## II. STATUS OF THE CEASE-FIRE

4. The status of the cease-fire in the Middle East up to May 1973 is described in the report of the Secretary-General of 18 May 1973 to the Security Council (S/10929, paras. 3-13). There was only one United Nations peace-keeping operation in the area at that time, namely, the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization in Palestine (UNTSO). Its main activities were to carry out three cease-fire observation operations established in pursuance of the Security Council, one in the Israel-Syria sector (Security Council resolution 235 (1967) of 9 June 1967), another in the Egypt-Israel or Suez Canal sector (consensus approved by the Security Council on 10 July 1967) and a third one in the Israel-Lebanon sector (consensus of the Security Council of 19 April 1972).

### A. Establishment of UNEF

5. On 6 October 1973, hostilities broke again in the Egypt-Israel and Israel-Syria sectors. On 22 October the Security Council adopted resolution 338 (1973) in which it called for an immediate cease-fire, called upon the parties concerned to start immediately after the cease-fire the implementation of Security Council resolution 242 (1967) and decided that, immediately and concurrently with the

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cease-fire, negotiations start between the parties concerned under appropriate auspices aimed at establishing a just and durable peace in the Middle East. The next day, as fighting continued in the Egypt-Israel sector, the Council adopted resolution 339 (1973) by which it confirmed its call for an immediate cease-fire and requested the Secretary-General to take measures for the immediate dispatch of United Nations observers to supervise the cease-fire between Egyptian and Israeli forces. In pursuance of this resolution, UNTSO observers were dispatched to the battle zone, but fighting continued (S/7930/Add.2219).

6. On 25 October the Security Council met again and adopted resolution 340 (1973) in which it demanded that immediate and complete cease-fire be observed and that the parties return to the positions occupied by them at 1650 hours GMT on 22 October 1973, decided to set up immediately under its authority a United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) to be composed of personnel drawn from States Members of the United Nations except the permanent members of the Security Council and requested the Secretary-General to report within 24 hours on the steps taken to this effect.

7. On 26 October the Secretary-General submitted to the Security Council a report (S/11052/Rev.1) in which he set forth the terms of reference of UNEF, the general considerations and guidelines for the functioning of the Force and the steps he proposed to take in order to set up the Force without delay. The next day the Security Council, by its resolution 341 (1973), approved the report of the Secretary-General and decided that UNEF should be established for an initial period of six months, subject to extension.

8. Shortly after the adoption of this resolution the first elements of UNEF arrived in the area of operations, and following their arrival tension subsided, and the cease-fire was restored. The situation in the Egypt-Israel sector has remained generally quiet since then. An account of the establishment and the activities of UNEF is contained in the reports of the Secretary-General to the Security Council on the subject (S/11248 and Add.1-7, S/11536 and Add.1, S/11670 and Corr.1 and 2, S/11758, S/11849, S/12212 and S/12416).

9. The mandate of the Force has been extended as necessary by the Security Council on the recommendation of the Secretary-General and with the agreement of the parties concerned. The last extension of UNEF, as decided by the Security Council in its resolution 416 (1977) of 21 October 1977, was for a further period of one year, until 24 October 1978. The general terms of reference of UNEF remain as contained in the Secretary-General's report mentioned in paragraph 7 above, but the tasks of the Force were expanded in the light of subsequent agreements concluded between the parties (see paras. 67-76 below). The present task of the Force is essentially to supervise the Agreement between Egypt and Israel of 4 September 1975. In this connexion, the Force mans and controls a buffer zone between the Egyptian and Israeli forces, inspects areas of limited forces and armaments on both sides of the buffer zone and supervises the demilitarized character of the Abu Rodeis and Ras Sudar oil fields area.

10. The total strength of UNEF was initially to be in the order of 7,000, and this level was reached by January 1974. Later, as the situation in the Egypt-Israel

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sector quieted down, the strength of the Force was gradually reduced. At present, the Force is composed of seven contingents, from Australia, Canada, Finland, Ghana, Indonesia, Poland and Sweden, and has a strength of about 4,300. It may be mentioned for the record that four contingents which participated in UNEF at its early stages were withdrawn at the request of their Governments, the Irish contingent in May 1974, the Nepalese in August 1974, the Panamanian in November 1974 and the Senegalese in June 1976. Two other contingents, from Austria and Peru, were transferred to the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force together with parts of the Canadian and Polish logistic components when that Force was established in May 1974.

11. Following the establishment of UNEF, the cease-fire observation operation carried out by UNTSO was discontinued, and UNTSO observers assigned to the area are now assisting UNEF in the performance of its tasks.

#### B. Establishment of UNDOF

12. Towards the end of the hostilities of October 1973, the Israeli forces moved forward of the 1967 cease-fire lines in the Israel-Syria sector and occupied a salient around the village of Sassa, some 40 kilometres west of Damascus. Following the adoption of Security Council resolutions 338 (1973) and 339 (1973), the cease-fire arrangements were adjusted to the new situation and some of the UNTSO observers were redeployed around the new forward defended localities of the opposing forces (S/11057, para. 9). With these adjustments the cease-fire observation operation in the Israel-Syria sector continued. There was no further forward movement of troops, but the cease-fire was marred by many firing incidents, mainly in the Sassa Salient, during the early months of 1974 (see reports of the Secretary-General in the S/11057/Add. series).

13. As described in paragraph 73 below, an agreement on the disengagement of the Israeli and Syrian forces was concluded on 31 May 1974. This Agreement and its Protocol provided essentially for the strict observance of the cease-fire, a partial withdrawal of the Israeli forces on the Golan Heights, the redeployment of the Israeli and Syrian forces along agreed lines, the establishment of an area of separation between those two lines and of areas of limitation in armaments and forces on both sides of the area of separation. The provisions of the Agreement were to be supervised by a United Nations Disengagement Observer Force.

14. On 31 May, after being informed by the Secretary-General of the signing of the Agreement, the Security Council adopted resolution 350 (1974) in which it decided to set up immediately under its authority the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) and requested the Secretary-General to take the necessary steps to this effect. The Force was established for an initial period of six months, subject to extension by the Security Council.

15. UNTSO observers in the Israel-Syria sector were immediately assigned to the new Force and were soon joined by contingents transferred from UNEF. The

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cease-fire became effective upon the conclusion of the disengagement agreement. The area has remained generally quiet since then. The establishment and the activities of the Force are outlined in the reports of the Secretary-General on the subject (S/11310 and Add.1-4, S/11563 and Add.1, S/11694, S/11883 and Add.1, S/12083 and Add.1, S/12235, S/12453 and S/12710).

16. The mandate of UNDOF has been extended as necessary by the Security Council, on the recommendation of the Secretary-General, in much the same way as for UNEF. The last extension was for a period of six months, until 30 November 1978, in accordance with Security Council resolution 429 (1978) of 31 May 1978.

17. As stipulated in the Agreement on disengagement of forces between Israel and Syria, the strength of UNDOF has been maintained around 1,250. The Force, which is composed of personnel from States Members of the United Nations except the permanent members of the Security Council, consists of four national contingents and 90 observers detailed from UNTSO. Originally the four contingents were the Austrian and Peruvian infantry battalions and the Canadian and Polish logistic elements detached from UNEF. Later, in July 1975, the Peruvian contingent was withdrawn at the request of its Government and replaced by an Iranian contingent.

18. The UNTSO cease-fire observation operation in the Israel-Syria sector was discontinued after the establishment of UNDOF and, as indicated above, 90 observers were incorporated into UNDOF.

19. With the establishment of UNDOF, the United Nations had two peace-keeping forces and one observer mission in the Middle East. Consequently, the Secretary-General felt that it would be desirable to establish a co-ordinating mechanism for the activities and administration of those operations, and in August 1975, with the agreement of the Security Council (S/11808), he appointed Lieutenant-General Ensio Siilasvuo as Chief Co-ordinator of United Nations Peace-keeping Missions in the Middle East.

#### C. Establishment of UNIFIL

20. The cease-fire observation operation set up by UNTSO in the Israel-Lebanon sector continued to function until March 1978. Following the outbreak of the Lebanese crisis in 1975, the UNTSO area of operations in southern Lebanon came under the control of various de facto forces, and this situation often made the UNTSO operation very difficult. Nevertheless, UNTSO observers continued to man the five observation posts in southern Lebanon as well as their forward headquarters at Naqoura as best they could under exceptionally difficult conditions, and they continued to observe and report on the observance of the cease-fire between Israel and Lebanon along the armistice demarcation line (see reports of the Secretary-General on the S/11663/Add/Series).

21. In a letter dated 13 March addressed to the Secretary General (A/33/64-S/12598), the Permanent Representative of Israel complained about an incident in Israel on

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11 March, which resulted in 37 civilians dead and 76 others wounded and for which the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) had claimed responsibility. On 15 March the Israeli forces invaded Lebanon and by 19 March they had occupied all territory south of the Litani River except for a pocket around the city of Tyre.

22. On 19 March the Security Council adopted resolution 425 (1978) in which it called upon Israel immediately to cease its military action against Lebanese territorial integrity and to withdraw forthwith its forces from all Lebanese territory, decided to establish immediately under its authority a United Nations Interim Force for southern Lebanon for the purpose of confirming the withdrawal of Israeli forces, restoring international peace and security and assisting the Government of Lebanon in ensuring the return of its effective authority in the area, the Force to be composed of personnel drawn from States Members of the United Nations, and requested the Secretary-General to report to the Council within 24 hours on the implementation of that resolution.

23. On the same day, the Secretary-General submitted a report to the Security Council (S/12611) setting forth the terms of reference of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), the general considerations and guidelines for the functioning of the Force and a proposed plan of action. The general considerations and guidelines proposed by the Secretary-General are similar to those applied to UNEF and UNDOF. The Secretary-General envisaged the task of UNIFIL as a two-stage operation. In the first stage, the Force would confirm the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanese territory to the international border. Once this was achieved, it would establish and maintain an area of operation as defined. In this connexion, it would supervise the cessation of hostilities, ensure the peaceful character of the area of operation, control movement and take all measures deemed necessary to assure the effective restoration of Lebanese sovereignty. Later on the same day, the Security Council adopted resolution 426 (1978) by which it approved the report of the Secretary-General and decided that UNIFIL should be established for an initial period of six months, subject to extension.

24. The authorized strength of UNIFIL was initially set at 4,000. Subsequently, on the recommendation of the Secretary-General, the Security Council decided to increase it to 6,000 (Security Council resolution 427 (1978) of 3 May 1978). As at the beginning of September 1978, the Force was composed of contingents from Canada, Fiji, France, Iran, Ireland, Nepal, Nigeria, Norway and Senegal and had a total strength of about 5,900.

25. The establishment and activities of UNIFIL have been described in the reports submitted by the Secretary-General to the Security Council on this subject (S/12620 and Add.1-5 and S/12845). As indicated in his periodic report of 13 September 1978 (S/12845), the Israeli forces completed their withdrawal from Lebanese territory on 13 June 1978, but the fact that they handed over control of the border area to Lebanese de facto armed groups, rather than to UNIFIL, has continued to make impossible the full deployment of the Force and the restoration of the authority of the Lebanese Government in the whole area of operation. Thus,

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while UNIFIL has made good initial progress, much remains to be done before the task entrusted to UNIFIL by the Security Council is fulfilled.

26. After considering the report of the Secretary-General, the Security Council decided, by its resolution 434 (1978) of 18 September 1978, to extend the mandate of UNIFIL for a further period of four months, until 19 January 1979.

27. Before concluding this section, a reference should be made to a recent development which is not directly related to the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon. On 6 October 1978, the Security Council adopted resolution 436 (1978) in which the Council, after noting the deteriorating situation in Beirut and its surroundings and the appeal made on 4 October by the President of the Security Council and the Secretary-General, called upon all those involved in hostilities in Lebanon to put an end to acts of violence and observe scrupulously an immediate and effective cease-fire and cessation of hostilities so that internal peace and national reconciliation could be restored, based on the preservation of Lebanese unity, territorial integrity, independence and national sovereignty. In the same resolution the Council also called upon all involved to permit units of the International Committee of the Red Cross into the area of conflict to evacuate the wounded and provide humanitarian assistance, and supported the Secretary-General in his efforts and requested him to continue these efforts to bring about a durable cease-fire. One day earlier the Secretary-General had asked Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan to undertake a humanitarian mission to the area with a view to extending the Secretary-General's good offices to facilitate the cessation of hostilities.

### III. SITUATION IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

28. The efforts undertaken by the United Nations concerning the situation in the occupied territories and the question of Jerusalem from June 1967 until May 1973 have been described in the report of the Secretary-General of 18 May 1973 (S/10929, paras. 14-34).

29. The mandate of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories has been renewed by the General Assembly at every session since 1973, and the Special Committee has continued to report yearly to the Assembly on the situation in the occupied territories, including East Jerusalem.

30. The General Assembly, at its thirty-second session, after considering the report of the Special Committee (A/32/284) adopted three resolutions on 13 December 1977. By resolution 32/91 A, it reaffirmed that the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949, 1/ was applicable to all the Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967, including Jerusalem, and called again upon Israel to acknowledge and to comply with the provisions of that Convention. By resolution 32/91 B, it condemned "the massive deliberate destruction of Quneitra perpetrated during the Israeli occupation and

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1/ United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 75, No. 973, p. 287.

prior to the withdrawal of Israeli forces from that city in 1974". By resolution 32/91 C, it condemned certain Israeli policies and practices in the occupied territories and demanded that Israel desist forthwith from those policies and practices.

31. At its thirty-third session, the General Assembly will have before it reports of the Special Committee concerning Israeli policies and practices in the occupied territories, the destruction of Quneitra and the treatment of civilians in detention in the occupied territories and a report of the Secretary-General concerning the facilities made available to the Special Committee to carry out its tasks and to ensure the widest circulation of information regarding its activities and findings.

32. The General Assembly has also given special attention to three problems relating to the situation in the occupied territories, namely, the establishment of Israeli settlements in the occupied territories, the question of permanent sovereignty over natural resources and the living conditions of the Palestinian people.

33. At its thirty-second session, the General Assembly decided to include in its agenda an additional item entitled "Recent illegal Israeli measures in the occupied Arab territories designed to change the legal status, geographical nature and demographic composition of those territories in contravention of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, of Israel's international obligations under the fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 and of United Nations resolutions, and obstruction of efforts aimed at achieving a just and lasting peace in the Middle East".

34. After considering the item at its 47th to 52nd plenary meetings, the General Assembly, on 28 October 1977, adopted resolution 32/5, in which it deplored the Israeli activities listed in the item, called upon Israel to desist from such action and requested the Secretary-General to undertake urgent contacts with the Government of Israel to ensure the prompt implementation of the resolution and to report to the General Assembly and the Security Council.

35. In pursuance of that resolution, the Secretary-General addressed an appropriate request to the Permanent Representative of Israel to which the latter replied that the position and views of his Government had been explained in detail in his interventions during the debate of the General Assembly on the item. The Secretary-General conveyed this reply to the General Assembly and the Security Council in his report of 30 December 1977 (A/32/498-S/12512).

36. The General Assembly also considered the question of permanent sovereignty over natural resources in occupied territories and the question of the living conditions of the Palestinians in occupied territories at its thirty-second session. By its resolution 32/161 of 19 December 1977, the General Assembly took note of the report of the Secretary-General on the first of these subjects (A/32/204), reaffirmed that all measures undertaken by Israel to exploit the human, natural and all other resources, wealth and economic activities in the occupied Arab territories were illegal, and called upon Israel immediately to desist forthwith from all such

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measures. By its resolution 32/171, it requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its thirty-third session a comprehensive and analytic report on the social and economic impact of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories.

37. The Security Council examined questions relating to the situation in the occupied territories on several occasions. By a letter dated 19 March 1976 (S/12017), the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and Pakistan requested an urgent meeting of the Security Council to consider the serious situation arising from recent developments in the occupied territories. The Security Council met from 22 to 25 March, but no decision could be adopted, owing to the negative vote of a permanent member (S/PV.1893-1899).

38. In a letter dated 3 May 1976 (S/12066) the representative of Egypt drew the attention of the Security Council to developments in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, which were "a pitiful result of the continuation of Israeli occupation as well as an outright affirmation of the Palestinian people's refusal of the Israeli terrorist practices", and he requested an urgent meeting of the Security Council to consider the continued deterioration of the situation.

39. The Security Council held seven meetings on this item between 4 and 26 May (S/PV.1916-1922). At the close of the debate on 26 May, the President declared that, after consulting all the members of the Security Council, the majority of the members agreed on the following:

"Grave anxiety was expressed over the present situation in the occupied Arab territories; concern was also expressed about the well-being of the population of those territories. The Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War is applicable to the Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967. The occupying Power was therefore asked strictly to respect the provisions of that text and to refrain from and rescind any measure which would violate them. In this connexion, the measures taken by Israel in the occupied Arab territories, which are such as to modify their demographic composition or geographical character, and in particular the establishment of settlements, were deplored. These measures, which cannot prejudice the outcome of the efforts to achieve peace, constitute an obstacle to peace. The Security Council should continue to follow the situation closely."

40. In a letter dated 20 October 1976 (S/12218), the Permanent Representative of Egypt requested a meeting of the Security Council to consider the dangerous and explosive situation in the occupied Arab territories resulting from continuing repressive measures by Israel against the inhabitants of those territories.

41. The Security Council held four meetings on this item between 1 and 11 November 1976. At the conclusion of the debate, the President of the Security Council stated, after consulting all the members, that the Council had agreed on the following:

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- (1) To express its grave anxiety and concern over the present serious situation in the occupied Arab territories as a result of continued Israeli occupation;
- (2) Reaffirmation of its call upon the Government of Israel to ensure the safety, welfare and security of the inhabitants of the territories and to facilitate the return of those inhabitants who have fled the areas since the outbreak of hostilities;
- (3) Its reaffirmation that the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War is applicable to the Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967. Therefore, the occupying Power is called upon once again to comply strictly with the provisions of that Convention and to refrain from any measure that violates them. In this regard, the measures taken by Israel in the occupied Arab territories that alter their demographic composition or geographical nature and particularly the establishment of settlements are accordingly strongly deplored. Such measures which have no legal validity and cannot prejudice the outcome of the search for the establishment of peace constitute an obstacle to peace;
- (4) It considers once more that all legislative and administrative measures and actions taken by Israel, including expropriation of land and properties thereon and the transfer of populations which tend to change the legal status of Jerusalem, are invalid and cannot change that status, and urgently calls upon Israel once more to rescind all such measures already taken and to desist forthwith from taking any further action which tends to change the status of Jerusalem. In this connexion the Council deplores the failure of Israel to show any regard for Security Council resolutions 237 (1967) of 14 June 1967, 252 (1968) of 21 May 1968 and 298 (1971) of 25 September 1971 and General Assembly resolutions 2253 (ES-V) and 2254 (ES-V) of 4 and 14 July 1967;
- (5) Its recognition that any act of profanation of the Holy Places, religious buildings and sites or any encouragement of, or connivance at, any such act may seriously endanger international peace and security".

42. The United Nations Commission on Human Rights has continued to give attention to the question of human rights in the occupied territories. Most recently, it adopted resolutions 1 A and B (XXXIV) entitled "Question of the violation of human rights in the occupied Arab territories, including Palestine". Those resolutions, which condemned Israeli policies and practices along lines similar to those of General Assembly resolution 32/91 mentioned above, were brought to the attention of the General Assembly and the Security Council by the Secretary-General at the request of the Commission by a note dated 29 June 1978 (A/33/161-S/12758).

43. Since the General Assembly last discussed the matter, the situation in the occupied territories has been the subject of a number of communications addressed to the President of the Security Council or the Secretary-General and circulated as official documents of the United Nations (S/12563, A/33/60-S/12575, A/33/78-S/12640, A/33/88-S/12669, A/33/116-S/12725, A/33/151, A/33/153-S/12752, A/33/164-S/12762, A/33/165, A/33/175-S/12767, A/33/184-S/12777, A/33/203-S/12805, A/33/204-S/12806, A/33/206, A/33/211-S/12816, A/33/218-S/12820, A/33/230-S/12838, A/33/233-S/12844).

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#### IV. PALESTINE REFUGEE PROBLEM

44. The Palestine refugee problem and the United Nations effort to assist the refugees up to May 1973 were dealt with in the report of the Secretary-General of 18 May 1973 (S/10929, paras. 35-42).

45. The General Assembly has continued to review annually the activities of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) on the basis of the reports submitted by the Commissioner-General of the Agency. Following its consideration of the Commissioner-General's report <sup>2/</sup> at its thirty-second session, the Assembly, by resolution 32/90 A of 13 December 1977, reiterated its gratitude to the Agency in providing essential services for the Palestine refugees and, after noting with deep regret that the situation of the refugees continued to be a matter of serious concern, extended the Agency's mandate until 30 June 1981. The Assembly took this action without prejudice to the provisions of paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 194 (III), calling for repatriation or compensation of the refugees, which it noted with regret had not been effected. The Assembly also noted with regret that the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine had been unable to find a means of achieving progress in the implementation of paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 194 (III) and requested it to continue its work towards that objective.

46. The problem of financing UNRWA's operations has been a matter of increasing concern to the General Assembly. UNRWA's funding is derived almost entirely from voluntary contributions, mainly from Governments, and for many years it has experienced difficulty in securing the financial support necessary to maintain its services. In its resolution 32/90 A, the Assembly noted with profound concern that the level of income available to UNRWA was still insufficient to cover essential budget requirements and called upon all Governments as a matter of urgency to make the most generous efforts possible to meet UNRWA's needs. In particular, it urged non-contributing Governments to contribute regularly and contributing Governments to consider increasing their contributions. In a related decision, in resolution 32/90 D, the Assembly extended for another year the mandate of the Working Group on the Financing of UNRWA and requested it to continue its efforts, in co-operation with the Secretary-General and the Commissioner-General, to assist in assuring the Agency's financial security.

47. The General Assembly has continued to give attention to the population and refugees displaced as a result of the hostilities of June 1967. In its resolution 32/90 B, it endorsed the efforts of UNRWA to provide humanitarian assistance to those persons. After considering a report of the Secretary-General on the matter (A/32/263), the Assembly adopted resolution 32/90 E, it reaffirmed the right of the displaced inhabitants to return to their homes and camps in the territories occupied by Israel since 1967 and called once more upon Israel (a) to take immediate steps for the return of the displaced inhabitants and (b) to desist from all measures that obstruct the return of the displaced inhabitants, including measures affecting the physical and demographic structure of the occupied territories.

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<sup>2/</sup> Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-second Session, Supplement No. 13 (A/32/13).

48. The situation of Palestine refugees in the Gaza Strip has been of special concern to the General Assembly since 1971 when the Commissioner-General reported (A/8383 and Add.1) that, as a result of operations carried out by the Israeli military authorities, large numbers of shelters in refugee camps had been demolished and approximately 15,000 refugees had been removed. At its thirty-second session, after considering the reports of the Secretary-General on this subject (A/32/264 and Add.1), the General Assembly adopted resolution 32/90 E, in which it called once more on Israel (a) to take effective steps immediately for the return of the refugees concerned to the camps from which they had been removed and to provide adequate shelters for their accommodation and (b) to desist from further removal of refugees and destruction of their shelters.

49. At its thirty-second session, the General Assembly also directed attention to two new questions concerning Palestine refugees. By resolution 32/90 F, it appealed to all States to make special allocations of scholarships and grants to Palestine refugees and requested UNRWA to act as recipient and to make awards to qualified Palestinian refugee candidates. By resolution 32/111 on the health needs of Palestinian refugee children, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General, in collaboration with Governments of host countries and with relevant United Nations bodies, to undertake a sample survey to ascertain the needs of Palestinian children in refugee camps with a view to averting adverse effects on their health.

50. In addition to the annual report of the Commissioner-General of UNRWA, 3/ the Assembly will have before it at its thirty-third session reports of the Secretary-General on the return of refugees to their camps in the Gaza Strip and the provision of shelters for them (A/33/285), on the return of the displaced inhabitants of the territories occupied by Israel since 1967 (A/33/286), on the allocation of scholarships and grants to Palestinian refugees (A/33/287) and on the health needs of Palestinian refugee children (A/33/181), a report of the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine (A/33/276) as well as a report to be submitted by the Working Group on the Financing of UNRWA.

#### V. PALESTINIAN RIGHTS

51. In its consideration of the problem of the Palestinian refugees, the General Assembly adopted, in 1969, 1970, 1971, 1972 and 1973, resolutions in which it recognized that the problem arose from the denial of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people under the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and that the full respect for those rights was indispensable for the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East (resolutions 2535 B (XXIV), 2672 C (XXV), 2792 D (XXVI), 2963 E (XXVII) and 3089 D (XXVIII)).

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3/ Ibid., Thirty-third Session, Supplement No. 13 (A/33/13).

52. In 1974, at its twenty-ninth session, the General Assembly included the item "Question of Palestine" in its agenda at the request of 56 States Members. In an explanatory memorandum attached to the request, the sponsors of the item stated that, although the General Assembly had been continuously seized with the question of Palestine since 1947, it had not at any time considered the inalienable rights of the people of Palestine as a separate item. It was therefore deemed incumbent upon the Assembly to consider the question of Palestine in its true and proper form, particularly as the General Assembly had in recent years recognized and reaffirmed the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

53. During that session, three resolutions were adopted on the question of Palestine. On 14 October 1974, the General Assembly adopted resolution 3210 (XXIX), in which it invited the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the representative of the Palestinian people, to participate in its deliberations on the question of Palestine in plenary meetings. On 22 November 1974, by resolution 3236 (XXIX), the General Assembly reaffirmed the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people in Palestine, including the right of national independence and sovereignty and the right to return to their homes and properties from which they had been displaced and uprooted, emphasized that full respect for and the realization of the rights of the Palestinian people were indispensable for the solution of the question of Palestine and requested the Secretary-General to establish contacts with the PLO on all matters concerning the question of Palestine. On the same day, the General Assembly also adopted resolution 3237 (XXIX), by which it invited the PLO to participate in the capacity of Observer in the sessions and the work of the General Assembly and of all international conferences convened under its auspices.

54. In accordance with the request contained in resolution 3236 (XXIX), contacts with the PLO were established and members of the Secretariat met with representatives of the PLO as the occasion required. Following the adoption of resolution 3237 (XXIX), the PLO appointed Permanent Observers to the United Nations, both in New York and Geneva. The observers of the PLO have since attended meetings of the General Assembly, the Security Council and other United Nations bodies on various occasions.

55. At its thirtieth session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 3375 (XXX) of 10 November 1975 by which, among other things, it requested the Security Council to consider and adopt the necessary resolutions and measures in order to enable the Palestinian people to exercise its inalienable rights and called for the invitation of PLO in all deliberations on the Middle East held under the auspices of the United Nations. On the same day, the General Assembly adopted resolution 3376 (XXX) by which it decided to establish a Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, composed of twenty Member States (by resolution 31/318 of 22 December 1976, the General Assembly raised the number of members to 23) and entrusted it with the task of recommending to the General Assembly a programme of implementation of the rights of the Palestinian people. The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People was requested to submit its report and recommendations not later than 1 June 1976 to the Secretary-General, who was to transmit it to the Security Council for its consideration.

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56. In June 1976, the Committee submitted its report requested by General Assembly resolution 3376 (XXX) (S/12090).

57. The Security Council considered the report of the Committee during seven meetings, between 18 and 29 June 1976, but no resolution could be adopted owing to the negative vote of a permanent member (S/PV.1928, 1933-1938). On 21 July the Committee, taking note of the Security Council's action, reaffirmed its recommendations and submitted its report to the General Assembly. 4/

58. At its thirty-first session, the General Assembly, by resolution 31/20 of 29 November 1976, endorsed the recommendations of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, urged the Security Council to consider these recommendations once again and authorized the Committee to exert all efforts to promote the implementation of its recommendations. In pursuance of Assembly resolution 31/20, the Security Council met on 27 October 1977 to consider the question of the exercise by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights, but it decided to adjourn the debate on this item (S/PV.2041).

59. The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, in its report to the General Assembly 5/ at its thirty-second session, stated that it had unanimously decided to reaffirm the validity of its recommendations endorsed by the General Assembly at its thirty-first session. The Assembly endorsed the report of the Committee and adopted two resolutions. By its resolution 32/40 A, it urged the Security Council to take, as soon as possible, a decision on the recommendations endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 31/20 as a basis for the solution of the problem of Palestine. By its resolution 32/40 B, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to establish within the Secretariat of the United Nations a Special Unit on Palestinian Rights, which would "prepare ... studies and publications relating to the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people" and "promote maximum publicity for such studies and publications". In accordance with that resolution, the Secretary-General established the Special Unit on Palestinian Rights at the beginning of 1978.

60. Since the General Assembly last discussed the matter, the rights of the Palestinian people have been the subject of a number of communications addressed to the Secretary-General and circulated as United Nations official documents (A/33/54, A/33/118, A/33/151, A/33/154, A/33/165, A/33/206). The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People has submitted a further report to the General Assembly for its consideration at its thirty-third session. 6/

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4/ Ibid., Thirty-first Session, Supplement No. 35 (A/31/35).

5/ Ibid., Thirty-second Session, Supplement No. 35 (A/32/35).

6/ Ibid., Thirty-third Session, Supplement No. 35 (A/33/35).

## VI. SEARCH FOR A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT

### A. Security Council resolution 242 (1967) and the efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General

61. The search for a peaceful settlement in the Middle East after the June 1967 hostilities was highlighted by the adoption of Security Council resolution 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967 and the efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ambassador Gunnar Jarring, within the framework of that resolution.

62. Resolution 242 (1967), which was unanimously adopted by the Security Council, defined the principles and requirements for the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. The efforts of Ambassador Jarring to promote agreement among the parties have been described in detail in the report of the Secretary-General of 18 May 1973 (S/10929, paras. 45-67, 70-72, 99-108). It is sufficient to recall here that in May 1973 the parties continued to maintain irreconcilable positions and thus the basic deadlock in the search for a peaceful settlement of the conflict persisted.

63. The report of the Secretary-General was considered by the Security Council from 6 to 15 June 1973. The debate was adjourned on the understanding that the Council would resume its examination of the situation in the Middle East at a later date.

64. In August 1973 the Secretary-General, after meeting with his Special Representative in Geneva, paid a visit to the Middle East to discuss the situation with the Governments concerned and to determine in what way the United Nations and he as the Secretary-General might be helpful in the search for a peaceful settlement. In the introduction to the annual report to the General Assembly submitted during the same month, 7/ the Secretary-General stated that, despite all the efforts made by him and his Special Representative and the recent deliberations of the Security Council, a peaceful settlement in the Middle East remained elusive. The Secretary-General went on to point out that "time is not on our side in this highly explosive situation". 7/

### B. Hostilities of October 1973 and adoption of Security Council resolution 338 (1973)

65. As stated earlier, hostilities broke out again in the Middle East in October 1973. On 22 October, the Security Council adopted resolution 338 (1973) in which, after calling for an immediate cease-fire, the Council called upon all the parties concerned to start immediately after the cease-fire the implementation of Security Council resolution 242 (1967) and decided that, immediately and concurrently with the cease-fire, negotiations start between the parties concerned under appropriate auspices aimed at establishing a just and durable peace in the

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7/ Ibid., Twenty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 1A (A/9001/Add.1).

Middle East. The subsequent decisions of the Security Council, including the establishment of the United Nations Emergency Force in the Egypt-Israel sector, have been dealt with earlier in this report (see paras. 5-11 above).

66. Following the establishment of the Emergency Force and the cessation of hostilities in the area, the Secretary of State of the United States of America launched an initiative to bring about agreements on a disengagement of forces, first between Egypt and Israel, and later between Israel and Syria. In the event, four agreements were concluded between November 1973 and September 1975. In each case, an agreement in principle was achieved through indirect negotiations between the parties, conducted with the assistance of the Secretary of State, and then the detailed implementation of the agreement was worked out in direct discussions between the military representatives of the parties under the auspices of the United Nations.

#### C. Six-point agreement of 11 November 1973

67. On 9 November the Secretary of State of the United States informed the Secretary-General (S/11091) that the Governments of Egypt and Israel were prepared to accept a six-point agreement under which the two parties would scrupulously observe the cease-fire and would immediately begin discussions to settle the question of the return of forces to the positions that they had occupied on 22 October 1973 in the framework of agreement on the disengagement and separation of forces under the auspices of the United Nations. The Secretary of State also indicated that the parties would hold a meeting under the auspices of the Commander of UNEF to sign this agreement and to provide for its implementation.

68. On 11 November, the six-point agreement was signed by the military representatives of Egypt and Israel and by the Commander of UNEF, Lieutenant-General Ensio Siilasvuo, as witness, at a meeting held at kilometre marker 101 on the Cairo-Suez road. Discussions on the implementation of the agreement began immediately thereafter under the auspices of the United Nations, and on 14 November the parties reached an accord providing for an exchange of prisoners of war, the supply of the Egyptian Third Army by United Nations convoys and the replacement of Israeli checkpoints by UNEF checkpoints on the Cairo-Suez road. Further discussions were held during November for the purpose of bringing about a disengagement of Egyptian and Israeli forces (S/11056/Add.4-6).

#### D. The Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East

69. In December 1973, there were diplomatic contacts under the auspices of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America, aimed at the convening of a peace conference on the Middle East in Geneva. On 15 December, the Security Council held a private meeting to discuss the arrangements for the proposed conference and adopted a resolution 344 (1973), in which, after noting that a peace conference on the Middle East situation was to begin shortly in Geneva under the auspices of the United Nations, the Council expressed its confidence that the Secretary-General would play a full and effective role in the Conference, and that he would preside over its proceedings. The Council also requested the Secretary-



General to keep it informed of the developments in the negotiations at the Geneva Conference and to provide all the necessary assistance and facilities for the work of the Conference.

70. By identical letters dated 18 December 1973 (S/11161), the Permanent Representatives of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America informed the Secretary-General that agreement had been reached among the parties to the Middle East dispute to participate in the Peace Conference under the auspices of the United Nations and under the co-chairmanship of the USSR and the United States.

71. The Peace Conference on the Middle East was convened in Geneva by the Secretary-General on 21 December 1973. The Conference, in which the Governments of Egypt, Israel, Jordan, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America were represented, held three meetings, over which the Secretary-General presided. The Conference agreed to continue its work through the setting up of a military working group as well as of other working groups as needed. The Military Working Group was to start discussing forthwith the question of disengagement of forces. The working groups were to report to the Conference, which was to continue at the ambassadorial level, and the Conference at the foreign ministers' level was to convene in Geneva as needed in the light of developments (see S/11169). The Secretary-General appointed Mr. Roberto Guyer, Under-Secretary-General for Special Political Affairs, as his Personal Representative to the Conference.

E. Agreement between Egypt and Israel of 18 January 1974

72. The discussions held by the Military Working Group under the chairmanship of the Commander of UNEF in late December 1973 and early January 1974 led to an agreement on the disengagement of forces between Egypt and Israel. It was signed on 18 January 1974 at kilometre marker 101 by the military representatives of Egypt and Israel and by General Siilasvuo as witness (S/11056/Add.8). The Agreement provided essentially for a limited withdrawal of Israeli forces to the east, for the redeployment of Egyptian and Israeli forces in the Sinai, leaving between them a zone of disengagement where UNEF was to be stationed, and for the establishment of areas of limited armaments and forces on both sides of the zone of disengagement to be inspected by UNEF (S/11193 and Add.1).

F. Agreement between Israel and Syria of 31 May 1974

73. In May 1974, negotiations took place towards a disengagement of forces between Israel and Syria. The agreement was signed on 31 May 1974 by the military representatives of Israel and Syria and by the Commander of UNEF as witness at a meeting of the Egypt-Israel Military Working Group of the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East, in which the representatives of the Co-Chairmen of the Conference also participated. In addition to the redeployment of the Israeli and Syrian forces in accordance with arrangements similar to those applied in the Egyptian-Israeli Agreement of 18 January 1974, the Israeli-Syrian Agreement also provided for the return of the Syrian civilian administration to the area of separation and the supervision by a United Nations force of the demilitarized character of that area.

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74. On 31 May 1974, the Security Council adopted resolution 350 (1974) by which it welcomed the agreement on disengagement between Israel and Syria, negotiated in implementation of its resolution 338 (1973), and decided to set up the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (see paras. 12-19 above).

G. Agreement between Egypt and Israel of 4 September 1975

75. In August and September 1975, new negotiations were held under the auspices of the Secretary of State of the United States towards the conclusion of a second agreement between Egypt and Israel. It was signed in Geneva on 4 September 1975 by the representatives of Egypt and Israel and witnessed by General Siilasvuo, now Chief Co-ordinator of United Nations Peace-keeping Missions in the Middle East (S/11818/Add.2). The agreement provided essentially for a further withdrawal of Israeli forces to a line east of the Gidi and Mitla Passes and from the oil fields of Abu Rodeis and Ras Sudar on the coastline of the Gulf of Suez, the establishment of a larger buffer zone controlled by UNEF and the return of Egyptian civilian administration to the oil fields, whose demilitarized character was to be supervised by UNEF. On the same day the military representatives of Egypt and Israel formally accepted a proposal by the Secretary of State of the United States, which provided for the establishment of an early warning system in the UNEF buffer zone to be manned separately by the United States and each of the two parties.

76. The detailed arrangements for the implementation of the above agreement were worked out by the Military Working Group of the Geneva Peace Conference and laid down in a Protocol to the agreement, which was signed by the representatives of the two parties and witnessed by General Siilasvuo (S/11818/Add.5). In his report to the Security Council, dated 17 October 1975 (S/11849), the Secretary-General outlined the implications of the agreement for the operation of UNEF in the Egypt-Israel sector. The Security Council considered the report of the Secretary-General, and by its resolution 378 (1975) of 23 October 1975 decided to renew the mandate of UNEF for a period of one year. The Permanent Mission of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the United Nations informed the Secretary-General by a note verbale dated 30 December 1976 that the Agreement of September 1975 was concluded on a separate basis and actually circumvented the Geneva Peace Conference; consequently the USSR could not bear any responsibility for the implications of the agreement, including the financing of additional expenses of UNEF resulting from it.

H. Efforts to reconvene the Geneva Peace Conference

77. The agreements between Egypt and Israel of 18 January 1974 and of 4 September 1975, as well as the agreement between Israel and Syria of 31 May 1974, contained clauses stating in varying terms that the parties did not consider them as final peace agreements but as steps towards a just and lasting peace in the Middle East, as called for by Security Council resolution 338 (1973). In his

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periodic reports on the activities of UNEF and UNDOF, which were submitted to the Security Council before the expiry of the mandates of those Forces, the Secretary-General expressed the view that, although the areas of operations of the two Forces were quiet, the situation in the Middle East as a whole was unstable and would remain so unless and until a comprehensive settlement covering all aspects of the Middle East problem could be reached. The Security Council, in renewing the mandates of the two Forces, expressed its concurrence with this view and called upon the parties concerned to implement immediately its resolution 338 (1973).

78. In 1975, at its thirtieth session, the General Assembly considered both the question of Palestine and the situation in the Middle East. In its resolution 3375 (XXX) of 10 November 1975 on the question of Palestine, which has already been mentioned earlier in this report (see para. 55 above), it requested the Secretary-General to take the necessary steps to secure the invitation of the Palestine Liberation Organization to participate in the work of the Geneva Peace Conference.

79. Later at the same session, the General Assembly considered the situation in the Middle East and on 5 December 1975 adopted resolution 3414 (XXX) whereby it requested the Security Council to take all necessary measures for the speedy implementation of all relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council, aiming at the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the region through a comprehensive settlement, worked out with the participation of all parties concerned, including the Palestine Liberation Organization, and within the framework of the United Nations.

80. In pursuance of the request contained in General Assembly resolution 3375 (XXX), the Secretary-General on 19 November 1975 addressed identical letters to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Secretary of State of the United States of America, in their capacity as Co-Chairmen of the Peace Conference on the Middle East, to bring the resolution to their attention. He also requested the Co-Chairmen to keep him informed of any action they might take in relation to the resolution. In his reply to the Secretary-General dated 9 January 1976 (A/31/44-S/11931), the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the USSR advocated the speediest possible resumption of the Geneva Peace Conference with the full and equal participation of the representatives of the PLO.

81. Shortly after the adoption of General Assembly resolution 3375 (XXX), the Security Council met to consider the mandate of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF). In its resolution 381 (1975) of 30 November 1975 on the renewal of the mandate of UNDOF, the Council also decided to reconvene on 12 January 1976 in order to continue the debate on the Middle East problem, including the Palestinian question. In accordance with its decision of 30 November 1975, the Security Council discussed the Middle East problem, including the Palestinian question, in a series of 10 meetings in January 1976, but no resolution could be adopted, owing to the negative vote of a permanent member (S/PV.1870-1879). At the end of the Security Council debate, on

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26 January 1976, the Secretary-General made a statement in which he noted that the discussions of the Council had emphasized the Palestinian dimension of the Middle East problem and had reaffirmed the right of every State in the area to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries and announced his intention to undertake a new initiative.

82. In identical letters addressed to the Co-Chairmen of the Geneva Peace Conference on 27 January 1976, the Secretary-General requested them to let him know their thinking on ways of making progress towards a solution of the Middle East problem. In his reply the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics expressed the view that the only reliable way to achieve agreement on all the questions involved in a settlement was the resumption, after careful preparation, of the work of the Geneva Peace Conference with the participation of all those directly concerned, including the PLO and the Co-Chairmen of the Conference. The Secretary of State of the United States of America took the position that the resumption of the Geneva Peace Conference should be carefully prepared and he proposed a preparatory conference of those that had participated so far in the negotiations.

83. As a follow-up to the communications addressed to the Co-Chairmen, the Secretary-General requested his Personal Representative for the Peace Conference on the Middle East, Under-Secretary-General Roberto E. Guyer, to undertake an exploratory mission to the Middle East. During that mission, which took place from 25 February to 2 March 1976, and the subsequent talks which Mr. Guyer held in Moscow and Washington, a number of issues were discussed, including the question of the participation of the PLO in peace efforts.

84. Following Mr. Guyer's exploratory mission, the Secretary-General addressed, on 1 April 1976, identical aide-mémoires to the parties concerned, including the PLO, requesting their views as to the action which might be taken by the United Nations in order to break the impasse in the peace efforts.

85. As described in the report of the Secretary-General of 18 October 1976 (A/31/270-S/12210), all the parties welcomed his initiative. Egypt, Jordan and Syria reiterated their demand for the withdrawal of the Israeli forces from all the Arab territories occupied since June 1967. They further underlined the urgency of a comprehensive solution of the Middle East problem. Egypt stated that it wanted the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to reactivate the negotiating process, which should focus on the resumption of the Geneva Peace Conference with the full participation of the Palestine Liberation Organization. The Soviet Union affirmed that the most appropriate forum for working out a solution to the Middle East problem was the Geneva Peace Conference with the participation of all directly concerned parties, including the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Co-Chairmen of the Conference. The United States emphasized that it was their intention actively to pursue contacts with the parties in efforts to bring about an agreement which would end the state of war in the Middle East as soon as the situation in Lebanon had improved. Israel, in its reply, emphasized that it favoured the reconvening of the Geneva Peace Conference with the original participants.

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86. In the same report the Secretary-General observed that, while there was general agreement on the necessity of resuming negotiations for a just and lasting settlement of the Middle East problem, there were still important differences of view among the parties concerned, which had to be resolved before the negotiating process could be usefully resumed.

87. During its thirty-first session, on 9 December 1976, the General Assembly adopted resolution 31/61 on the situation in the Middle East, in which it requested the Security Council to take effective measures for the implementation of all relevant resolutions of the Council and the Assembly. It also requested the Secretary-General to inform the Co-Chairmen of the Geneva Peace Conference of its resolution and to submit a report on its implementation to the General Assembly at its thirty-second session. On the same day, the General Assembly further adopted resolution 31/62 concerning the Peace Conference on the Middle East. In that resolution, the General Assembly called for the early convening of the Geneva Peace Conference not later than the end of March 1977, requested the Secretary-General to resume contacts with all the parties to the conflict and the Co-Chairmen of the Peace Conference in accordance with his initiative of April 1976, with a view to convening the Peace Conference, and to submit a report to the Security Council on the results of his contacts and on the situation in the Middle East no later than 1 March 1977. The General Assembly further requested the Security Council to convene, subsequent to the submission of the Secretary-General's report, in order to consider the situation in the area and to promote the process towards the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the area.

88. In pursuance of General Assembly resolution 31/62, the Secretary-General held initial consultations with the representatives of the parties and of the two Co-Chairmen. In February 1977 he travelled to the Middle East, where he held extensive consultations with leaders of Egypt, the Syrian Arab Republic, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Jordan and Israel, as well as with the Chairman of the PLO. On 28 February 1977, he submitted a detailed report to the Security Council (S/12290 and Corr.1), in which he described the positions of the parties with regard to the questions of participation, timing, terms of reference, agenda, and organization of the work of the Peace Conference. He also reported the views of the two Co-Chairmen on the modalities for reconvening the Geneva Peace Conference. From his consultations, the Secretary-General concluded that, while all concerned were earnestly desirous of moving towards a negotiated settlement, a determined effort was necessary to overcome the lack of confidence and the mutual distrust and fears of all the parties as to the consequences of making compromises and concessions. He stated that although the main elements of the Middle East problem remained intractable, there was an increasing consciousness in the area that an opportunity existed at the time to resume negotiations in a meaningful way, and he warned that, if this opportunity were not seized, there were grave dangers that the situation would deteriorate once again.

89. On 25, 28 and 29 March 1977, the Security Council considered the situation in the Middle East in the light of the Secretary-General's report, but it adjourned the debate without adopting a resolution (S/PV.1993, 1995 and 1997).

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90. In the following months, efforts were made at various levels to reach agreement on the modalities for resumption of the Geneva Peace Conference. On 1 October 1977 the Foreign Ministers of the USSR and the United States, as Co-Chairmen of the Conference, issued a joint declaration in which they outlined their common position on substantive as well as procedural questions connected with the search for a just and lasting settlement of the Middle East problem. In particular, they expressed their belief that the only right and effective way for achieving a fundamental solution to all aspects of the Middle East problem in its entirety was negotiation within the framework of the Geneva Peace Conference, specially convened for this purpose, with the participation in its work of the representatives of all the parties involved in the conflict, including those of the Palestinian people. The next day, the Secretary-General issued a statement welcoming the joint declaration.

91. The General Assembly considered again the situation in the Middle East during its thirty-second session. On 25 November 1977 it adopted resolution 32/20 in which, among other things, it reaffirmed that "a just and lasting peace in the Middle East, in which all countries and peoples in the region can live in peace and security within recognized and secure boundaries, cannot be achieved without Israel's withdrawal from all Arab territories occupied since 5 June 1967 and the attainment by the Palestinian people of their inalienable national rights;" called anew "for the early convening of the Peace Conference on the Middle East, under the auspices of the United Nations and the co-chairmanship of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America, with the participation on an equal footing of all parties concerned, including the Palestine Liberation Organization;" urged "the parties to the conflict and all other interested parties to work towards the achievement of a comprehensive settlement covering all aspects of the problems and worked out with the participation of all parties concerned within the framework of the United Nations."

#### I. Initiative of the President of Egypt

92. A new element was introduced into the Middle East situation on 9 November 1977, when President Anwar Al-Sadat of Egypt announced that he was prepared to go to Israel in order to achieve progress towards a peaceful settlement. He was subsequently invited by the Government of Israel and travelled to Jerusalem on 19 November 1977 for a two-day visit. After his return to Cairo, President Sadat invited the parties to the Middle East conflict, including the PLO, as well as the two Co-Chairmen of the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East and the Secretary-General, to talks in Cairo to prepare for a resumption of the Geneva Peace Conference. This invitation was accepted by Israel and the United States. On 29 November, the Secretary-General designated the Chief Co-ordinator of United Nations Peace-keeping Missions in the Middle East, Lieutenant-General Ensio Siilasvuo, to be present at the meeting in Cairo. At the same time, noting that it was apparent that the meeting in Cairo would not be attended by all those invited and having in mind the urgent need for an early convening of the Geneva Peace Conference, the Secretary-General suggested that consideration be given to the holding of a preparatory meeting at United Nations Headquarters, or any other generally agreed venue, of all those invited to the Cairo meeting.

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93. By a letter dated 5 December 1977 (A/32/411), the Permanent Representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya conveyed to the Secretary-General the text of a declaration issued by the representatives of Algeria, Democratic Yemen, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, the Syrian Arab Republic and the PLO at the conclusion of their summit conference from 2 to 5 December 1977 at Tripoli. In a letter to the Secretary-General dated 8 December 1977 (A/32/419-S/12478), the Chargé d'Affaires of Egypt responded to this declaration.

94. The Cairo Conference convened on 14 December 1977. After several meetings the Conference recessed to await the result of a summit meeting between Prime Minister Begin and President Sadat, scheduled to be held at Ismailia on 25 and 26 December. At the conclusion of that meeting, it was decided to establish two working groups at the ministerial level - a political committee in Jerusalem, and a military committee in Cairo. Thereupon, the Cairo Conference adjourned sine die.

95. The Military Working Committee began its work on 11 January 1978 and the Political Working Committee on 17 January. The Egyptian delegation withdrew from that Committee on 18 January. Shortly thereafter, the Military Working Committee also became inactive.

96. Subsequently, the Government of the United States undertook an effort to reactivate direct negotiations between Egypt and Israel. This led to a meeting of the Foreign Ministers of Egypt and Israel and the Secretary of State of the United States at Leeds Castle near London from 17 to 19 July 1978, and, later on, from 5 to 17 September, to a summit conference between the President of Egypt, the Prime Minister of Israel and the President of the United States at Camp David near Washington.

97. At the conclusion of the Camp David conference the President of the United States informed the Secretary-General that the President of Egypt and the Prime Minister of Israel had concluded two agreements, one on a framework for peace in the Middle East and the other on a framework for the conclusion of a peace treaty between Egypt and Israel.

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98. In their statements in the general debate of the thirty-third session of the General Assembly, a number of speakers have commented on these agreements. In a letter dated 27 September to the Secretary-General, the Chairman of the PLO expressed his views on the agreements.

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99. I have not received any additional official information on the subject from the parties concerned and therefore do not feel I am in a position to put forward any considered views at this stage, except to express my earnest hope that urgent efforts will be pursued by all concerned until a comprehensive, just and durable peace settlement covering all aspects of the Middle East problem can be fully achieved.

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