



CONTENTS

Agenda item 33: The situation in the Middle East: report of the Secretary-General (<i>continued</i>)	Page 1713
---	--------------

President: Mr. Ismat T. KITTANI (Iraq).

AGENDA ITEM 33

The situation in the Middle East: report of the Secretary-General (*continued*)

1. Mr. ABDEL MEGUID (Egypt) (*interpretation from Arabic*): If the consideration today of the situation in the Middle East has been preceded by the lengthy debate on the question of Palestine, it is because the latter is the key to peace in the region as a whole. Without a comprehensive peaceful settlement based on justice and international law, a settlement that recognizes the national right of the Palestinian people to return to their homeland and to self-determination, sovereignty and independence, the desired peace will remain an elusive dream.

2. The debate during the past weeks has dealt with the different components of the situation in the Middle East—the Palestine question and the situation in the occupied Arab territories, Lebanon, the Iraqi-Iranian conflict and the attack on the Iraqi peaceful nuclear reactor—is clear evidence of the solidarity of the international community *vis-à-vis* the numerous policies and situations that are detrimental to the prospects of establishing a just and lasting peace in that region.

3. In addition to the general debate during the present session, the Special Political Committee has been occupied for weeks on end with topics underlying the issues of peace and stability in the Middle East. Many States and organizations have been engaged in assisting Palestinian refugees, and the fate of the refugees weighs on the conscience of mankind. The world has confirmed that the human ordeal which has afflicted millions of Palestinians and caused them to be exiled from their homeland can be remedied only if they can return to their homes and contribute to a peaceful coexistence in that area.

4. Egypt, which is an integral part of the ever-growing international consensus condemning Israeli practices in the occupied territories, has proceeded from the premise of justice, legitimacy and the consistent legal, political and human principles to an attitude of the utmost determination against such policies and practices, which jeopardize any progress towards the coexistence and reconciliation that we sincerely seek.

5. A study of the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Middle East [A/36/655] confirms our assessment that the situation in this vital area of the world is still characterized by extreme complexity and grave

prospects as regards regional and international security. This means that statesmanship and seriousness must be shown in considering and dealing with it. In this connection, we agree with the Secretary-General's thorough analysis of the situation in the Middle East contained in his report.

6. The dangers inherent in the lack of progress towards a settlement that would ensure a future in which peace and justice prevail should be faced and overcome by the collective efforts of all States. This is essential in order that the forces opposed to peace may not outweigh all the sincere efforts to accelerate the process of peace and to maintain the peace momentum generated by Egypt's initiative of 1977. The late President Anwar El Sadat devoted his efforts to the struggle to achieve peace on the basis of right and justice for all nations and peoples. In this connection, I wish to thank the representatives of Austria and Japan for their references to the historical role of the late President of Egypt.

7. Egypt profoundly believes that a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East must be based on the following principles: strict respect for the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and of international law and the implementation of the relevant United Nations resolutions setting forth the practical foundations for a peaceful settlement—above all Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). In those resolutions the Council clearly emphasizes the principles of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, the peaceful settlement of disputes and the right of all States, including Israel, to live in peace within recognized and secure borders, within the framework of mutual guarantees which will enable the Palestinian people to recover and to exercise their inalienable national rights, including the right of return and self-determination.

8. Egypt's Arab regional strategy is based on a general principle, namely, that of safeguarding the unity, sovereignty and integrity of all Arab States. This entails rejecting and condemning all the Israeli policies and practices against northern and southern Lebanon, the Israeli attack against Iraq and the Israeli policy which runs counter to the interests of the Palestinian people within and outside the occupied territories.

9. The Arab regional strategy of Egypt proceeds from the fundamental premise that the Palestinian question is the crux and the root cause of the Arab-Israeli conflict and is thus the key to peace and stability in the Middle East. Actually, a peace equation, as it were, in the Middle East should not be impossible to achieve. It is a practical equation, based on twin elements: the right of the Palestinian people to exist as an independent national entity and to security, and Israel's right to existence and security. This is the way that the dream of peace can become reality in the Middle East. Indeed, there is no need to emphasize the dangers hovering over the region and the world today because of the persistence of the Arab-Israeli conflict since 1948.

10. Needless to say, also, there are certain prerequisites for the continuous peace efforts to be effective in achieving permanent stability and security. First and foremost is the affirmation of the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, which presupposes the withdrawal by Israel from all the occupied Arab territories in implementation of all the provisions of resolution 242 (1967). The position of Egypt has always been that the central premise for a peaceful settlement of the Middle East crisis is embodied in resolution 242 (1967), which affirms the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force and the commitment by all States to act in accordance with Article 2 of the Charter of the United Nations. Any attempt to disregard or sidestep either of those two elements is bound to undermine the balance and cohesion of that historic resolution. That was affirmed by the author of the resolution, Lord Caradon, the representative of the United Kingdom in 1967, in his study on resolution 242 (1967) published by Georgetown University, Washington, in 1981. Similarly, William B. Quandt, a United States diplomat, wrote in the periodical *Foreign Policy*, Number 44, in autumn of 1981, that in return for peace and security guarantees by the Arab States, Israel must initially agree to end its military rule in the West Bank and Gaza and to withdraw its troops from the occupied territories. That is what is called for in resolution 242 (1967).

11. Israel's withdrawal from Sinai, the last phase of which is to be carried out next spring, is the strongest proof of the soundness of the premise on which resolution 242 (1967) is based; the parties must be committed to implementing it in letter and in spirit. It has become all the more evident that it is not possible to resolve the Middle East conflict without Israel's withdrawal from all the territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem, the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and the Syrian Golan Heights, and the establishment of a Palestinian regional entity, so as to fulfil the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people to sovereignty and independence.

12. A glimmer of hope in this region is to be found in the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel, with each party fulfilling its commitments and obligations strictly and honestly. That has been demonstrated by the withdrawal of Israeli troops from the territory of occupied Sinai as an integral part of the peace equation in the context of relations based on dialogue, negotiations and mutual security and within the framework of movement towards a general, just and historic reconciliation between the two peoples.

13. The participation of a number of States in the peace-keeping tasks in the territory of Egypt during the present stage is a positive contribution in the assumption of responsibilities which, with all the more reason, should have been assumed by the international Organization as an essential part of its international commitments. We hope that the establishment of permanent peace will render the presence of those forces, *per se*, insignificant.

14. In saying this, we do not claim to have the ultimate wisdom and flawless judgement, nor do we attempt to impose our way on anyone. We welcome any positive effort aimed at solving the problem, whether it takes the form of principles or of a conference. However, until minds are open and hearts are sincere, we see no alternative to Cairo's path to peace, a path on which we are making decisive strides today and expect to be making decisive strides in the near future.

15. The Middle East is also afflicted by other rifts in the edifice of stability and regional security caused by the bloody hostilities between two fraternal peoples, those of Iraq and Iran. That conflict has depleted the capacities of those two developing non-aligned States and opened the door for super-Powers that want to perpetuate their spheres of influence in that region. Egypt has always called for the cessation of hostilities and the restoration of the rights of the legitimate parties under the principles of international law and legality. It has always called for the settlement of all disputes between the two States in accordance with the provisions of the Charter and by peaceful means, so as to avert the serious and unforeseeable consequences that may result for the peoples of the region and of the entire world. Peace between the Iranian and Iraqi peoples will certainly be a healthy event for the Middle East region. Furthermore, it will revive the principles and values on which the non-aligned movement was founded, as well as those from which flow the authenticity and magnanimity of the Islamic religion, which prohibit a Moslem from taking the life of a fellow Moslem.

16. As the representative of an Islamic and non-aligned State, it behoves me to state before the Assembly that Islam is a religion of love, tolerance and mercy. It rejects intolerance, irredentism and sectarianism as well as ethnocentric and tribal attitudes. It does not contradict progress or modernization; rather, it is a religion that rejects rigidity and immobility. It respects human thought, research and knowledge. It made a notable contribution to a prosperous Islamic civilization that provided Europe during the renaissance and modern times with the ferment of modernization and progress.

17. That is Islam, which some would like to hold responsible for the present situation in that area of the world. Given the true Islamic character, these events of the regional conflict, which reflect tribal and irredentist thought, run completely counter to Islam's spirit and tolerance.

18. Egypt took the initiative¹ in a process that could ensure the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East, and it is now more necessary than ever before to find a means of achieving that end and of assuring security and stability in our area, which for too long has had to face challenges and dangers of which we are all aware.

19. All of the above are self-evident prerequisites for the achievement of peace and stability in the Middle East. Only then will it be possible to look forward to the day when that area, which has been torn and devastated by wars and conflicts throughout history, is declared an area of security, peace and co-operation for States, peoples, civilizations, religions and forms of nationalism in order that truth, good and justice may triumph.

20. Sir Anthony PARSONS (United Kingdom): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the ten member States of the European Community.

21. During the course of this session of the General Assembly we have had the opportunity to discuss a number of aspects of the Middle East situation. This debate provides the occasion to draw together these various threads and to consider these problems as a whole.

22. Again and again the debate at this session has drawn attention to the growing tensions in the Arab-Israeli dispute and the serious dangers resulting from it. The

need for a negotiated, comprehensive settlement which will be both just and lasting is clearly more pressing than ever. This need is above all that of the people of the area, both Israeli and Arab, whose lives are darkened by the continuing failure to find such a just solution.

23. The member States of the European Community, drawn by the close ties and common interests which link them to the Middle East, have felt it right that they should play an active part in this search for peace. They have based themselves in this on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). Building on these, they have sought to promote two fundamental principles. These are the right to existence and to security of all the States in the region, including Israel, and justice for all peoples, which includes the recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. The European Community continues to believe firmly that these principles, first set out at Venice a year and a half ago,² provide the starting point from which a peace settlement can be devised.

24. The necessary guarantees for such a peace settlement should be provided by the United Nations, by a decision of the Security Council, and, if necessary, on the basis of other mutually agreed procedures. The member States of the European Community reiterate in this context that they are prepared to participate, within the framework of a comprehensive settlement, in a system of concrete and binding international guarantees.

25. They also wish to reiterate that all of the countries in the area are entitled to live in peace within secure, recognized and guaranteed borders. They emphasize too, as they did just recently in the debate on the question of Palestine [81st meeting], that a just solution must be found to the Palestinian problem, and that this problem is not simply one of refugees. The Palestinian people, which is conscious of existing as such, must be placed in a position, by an appropriate process defined within the framework of the comprehensive peace settlement, to exercise fully its right to self-determination.

26. In seeking the promotion and implementation of these principles the European Community recognizes the need for the involvement and support of all the parties concerned in the peace settlement. It also reaffirms that the principles must be respected by all the parties concerned and thus by the Palestinian people and by the Palestine Liberation Organization [PLO], which will have to be associated with negotiations.

27. I have already referred, in the debate on the question of Palestine, to the contacts which successive presidencies of the European Community have made in support of these principles and in order to elaborate them. The 10 member States will continue to be active in pursuing their efforts while at the same time continuing to point out that in the end it must be for the parties concerned to negotiate a lasting settlement themselves. The Community welcomes all clear statements of interest in a peaceful settlement, as its members have already indicated in the debate on the question of Palestine.

28. If a settlement is to be possible a climate of confidence must first be built up between the parties. Both sides must refrain from violent words or acts, which only complicate the search for a settlement. In particular they must renounce the use of force or the threat of force. The European Community has been deeply concerned by the use of armed force during the past year, in particular by the bombing of Beirut last July, which led to heavy civil-

ian casualties, by the loss of lives on both sides of the Israel-Lebanon border and by the raid on the Iraqi nuclear facility at Tamuz, which has added a new and dangerous dimension to the Arab-Israeli conflict. Such actions only perpetuate the cycle of violence and reprisals and endanger efforts to achieve a just and comprehensive solution.

29. Lord Carrington, the United Kingdom Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, has already put on record on behalf of the European Community, at the 8th meeting of this session, the Community's sympathy for the human suffering in Lebanon and our support for the efforts of the Lebanese Government to promote security and national reconciliation. The Community condemns all bloodshed in Lebanon, whether it comes through internal strife or external acts of violence. We believe that the unity, independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Lebanon can be assured only if all concerned uphold the authority of the legal Government and avoid all actions tending to undermine it. In this context the Community has valued the work of the Quadripartite Committee of the Arab League.

30. The 10 member States of the European Community strongly support Security Council resolution 490 (1981), which calls for a cessation of all armed attacks. The task now is to consolidate and build upon the valuable achievement of a cease-fire, since the situation in south Lebanon remains unstable. We welcome and support all diplomatic efforts to this end. We call on all the parties concerned to play their full part in observing the cease-fire and to show the utmost restraint.

31. The members of the European Community believe that UNIFIL, to which a number of countries among the Community make a contribution, should be enabled to carry out in full the mandate entrusted to it by the Security Council. I take this opportunity on behalf of the Community once more to applaud the courageous and responsible work of the Force and to express our sympathy in its losses. Community members are greatly concerned by the continuing harassment of UNIFIL units, including most recently the incident at Hill 880; they call for an end to such acts, which prevent the implementation of UNIFIL's mandate. The Community strongly appeals to all parties fully to support UNIFIL and the decisions of the Security Council.

32. Elsewhere, the European Community welcomes the continuing peaceful development of normal relations between Israel and Egypt which has followed the signing of the Camp David agreements. It looks forward to the completion of the return of Sinai to Egypt next April.

33. The situation in the occupied territories was extensively debated a fortnight ago in the Special Political Committee. The 10 member States of the European Community wish to reiterate the great importance which they attach to all matters affecting the rights of the population of the Arab territories which Israel has occupied since 1967. In particular, they remain deeply worried by the continuing Israeli policy on settlements. They note that during the last year Israel once again has maintained and developed its existing settlements and established yet more new ones. The members of the European Community reiterate that they consider these settlements, as well as changes in demographic structure and property ownership in the occupied territories, to be contrary to international law and to the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war, which is

contained, *inter alia*, in Security Council resolution 242 (1967). They call on Israel to put an end now to this illegal and damaging policy, which is a grave obstacle to progress towards peace.

34. The member States of the European Community reaffirm that they consider the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,³ to apply to all the occupied territories; they cannot accept any unilateral initiative to change the status of Jerusalem or any part of territories occupied since 1967.

35. The European Community is seriously concerned by the very great financial difficulties now facing UNRWA. Its members wish to reiterate their appeal to all Member States to demonstrate their concern for UNRWA's financial plight by responding urgently to the Commissioner-General's appeal and providing, in accordance with their means, the prompt finance necessary to ensure the continuation of the Agency's effective operation.

36. The Community remains deeply concerned at the continuing conflict between Iran and Iraq. We are grateful to the Secretary-General for the efforts he is making through his Special Representative, Mr. Olof Palme, to mediate between the parties and for the parallel missions undertaken by heads of Government of the Organization of the Islamic Conference and by foreign ministers of non-aligned countries. We sincerely hope that these efforts will bear fruit and urge both sides to choose the path of negotiation, so as to achieve a peaceful settlement in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

37. In conclusion, I should like to re-emphasize the European Community's strong and continuing concern with developments in the Middle East. Its members will continue to try by all means available to them to promote a comprehensive, just and lasting peace settlement, involving all the parties and taking into account all the fundamental problems.

38. We note with satisfaction that the Secretary-General maintains contact with all the parties concerned on questions relating to the Middle East. I should like to assure him once again, on behalf of the Community, of our full support and co-operation.

Mr. Anderson (Australia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

39. Mr. LIPATOV (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) (*interpretation from Russian*): Various aspects of the Middle East problem have been on the agenda of the principal organs of the United Nations for many years now. Over this time the region has been the arena of four Arab-Israeli wars, each of which has taken its toll of more human lives, has caused more sorrow and suffering and has left in its wake ever more devastation.

40. The disturbing turn of events in that explosive part of the world remains at the focus of attention of world public opinion and of all those who cherish the interests of international peace and security. We are concerned by the fact that over the past year there has been a substantial exacerbation of the situation in the Middle East caused by the militaristic aspirations of the United States and the increased aggressiveness of Israel.

41. Because of Israel, and with the connivance of its overseas protectors, the situation in the region has become

white-hot. In defiance of world public opinion and in disregard of the generally recognized norms of international law, the leaders of Israel continue their brigandage and aggression against Arab peoples.

42. The most recent demonstrations of this criminal policy were the barbaric attacks by the Israel warmongers against peaceful Lebanese cities and villages and Palestinian refugee camps. As a result of those savage bombardments by land and sea, hundreds of completely innocent people perished. As can be seen from the reports of the delegation of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and the mission of the Co-ordinating Bureau of the non-aligned countries, which visited Lebanon in August this year, the main target of those piratical attacks was the civilian population. It is quite obvious that these acts of aggression constitute one more link in the long chain of crimes of imperialism and Zionism aimed at maintaining this hotbed of tension in the region and at annihilating the Palestinian people.

43. Tel Aviv's acts of provocation and threats against Syria have attained large-scale dimensions. Israel continues to hang on to the Golan Heights, which it occupied in 1967, and its leaders cynically declare that they have no intention of leaving them.

44. The discussion last month on the bandit-like raid by the Israeli air force against the atomic research centre in a suburb of Baghdad showed quite convincingly the deep concern of the States Members of the Organization over Israel's unprecedented act of aggression against Iraq. That act and the other acts of aggression I have mentioned clearly demonstrate the scale of the expansionist actions and intentions of those in the ruling circles of Israel and show once more that international terrorism is the State policy of Israel, its foreign policy.

45. While it continues to hang on to the Arab territories occupied as a result of aggression, Israel has for many years now been increasingly colonizing them. The practice of persecution and terror against the Arab population in the occupied territories; the attempts to turn an entire people into refugees; the implementation of various measures to change the physical character, demographic composition, organizational structure and legal status of the occupied Arab territories; legislative and administrative actions to alter the status of Jerusalem; the creation of Israeli settlements on occupied Arab territories, the desecration of Arab historic religious and cultural monuments; and other actions by Israel in those territories are most flagrant violations of international law and relevant United Nations decisions. Those in the ruling circles of Israel leave no doubt in their public statements about their annexationist aspirations in the occupied territories. As is clear from the policy statement made by the new Israeli Cabinet, Israel "intends to establish sovereignty over the West Bank and the Gaza Strip" by expanding the scale of its colonization.

46. Naturally, Israel could not behave with such brazen defiance were it not supported and abetted by the United States.

47. The Israeli military and political machine is the offspring of American imperialism. Tel Aviv's adventurism is a mirror image of the adventurist policies of the ruling circles of the United States, which have been activating their war preparations in the Middle East. Basing itself on the imperialistic doctrine of "defending vital interests" and building up the myth of the notorious "Soviet

threat", the United States sent to the oil-rich region of the Persian Gulf an armada of warships and placed the so-called rapid deployment force in a state of increased military preparedness.

48. Heightened tension in the already explosive area of the Middle East is being accompanied by interference in the internal affairs of the States of the region.

49. The exercises of the American rapid deployment force which took place last month under the code name Bright Star, the plans to establish a Pentagon bridgehead in the Middle East in the guise of the so-called multinational force and the conclusion of a so-called strategic agreement, which is in essence a military pact between the United States and Israel, are means of establishing political, military and economic domination over the people of the Middle East and their natural resources.

50. All this shows how unstable the situation is in the Middle East, how dangerous for the cause of peace it is to delay the settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. This is further evidence of the futility of the separate approach to the solution of the Middle East problem and of the failure of the so-called Camp David accords, which can bring to the peoples of the region neither peace nor tranquillity. Talks on so-called autonomy for the Palestinians is an attempt to supplant a genuine solution to the core of the Middle East question, that is, the Palestinian question. That attempt is aimed at impeding the exercise of the inalienable national rights of the Arab people of Palestine, primarily their right to create their own independent State.

51. It is quite obvious that only a comprehensive political settlement of the conflict can defuse the storm-laden atmosphere in the Middle East and give the people peace and security. This can be brought about only through honest collective efforts. To our mind, a realistic and constructive way to achieve this is contained in the Soviet Union's proposal regarding the convening of an international conference on the Middle East, with the participation of all the parties concerned, including, naturally, the PLO, the political vanguard and the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. The aim of this proposal is at last to make some headway in bringing about a just and comprehensive settlement in the Middle East. This approach is in the interests of the Arab peoples and in the interests of the entire international community.

52. The delegation of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic expresses the hope that this session will work out further measures leading to a comprehensive and just solution of the Middle East problem.

53. Mr. PASTINEN (Finland): The situation in the Middle East continues to pose the most persistent threat to international peace and security. The legacy of history in the area is one of war and violence. The relations between States in the region is marked by tacit hostility or open belligerence. The use of force is on the increase. Acts of armed aggression and violence infect the area. The cycle of violence fuels a continuous arms race. It has made the Middle East an area with one of the heaviest concentrations of sophisticated weapons in the world, second only to Europe. The danger of the introduction of nuclear weapons to the Middle East adds a new dimension to the threat of destruction and terror, underlining the necessity of establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

54. The situation in the Middle East is often perceived as a regional conflict. This is to underrate the pivotal political, economic and strategic importance of the region, which transcends the regional confines of the conflict. Global interests make the Middle East a scene of global competition and confrontation.

55. Finland remains committed to a political settlement of the Middle East conflict through negotiation, in accordance with the basic documents of the United Nations, Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), governing the achievement of such a solution.

56. In our view, the basic principles of a peaceful settlement remain immutable. The acquisition of territories by force is inadmissible. Israel must therefore withdraw from Arab territories occupied since 1967. It is equally imperative that the right of Israel and all other States of the area to exist within secure and recognized borders be guaranteed. Furthermore, provision must be made for the legitimate rights of the Palestinians, including their right to national self-determination. This presupposes their right to participate in negotiations on their own future within a comprehensive solution in the Middle East. In this context, Finland considers the PLO to be the most significant representative of the Palestinians.

57. In accordance with its policy of neutrality, Finland has taken a balanced and conciliatory position on the various controversial issues in the Middle East. We have thus maintained good relations with all the nations concerned, including the most immediate parties to the dispute. It is our firm intention to continue this policy and thereby preserve the confidence of all parties to the conflict in the Middle East. Thus, we have been able to render such peaceful services to all concerned as are required. A tangible expression of that is the sizable contribution which Finland has made, from their very beginning and continues to make, to the United Nations peace-keeping activities in the area.

58. The international community is well aware of the dangers inherent in the persistent conflict in the Middle East. During the last few years the search for peace has produced an increasing number of initiatives and proposals, among others the joint declaration by the United States and the Soviet Union of October 1977 on the reconvening of the Geneva Conference; the Camp David accords of September 1978 between Egypt and Israel; the efforts of the European Community on the basis of the Venice Declaration on June 1980;² and the eight principles put forward by the Saudi Arabian Government in August 1981.⁴

59. While those initiatives approach the problem from different premises, they all have a common denominator: the achievement of peace in the Middle East through negotiations. In substance they also have a number of elements that are basically the same or similar. In essence they all build on the basic Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973).

60. Common to all those initiatives is the recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. Time has shown that this indeed is the core of the problem. Therefore the recognition of that right should not remain an abstraction. It is a reality that cannot be ignored. No one questions that the right of the Palestinians to self-determination must be part and parcel of a comprehensive settlement in the Middle East. Yet justice for one cannot be done by doing injustice to the other. Israel, like all other

States in the area, has the right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries. All these elements constitute the basis for an evolving international consensus. It is with that in mind that the parties to the conflict, as well as all others concerned, should now move towards a structure of peace in the Middle East by all appropriate means.

61. Mrs. KIRKPATRICK (United States of America): Recently, in the United States statement on the question of Palestine, the representative of my Government said:

“The United Nations is more than a weapon in one side’s political armory. It must not align itself with forces working against a final settlement between Israel and its Arab neighbours by repudiating the sole existing framework provided in the Camp David accords for a just resolution of the Palestinian problem in all its aspects. It is vital that the United Nations, rather than continuing to repeat the errors of the past, not be exploited for partisan purposes and that it strive to preserve the principles of balance and equity on which it was founded.” [83rd meeting, para. 266.]

62. The General Assembly, unfortunately, chose a different course. It adopted a number of resolutions which depart substantially from Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), criticize the Camp David accords and seek to enhance the international status of the PLO, an organization that refuses to accept as the basis for any negotiations resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and also Israel’s right to exist.

63. The adoption of these resolutions by the General Assembly diminishes the ability of the United Nations to further the cause of peace in the Middle East.

64. Today, the Assembly addresses a new item: “The situation in the Middle East”. One might assume that under that rubric the General Assembly would want to address the grave issues that now threaten that region. Surely there are enough of them. Iran and Iraq are enmeshed in a seemingly endless war. Iran is plagued with serious internal disorder. Lebanon is struggling bravely against destabilizing forces of many kinds. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya pursues subversion and terror beyond its borders. Throughout the region, in fact, the forces of moderation must contend with elements that promote violence, extremism and instability. And of course the threat of Soviet expansion hangs over the entire region. The Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, as well as the presence of Soviet-bloc military personnel elsewhere in the region, threatens the independence of all nations in the Middle East.

65. All of these issues should be of vital concern to the Assembly. All ought to be addressed under the item before us today. Yet neither the report of the Secretary-General nor the speeches of most participants in this debate have addressed these issues. Instead, the focus of this debate has again been on one item, and one item alone: the Arab-Israeli conflict. Once again, the same arguments are repeated and the attacks on the only successful peace negotiations in the entire history of the Arab-Israeli dispute—the Camp David accords and the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty—are renewed.

66. What is accomplished by the endless stream of criticism directed at one Member State of the Organization? What are the people of my country to conclude when they

witness year after year these condemnations of Israel, a friend and fellow democracy?

67. Indeed, we feel constrained to point out—once again—that the words and actions of the United Nations on this question serve only to undermine further the reputation of this body and its ability to help bring about peace between Israel and its Arab neighbours.

68. The character of the debate is especially regrettable since the United Nations should be devoting its energies, resources and moral authority to a non-partisan effort to achieve a permanent peace in the Middle East.

69. With respect to the question of a comprehensive peace between Israel and its Arab neighbours, I desire both to review events and to look ahead—each briefly. The basis of peace is to be found in resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). Those resolutions flow directly from the principles of the Charter of the United Nations which require the peaceful settlement of disputes and prohibit the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity of any State.

70. The United States is fully aware of the complexities of the Arab-Israeli conflict. For that very reason we do not believe that peace can come about by wilfully disregarding the obstacles and pitfalls that have undermined previous peace efforts. Certainly it cannot be achieved without recognizing the legitimate rights of the Palestinians and the right of all States, including Israel, “to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force”, as provided in resolution 242 (1967). My Government concluded some time ago that the only path towards peace was through negotiations among those who are in fact sincerely committed to peace.

71. Consider the significance of what has happened on the Israeli-Egyptian border. Those two countries, defying past practice, boldly looking beyond ancient antagonisms towards reconciliation, decided to negotiate with each other and were able to sign a peace treaty in March 1979. Equally important, they began negotiations for the establishment of full autonomy for the Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza.

72. Predictably, these negotiations have been and will continue to be difficult. But the dedication of my Government to their successful completion will not flag, for they remain the only existing realistic approach to achieving a comprehensive settlement.

73. There are those in the Middle East that appear to have a stake in the perpetuation of the Arab-Israeli conflict and that have in fact done everything possible to subvert the Camp David process. We particularly condemn all acts of intimidation and violence whose purpose it is to discourage this process. Surely, the time has come to transcend the animosities of the past, animosities that otherwise will continue to be exploited by others outside the region for their own ends.

74. I want to conclude my remarks by quoting from the preamble to the Camp David framework, which called the historic initiatives leading up to that agreement “an unprecedented opportunity for peace which must not be lost if this generation and future generations are to be spared the tragedies of war”.⁵

75. The Government and people of the United States are fully committed to the success of the Camp David peace process. We are resolved to build upon the gains already made.

76. Mr. LADGHAM (Tunisia) (*interpretation from French*): Since the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly the situation in the Middle East has continued to deteriorate. The Secretary-General, in his annual report on the work of the Organization, stated on this subject that "the already complex situation has been further complicated by a series of grave and often violent developments . . . [which have] underlined the dangers inherent in the absence of progress towards a comprehensive settlement" [see A/36/I, sect. IV].

77. Indeed, a strategy of tension, whose objective as clearly defined by the Israeli Chief of Staff is to weaken and crush the resistance of the Palestinian people, is being pursued in the occupied Arab territories and in Lebanon. Large-scale military operations using aircraft, naval forces and commando units have been mounted against refugee camps and the Palestinian resistance in Lebanon. The savage bombing of the population of Beirut, the crisis involving the Syrian ground-to-air defensive missiles and the premeditated raid on the Tamuz nuclear centre in Iraq are all events which have thrown the entire region into a state of tension not reached since the 1973 war.

78. The General Assembly's debate on this question clearly indicates that the entire international community continues to be concerned over developments in the Middle East problem, in view of its impact on peace and security not only in the region but also throughout the world.

79. Escalating tension, the continuing military build-up, and the East-West rivalry have all made of that region a kind of volcano in a state of nearly constant eruption.

80. At the root of this situation, which is alarming in more than one respect, is Israel's obstinate refusal to recognize the fundamental truth, the universally accepted fact that the Palestinian question is at the core of the Middle East problem. The fate of a people is at stake along with the inevitable recognition of its legitimate rights to self-determination and to the establishment of an independent sovereign State.

81. Since 1948 Israel has done everything it could to trivialize the matter of the desire of an entire people to preserve its identity, by reducing it at matter to a refugee problem and by reducing the problem of the Middle East to the refusal of Arab States to recognize Israel. That crude manoeuvre has met with utter failure.

82. Neither the policy of extreme oppression pursued by the Israeli military authorities in the Arab territories occupied since 1967 nor the extortion of all kinds against the inhabitants and their property, which remind us of practices of the recent past which were condemned by all mankind, have been able to put an end to the heroic struggle of the Palestinian people to regain its national rights.

83. In the Middle East today the deadlock persists. Those that thought that the Camp David agreements would bring a dynamic for peace to the region have had to face the facts: peace is limited to the Sinai, whereas the rest of the region is ruled by tension. Camp David has been reduced by Israel to a partial agreement, the avowed

objective of its diplomacy for years past. The Camp David accords, in approaching the Palestinian question in a roundabout way as required by Israel and in the absence of other partners, could lead only to a minefield.

84. The concept of autonomy—a transitional régime defined by international law—has been reduced by Israel to a restricted administrative autonomy stripped of authority over the national territory, which would continue to be under the exclusive control of the Israeli Government.

85. It is obvious that in these conditions no responsible Palestinian leader could subscribe to such a sham settlement, even if it were transitory.

36. Furthermore, since 1978, the date of the signing of those agreements, no progress has been made with regard to this pseudo-autonomy. Tunisia, which has always preferred dialogue and negotiation to confrontation, has warned those that have placed great hopes in these agreements by stressing the limited scope of such a settlement and the dangerous ambiguity of that approach to the Palestinian question.

87. With regard to the principles—the inalienable right of the Palestinians to self-determination and to the establishment of an independent sovereign State in accordance with United Nations resolutions—Tunisia's position is clear. It is as flexible on the means as it is firm on the principles. Flexibility on means and firmness on principles—that is the Bourguiba approach to international problems, and in particular to the problem of the Middle East.

88. It is an irrefutable fact that as soon as those agreements were signed Israel gave free rein to its expansionist policies in the West Bank, Gaza and the Golan Heights. Since that time, 47 new settlements have been established in those territories. The many statements by Israeli leaders leave no doubt about the objective of such policies: it is to create an irreversible situation which will further complicate the problem and jeopardize the exercise by the Palestinians of their right to self-determination.

89. Following that expansionist policy, the Israeli authorities, having made many changes in the historic and demographic structures of the Arab sector of Al Quds, decided unilaterally to alter the legal status of that city by declaring it the "eternal capital" of the State of Israel, which is a flagrant violation of United Nations resolutions, defiance of the opinion of millions of believers throughout the world and an inadmissible attack on the right of the city's inhabitants to self-determination.

90. It is surely unnecessary to emphasize that the Israeli thesis of the so-called reunification of Al Quds, designed to legitimize a *fait accompli*, is more a matter of propaganda aimed at misleading public opinion than of historical facts or the principles of international law. The city of Al Quds has been under uninterrupted Arab sovereignty for centuries, ever since its liberation from the Crusaders by Saladin El Ayoubi in 1187. Furthermore, after the partition of Palestine the United Nations made provision for a special régime for that city. The administration of an occupied city is governed by the rules of international law and by the appropriate international conventions. The international community has not been hoodwinked by the Israeli manoeuvres, which it has unanimously condemned.

91. The heroic struggle of the Palestinian people is today actively supported by the international community. Tunisia, which has constantly and unreservedly supported that just cause, reaffirms its conviction that there can be no lasting peace in the Middle East without a comprehensive settlement which takes into account, above all, the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and to the establishment, under the leadership of their sole representative, the PLO, of an independent State; and without Israel's total withdrawal from all the occupied Arab territories, including Al Quds.

92. All the peoples of the region require peace, but it cannot be a diktat imposed by Israel on the entire region.

93. Security is also a major concern of the countries of the Middle East. It is an imperative need for their development and stability. But it cannot be viewed as the supremacy of one State over the others, for that would lead the latter to intense rearmament and various alliances to defend themselves against the former's hegemony and interference—particularly in Lebanon.

94. The international Organization has been seeking since 1948 a settlement that would ensure true peace in the Middle East. It must not relax its pressure on Israel to end its aggressive and expansionist policy in the region.

95. "Greater Israel"—this new kind of *Drang nach Osten*—is a universally condemned, anachronistic concept. True security for Israel is living in peace with its neighbours; giving up its role as the Prussia of the Middle East—a description used by some even in Israel itself; and recognizing the existence of the Palestinian people and their inalienable right to self-determination.

96. True peace must be based above all on consensus, on respect for the legitimate rights of all the parties concerned, on the rejection of expansionism and domination. Any strategy for peace in the Middle East that does not have that objective is doomed to failure.

97. Israel's intransigence continues to block any initiative for a comprehensive settlement of the Middle East question.

98. The present precarious truce must be used to undertake without delay the exploration of new ways to unfreeze the situation, so that a start may be made in a process of real peace that can fulfil the deep aspirations of the peoples of the region, particularly the Palestinian people, a process in which the PLO will be associated at all stages of negotiations.

99. Mr. KOMATINA (Yugoslavia): There is no doubt that the situation in the Middle East is constantly deteriorating and poses a direct threat to peace and security. There is no doubt either that the causes of that deterioration are the negation of the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people, the continuing occupation of Arab territories, the systematic aggression against Lebanon, the air raid on the nuclear reactor near Baghdad, the colonization of the occupied territories, the changing of the characteristics and status Jerusalem, and so on. Those are only some manifestations of the worsening situation which is the consequence of Israel's policy of annexation and expansion in the Middle East and which threatens to result in a new conflict. United Nations documents are full of data on the negative consequences of such a policy and practice, and I need not spell them out here. Unless the international community resolutely undertakes serious

and urgent measures to stop such a practice, we shall all be faced with the further deepening of the crisis in the wider region.

100. Such a situation is even more dangerous because of its integration into the general trends of worsening over-all international relations in all spheres. The debates held during this session have shown that the whole world is shaken by various manifestations of the use of force, which have been expressed, first of all, in military interventions and various forms of interference and denial of the rights of peoples and countries to self-determination, national independence, free social development and life in peace and security. At the global level, the use of force is reflected in the continuation of the arms race, the strengthening of the military presence and preparedness in all regions of crisis, the instigation of new hotbeds of tension, the maintenance of the unjust system of economic relations, and so on.

101. Those negative trends are particularly characteristic of the region of the Middle East and beyond, spreading to the wider area from the Gulf to South-East Asia. For that reason we are stressing the responsibility of the international community to undertake effective measures and steps leading to the solution of this focus of crisis—in many ways the most acute focus in the world—which is becoming the centre of new tensions and the source of a wider conflict.

102. Today, more than ever before, it is clear that we are faced with two different policies in this crucial region. One is characterized by the overall efforts of the international community to search for a lasting peaceful solution, taking into account all global and regional realities. A particular contribution to this policy is being made by the Arab countries and peoples; indeed, their aspirations to achieve a just and comprehensive solution are the essential contribution to peace. Initiatives in this direction are multiplying and are increasingly recognized by most countries and Governments. The second policy is reflected in a disregard for all such efforts; it is the policy of reliance on force, domination and partial solutions, although history and everyday life have shown that such a policy has no future.

103. Our aim is to support the first of the two policies, on the basis of already widely accepted elements for the urgent and comprehensive solution of the crisis, in order to prevent *faits accomplis* of the policy of aggression and to halt the dangerous deterioration of the situation. We shall be able to achieve this goal by relying on the positive evolution of international action and awareness of the need to solve the overall Middle East crisis on the following bases: first, the withdrawal of Israel from all territories occupied since 5 June 1967, including Jerusalem; secondly, the exercise by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights to self-determination, national independence and sovereignty, including the right to its own State; thirdly, the recognition of the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people and of its rights to sovereignty and independence; fourthly, the recognition of the right of Palestinian refugees and displaced persons to return to their homes; and fifthly, the recognition of the right of all countries and peoples of the region to a safe national life and independent social development based on national, religious, ethnic, cultural, economic and political equality.

104. The recent debate on the question of Palestine reaffirmed that there are no more dilemmas about the fact

that the realization of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination and national independence is the prerequisite for any realistic peaceful solution of the crisis.

105. Non-aligned countries are an ever-present, active and constructive factor in the search for a solution of the Middle East crisis based on the full recognition of the principles of non-acquisition of territories by force, recognition of the right of all peoples to self-determination and national independence, and support for the liberation struggle and recognition of liberation movements, as well as support of the States victims of aggression. Through the affirmation of those basic principles of the policy of non-alignment, the non-aligned countries have become the firmest stronghold of the Arab peoples and countries in their struggle for the realization of their legitimate national rights, and also they constitute the most reliable bastion of the independence and free development of all peoples and countries in the world.

106. These principles are integrated in all decisions of the major United Nations organs and in the positions adopted at the conferences of non-aligned countries and numerous international gatherings. They all contain a common denominator: the right of all peoples and of every human being to decide on their own destiny and to live in their own national State, and the right of every State to live in independence and security. Separate, partial solutions are outside of this consensus of the international community and introduce additional exacerbating elements, since they not only ignore the recognition of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people as the core of the crisis, but violate the basic principles of international relations.

107. In spite of the negative development and the difficulties stemming from it, we consider that all elements for the solution of the crisis are ripe and that there is a general agreement within the international community on the substance and ways for its solution. This reconfirms our belief that within the United Nations framework additional efforts must be exerted to create conditions for the peaceful political solution of the crisis, including the active and equal participation of all parties. In this way, the world Organization would most consistently confirm its responsibility for the destiny and the realization of the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people, and at the same time it would contribute to the realization of the just, legal and lasting principles embedded in the foundations of peace and security for all of us. Israel must understand that the continuation of the policy of force and expansion, condemned by the whole international community, cannot be a lasting guarantee of its own security, which can be achieved in this case, as in others, only if all peoples, and above all the Palestinian people, are enabled to exercise their inalienable rights to freedom and independence.

108. In this, as well as in all other cases of aggression and encroachment on the basic rights of peoples, Yugoslavia has always supported a peaceful political solution of the crisis based on the recognition of the fundamental principles of the Charter of the United Nations and on the policy of non-alignment, which would eliminate the consequences of aggression and ensure a life of peace, security and independence to all peoples and countries. Proceeding from those basic principles, we have since the beginning of the crisis believed that the liberation of all territories occupied in the 1967 war and the recognition of the right of the Palestinian people to its own State, includ-

ing the recognition of the PLO as its sole legitimate representative, are indispensable for the solution of the Middle East problem. The recognition of the right of all countries in the region to peaceful and safe development is an integral part of this belief.

109. Consistent with this policy, Yugoslavia will continue to support all efforts, concrete actions and measures for the elimination of obstacles standing in the way of a lasting, just and comprehensive solution. We expect that, based on this debate, the awareness of the indispensability of additional efforts to terminate this crisis will be increased and the General Assembly will adopt appropriate decisions in accordance with its responsibility. That would constitute a genuine milestone in the establishment of peaceful relations in the region and in the world as a whole.

110. Mr. EL-FATTAL (Syrian Arab Republic) (*interpretation from Arabic*): We call the agenda item which we are debating "The situation in the Middle East". It is actually nothing more than the subject of "The question of Palestine". We consider it, make statements and engage in debates, and we always come back to the same tragedy, that of the people of Palestine. We read the reports of the Secretary-General on the Middle East and we find that they proceed from the premise of the question of Palestine. We hear statements on the Middle East, but they are actually statements on Palestine. We adopt resolution after resolution, and we find ourselves within the framework of the question of Palestine.

111. Therefore, what we today call "the situation in the Middle East" is nothing but an expansion of the item we considered last week called "The question of Palestine". We recall what has been stated by the overwhelming majority of the representatives—that the Palestinian question is the very core, the essence of the problem of the Middle East, and any attempt—I repeat, any attempt—to settle the crisis of the Middle East without first solving the problem at the origin of the question of Palestine is a misleading and treacherous attempt, and hence null and void. It is impossible to solve the problem of the Middle East without solving the question of the Palestinian people in a way that will return all of its usurped rights.

112. We deplore the stance taken by the delegation of the United States of America, whose representative stated that the United States opposed any effort to prejudice the pivotal role of the Camp David accords. That delegation, which represents only itself and its puppets, has sought to prejudice the rights of the Palestinian people and to mislead States that have been committed to standing by the sincere efforts being made to enable the Palestinian people to recover its legitimate rights.

113. As stated by the Secretary-General in his report, "The situation in the Middle East with all its complexities and ramifications continues to be of central concern to the entire international community, containing as it does an explosive potential of conflict endangering world peace". [See A/36/655, para. 33.] We confirm that the situation in the Middle East has deteriorated and its dangers have escalated since the signing of the Camp David accords, because those accords are in contravention of the principles of a just and lasting peace. They make a mirage of peace despite the fact that the majority of the international community has adopted as a basis of a just and lasting peace the immutable principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force and has called for the complete and unconditional withdrawal of Israel from all the

Palestinian and other occupied Arab territories, thus enabling the people of Palestine to exercise its universally recognized rights, namely, its right to return to its homeland, its right to self-determination and its right to establish its own independent state free from all foreign intervention.

114. The expansionist practices of Israel and its aggressive policies, which are supported by the United States, have led to an accelerated deterioration of the situation. Israel, by virtue of its imperialist and racist nature and its expansionist aims, carries out its dark designs through war, terror, devastation and the misery of its Arab victims, and above all the Palestinians, Lebanese and Syrians; it also finds in the violation of human rights a method to strengthen itself and to prosper by feeding on the blood of the Arabs. It is like a parasitical entity that cannot live and grow unless the Arab body becomes weak. Israel tries first to humiliate and then to eliminate that Arab body. Israel justifies its arbitrary acts by resorting to a religious logic, but no religion preaches what Israel says and does. All through Israel's logic of history, which is written by Zionists to justify Israel's actions, an attempt is made to give a false picture of its presence which is based on force. Then it puts forward arguments and pretexts related to its own security, while in fact it threatens the security of all the peoples of the area and of the world. That is the bitter reality faced by our people, whose future and being are threatened.

115. The events that took place in 1948 with respect to the aggression against our people in Palestine were completed in 1967 by aggression against the people and territory of Palestine as well as against the territory of Egypt and Syria and their peoples. That same menace is now threatening fraternal Lebanon. The Zionist design, which aims at eliminating the Arabs from the human and cultural point of view, still exists. Israel wishes to establish its own empire, which is supposed to extend from the Nile to the Euphrates. The idea of peace, in the logic of the Zionists, is tantamount to conducting a war against all Arabs.

116. Israel, with the help of the United States, has achieved a part of its dream by fragmenting the Arabs by means of the United States imperialist conspiracy, which deprived Egypt of the honour of remaining steadfast and caused it to capitulate by accepting accords based on an exchange that deprived the people of Palestine of its right to live in its own homeland, independently and in dignity, like all peoples that have thrown off the yoke of imperialism. They did that in return for a partial withdrawal from the Sinai desert and to the prejudice of Arab sovereignty. Those ominous accords did not bring about peace and they cannot bring about peace. They have made the area, regionally and internationally, one of the most serious hotbeds of tension. They have also fanned the fires of violence and devastation. One of their most unjust effects for Moslems and Christians alike was to offer the city of Jerusalem to Zionism, which has sought unceasingly to destroy Arab Islamic and Christian culture in that city of cities. Those accords of submission encouraged Israel to intensify the persecution of the Arabs, who live under the fires of the colonialist occupation. This occupation is based on a policy aimed at liquidating the Palestinian people as an entity and usurping or destroying its cultural heritage. Despite all this, the occupation authorities have not been able to erase the cultural heritage of that dignified people, because it will always resist occupation of any kind. Israel, despite all its efforts, has not

found anyone to work with it to make the Camp David conspiracy acceptable.

117. Following the catastrophe of Camp David the United States, using all its intransigence and determination, formally declared itself to be an ally of Israel in the area and a defender of the Zionist colonialist and expansionist designs. It has agreed to become a resolute partner of Israel in the Middle East conflict. The irresponsibility of the United States has undermined any chance for peace in the Middle East. At present there is a 99 per cent chance that the United States will launch a common attack against our nation and against our interests. The military manoeuvres conducted by the rapid deployment force on Arab territories are nothing but poisoned arrows offered to those that seek out an alleged enemy but condone their greatest enemy, which is the regional extension of international Zionism, which the United States is supporting. The United States brags and prides itself on calling those manoeuvres Bright Star. Yes, they are a bright star, much as the explosion of the Hiroshima bomb, which turned night into day, was a bright star.

118. We wonder how Washington, which signed the strategic co-operation treaty with our primary enemy, which has established military bases in Israel and which has supplied it with destructive capability to protect the Israeli occupation, can claim a political role in resolving the Middle East crisis in a just manner while it is an ally of Israel and while it has organic relations with Israel. How can that State be the judge and the opponent at the same time?

119. I should like to say also that we wonder whether European policy did not receive a setback when some of the European countries which claim to play a constructive role in finding a just and lasting solution to the Middle East crisis have become involved in protecting the results of the Camp David accords on Arab land in Sinai. Has not the West realized that the conflict of the Middle East is an Arab-Israeli conflict which is the result of Zionist aggression against our Arab nation?

120. The Arabs have spared no effort to rationalize their relations with western Europe and to establish cordial relations with Europe through mutual beneficial co-operation. We hope that those European countries will not become involved in policies or deeds that are inimical to our nation, through either direct or indirect, overt or covert, support for those accords which have been rejected by all the peoples. There is still time for the European and other States that have expressed their desire to participate in the Sinai negotiations with the United States to decide not to become involved in a way that would be harmful to the Arabs on the one hand and to their own peoples on the other. We hope that those States will review their policy, and at the same time we warn them against the consequences of such involvement.

121. We are not interested in war, but we are not interested in submission either. The path to peace is mapped out in the resolutions of the United Nations, and, as we have said, it may be traversed by the unconditional Israeli withdrawal from occupied Arab territories and recognition of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, foremost among which are the rights to return, to self-determination and to establish an independent State under the leadership of the PLO.

122. In our view, and in the view of the majority of States, peace in the Middle East cannot be established

save by recognition of the pivotal role of the question of Palestine in the Middle East crisis. That is the only way to eliminate one of the gravest hotbeds of tension in the world and to restore stability and a just peace to our area.

123. Members will agree that peace in the Middle East is essential to the peace of the entire world. By virtue of its strategic geographic location and its natural resources and riches, including its human resources, it is possible for our area to participate in the building of a better world. The peoples of the world, and even more their vital interests, would be prejudiced if we were to allow American imperialism and its ally Israel to spread their organic, military and economic hegemony in that region to make it a new colony created in contravention of the logic of post-colonial history.

124. But peace has its prerequisites, and one of them is the balance of force between the two parties. The United States and the parties to the Camp David accords have through their co-operation and collaboration in all fields caused an imbalance of force in the interests of settler imperialism and expansionists. Egypt having withdrawn from the battlefield, Israel continues to increase and diversify its immense military arsenal with American support. Especially after the strategic co-operation agreement between Tel-Aviv and Washington, this encourages Israel to commit one act of aggression after another. Thus Israel bombs Lebanon, its towns and villages and even the refugee camps there. Has it not bombed Iraq's peaceful nuclear reactor and committed acts of aggression against the Arab deterrence forces? None of this would have been possible had there existed a reasonable strategic balance between the aggressor and the victim. The lack of such a balance means the complete submission of one party to the other.

125. Our Minister for Foreign Affairs said at the beginning of this session that

"any conflict that arises as a result of the clash of powers can be resolved only through the restoration of the balance of power or the liquidation of one party by the other.

"Talk of peace and its possibilities while an imbalance of power exists would mean the imposition of terms of surrender. That is completely unacceptable."
[See 17th meeting, paras. 123 and 124.]

It is deplorable that despite the Arab warning directed to it, the United States did not draw back in time from its alliance with our sworn enemy, Israel. Instead, it has voluntarily made an enemy of the Arab nation and intensified the confrontation, placing the American people in a position of enmity to the Arab people, causing itself and us grave damage, prejudicing the possibilities of a comprehensive and just peace and widening the military gap to the advantage of Israel.

126. Our will to restore normal conditions is part and parcel of the continuity of our existence as a people and as an Arab nation with our own vital interests.

127. As we consider the general situation in the area and its gravity, we call upon all peoples that cherish peace, justice and freedom to stand against the new alliance between the United States and Israel and to condemn it strongly. At the same time, by virtue of its responsibilities, the international Organization is called upon to take measures against the Israeli aggressor. We

appeal to all the Governments of the world to take stringent measures against Israel because of its persistence in aggression and its refusal to recognize the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people to force it to withdraw from the occupied Arab lands.

128. I affirm that the people of Syria and our Arab nation will continue the struggle, no matter what the sacrifices, to ensure the restoration of the national rights of the Palestinian people and to liberate the occupied Arab territories.

129. Members must have learned this morning that the racist Israeli régime and its representative, the terrorist criminal Begin, have put forward a bill to the so-called Israeli Knesset with a view to implementing Israeli racist legislation in the occupied Golan. This is a violation of international law and a threat to international peace and security.

130. Mr. MAHALLATI SHIRAZI (Iran): I wish to seek the help of Almighty God and to commence my statement with His own words: "And we wished to be gracious to those who were being depressed in the land, to make them leaders and make them heirs".

131. Let us tell the whole and complete truth instead of trying to convince each other with mere diplomatic formalities. Undoubtedly world imperialism would prefer the United Nations to be an assembly of representatives who, regardless of all the bitter realities in the outside world, cordially indulge in diplomatic criss-crossing, or at least avoid controversial issues that might bring about open and frank discussions, for the sake of a calm atmosphere of appeasement.

132. Still worse is the domineering spirit of the super-Powers, which try to blend this unique international body to their colours and to create here the same situation as prevails in countries dominated by old and new colonialism. As a result of this process we come to realize that, in an assembly in which representatives of the whole world community are supposedly present and where there should naturally exist meaningful diversities of opinion and varieties of cultural values, apart from superficial political differences almost all views seem to be similar, and semantically all speak the same language.

133. We believe that this assimilation has nothing to do with unity, since in the concrete world of reality such unity is non-existent. And, realistically, there should not be any unity whatsoever between sheep and wolves. Lack of a genuine and meaningful reflection of cultural diversity in the diplomatic arena is indicative of the most tragic encroachment on the cultural rights of oppressed nations. And this subtle intrusion is nothing but induction into the minds of third-world people of this colonial notion that the culture of the imperialist countries, owing to their advanced technology, is superior to that of other nations. And they are compelled to buy this myth that they must subject themselves to the authority of the conqueror. Sometimes the degree of this mental slavery is so extensive that those who dare to challenge this vicious transgression of basic human values and refuse to be assimilated are ridiculed. This, beyond any doubt, is the highest level of degradation and submission of humankind and, at the same time, is the most tangible victory for world imperialism. It is precisely for this reason that when any culture dares to contest and dispute this mythical notion it is naturally considered as an enemy which

not only threatens the vital interests of imperialism but also challenges the very existence of that vicious system.

134. In the light of this analysis, I wish to discuss the ever-increasing presence of imperialism in the Middle East. We want to emphasize that today it is not a matter either of coincidence or simply of the appearance of contradictions in the political and economic interests of the super-Powers that the Middle East has become the centre of their disputes and political games.

135. Two objectives are generally cited for the presence of imperialism in the Middle East, one strategic, the other economic. We do not doubt the merit of such an argument, but we believe that imperialistic conquest has a third objective more important than the other two: namely, cultural domination.

136. The East, especially the Middle East, has been the birthplace of the major divine religions that have inspired all the major cultural revolutions in human history. Among these, Islamic civilization and culture have a special status. Even Western orientalists have recognized the fact that Islam has inspired the greatest of human civilizations based upon moral codes. These codes have been responsible all through the history of Islam for guarding Moslems against foreign domination, as they have always taught human beings not to give up their liberty and honour even if martyrdom remains the only alternative. It is obvious that as long as such an ideal rules the minds of a people no power can penetrate such a fortification.

137. Since the beginning of Islamic history invaders and colonialists have experienced this reality, and it is precisely for this reason that imperialism has striven to weaken the foundations of Islamic culture and then to expand its economic and political control in the cultural vacuum that has been created. This phenomenon dates as far back as the anti-Islamic Crusades, and it finally manifested itself in the Balfour Declaration.

138. It is rather simplistic to believe that American imperialism has supported Israeli acts of violence ever since their inception solely for the sake of material benefits, because such benefits are much more easily provided to imperialism through some of its local satellites without violence, and, as is well known, those that exercise domination prefer tranquillity to turbulence, which might give birth to unforeseen conditions. Therefore, what is it that tempts the United States to support unconditionally the existence of Israel and its aggressive policies?

139. We believe that the struggle that is going on in the Middle East is a cultural struggle as well as a politico-economic one. It is an assault on the great Islamic culture; it is a struggle between materialistic belief and practice, and human ideals. This is a continuation of the same struggle as the Prophets had against those that used military and political power to enslave others.

140. After the defeat of the Fahd plan, which is nothing but a second Camp David, the special emissaries of big Powers are heading to the area to prepare the ground for similar plans which have no other purpose than to establish a permanent state of Israeli aggression. The increasing military presence of the United States and its allies in the region is a manifestation of the intention to force compromising settlements on the Middle East and, in case of failure, actually to intervene militarily to assist the Zionist régime of occupied Palestine. The strategic pact recently signed between the United States and Israel, as well as the American so-called Bright Star—or, as we

say, "blind star"—manoeuvre should be viewed within this context.

141. Nothing can defeat such policies better than the unity of the peoples of the region. Therefore the creation of division among Moslem peoples is a primary objective of plans such as the first and second Camp David agreements. I wish to quote here the leader of the revolution and founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Imam Khomeini, in his statement to Moslem people in this regard:

"If by now there are still those who have not discovered that these American plans are contrary to the interests of the region, then they must be very ignorant. What America wants is to divide Moslems. Did you not witness that the latest plan created divisions among Moslems? America will not give up. This plan was defeated and therefore another plan will be introduced. All Moslems should be aware that American plans cannot be beneficial for the region. Moslems should remind their Governments not to give in to these American plans, which are meant only to deceive people and plunder their resources."

142. The assault of imperialism against Islamic culture in the Middle East is not intended only to enforce domination over Islamic States; it is primarily a struggle against the non-materialistic dimension within Islamic ideology, because this same dimension of Islam, as well as of other major divine religions, is the strongest weapon against the very existence of the system of imperialism itself, and this is why imperialism is facing a strong challenge in its own homeland as well. No challenge is greater to the survival of imperialism than a social culture based upon moral and spiritual values. This is exactly the challenge that imperialism is facing in the Middle East, and this is precisely the reason why the American Government so strongly supports Zionism in the region and encourages Saddam in his war of aggression against the Islamic revolution of Iran.

143. This is a blatant manifestation of a double standard—to impose upon others what one cannot accept for oneself. This is nowhere better demonstrated than in the way the question of human rights is dealt with in the West. While some satellite régimes are encouraged to commit the ugliest of crimes against humanity, they selectively profess concern for the human being. Everyone has witnessed the wide coverage given in this country to the case of Andrei Sakharov, the prominent Soviet nuclear physicist. All that coverage is designed to demonstrate how much this country cares about human beings, even if the person in question is the one whose scientific research helped build the nuclear weapon for its greatest adversary.

144. But when Ayatollah Muhammad Bagher Sadre, one of the greatest scholars of the Islamic world, along with his sister Bent al-Hoda, who was also one of the most learned Moslems, was brutally martyred by the executioners of Saddam, did any of the supporters of human rights and science object? One can find the writings of those two Moslem scholars in the major libraries of the world and realize the kind of service they have rendered to knowledge and to humanity. But did any of these writers who have written pages concerning the inconveniences that Sakharov is experiencing write a single sentence in objection to the torture and execution of those Moslem scholars and many other prominent scientists in Iran?

145. Does this not demonstrate that American imperialism and its allies are in fact deceiving the world? Does

this example not demonstrate the animosity of American imperialism to Islamic scholars and Islamic culture? And does the silence concerning this tragedy not demonstrate that they have joined hands with Saddam in fighting Islamic culture and the Islamic revolution?

146. As the destruction of Islamic ideals is the major objective of imperialism in the Middle East, the best method of fighting imperialism in the region is to rely more than ever on those ideals and to strive to understand and promote them. If our principal weapon in this struggle is not our rich culture, then our defeat becomes inevitable. In a struggle in which only guns determine victory, it is obvious that the producer rather than the user of those guns will eventually prevail. In our opinion, only cultural weapons could enable us to detect all the conspiracies which surround us day and night and which have no mission but the imposition of more suffering and slavery on our people.

147. As everyone is by now aware, there have been numerous plans by various parties for the solution of the problem of Palestine and the aggression of the Zionists, usually by those same groups responsible for this mischief. Quite expectedly, the majority of those plans have been intentionally designed to combat the smoke, rather than to prevent the fire. Undoubtedly, the first and second Camp David accords are in that category. The most obvious objection to those heinous criminal schemes is precisely their contempt for the eminent Islamic values and their belittling of human dignity.

148. These plans, beyond being acts of political and economic treachery, are moral crimes. The most striking revelations regarding those notorious plans of imperialism are as follows: first, peaceful coexistence must be attained with a Government whose atrocities only surpass those of Fascist Hitler, and secondly, there must be submission to the will of imperialism and tacit approval of the aggression by the Zionists and their masters.

149. The history of Islam, the glorious lives of our great Moslem leaders and the stories of all human beings who have created honour for humanity have taught us this important lesson: the maintenance of dignity and the refusal to submit to force and coercion even at the high price of precious life are the highest and most noble achievements of humanity.

150. The Islamic revolution of Iran has since its inception been able to put into action this great teaching of the noble religion of Islam. It has not for a single moment compromised its independence, dignity and freedom *vis-à-vis* the super-Powers, even at the high cost of the loss of the lives of its best sons and daughters, and it has taught the lesson to all the puppets and mercenaries of imperialism, such as the defunct Shah and the criminal régime of Saddam, that anybody who revolts against the will of God and transgresses the inalienable rights of oppressed people has no choice but to beg miserably for mere survival and to be doomed to an undignified ending.

151. Here we should like to take the opportunity to unveil and expose some of the ugliest manifestations of these kinds of régimes. On Friday, 11 December, in a plenary meeting, we witnessed one of the most absurd scenes of a preposterous show performed by the representative of the Zionist régime of occupied Palestine.

152. Fourteen centuries ago, one of the greatest leaders of Islam and humanity, His Eminence Imam Ali—may

peace be upon him—made a remarkable point, which was probably one of the single greatest statements ever made in the uncovering and detection of hypocrites. Imam Ali, describing the true nature of hypocrites and their tactics for promoting their vicious aims, said “A just word is said for the sake of an unjust and devious purpose”.

153. Since the very beginning of the current session we have repeatedly heard the rhetoric of the hypocrite régime of Iraq and the Zionist régime of occupied Palestine, in which each side has documented and exposed another party's crimes and in so doing tried to cover up its own inhuman crimes.

154. Last Friday, once again, we heard the racist and barbaric Zionist régime of occupied Palestine trying to utilize the undeniable crimes of the Saddam régime committed against the oppressed people of the Islamic Republic of Iran to justify its own acts of genocide and atrocities. And that is precisely what Saddam's representatives have been doing by citing the obvious and evident reality of the crimes of the Zionists merely to justify their own misdeeds.

155. We believe these perverted games are nothing but an insult to the intelligence of the audience. How can the savage Zionists, by citing this reality and exposing the crimes of the Iraqi régime, justify their own Hitlerite aggression against the people of the region in general and the oppressed Palestinian people in particular?

156. For the sake of clarification, I wish to pose a few questions, which we are confident cannot be answered by the representatives of either of these illegal régimes. From the standpoint of crimes and aggression against basic human rights, we ask what differences there are in the following examples: first, the bombardment of civilians in southern Lebanon and the mass murder of innocent people by Zionist Israel on the one hand, and the continued bombardment of civilian targets in the southern cities of the Islamic Republic and the blood bath created by the mercenaries of the bloody Ba'athist Saddam al Takriti on the other. Secondly, the aggression and violation of all human rights based on Zionist racism in Israel and that of the British-inspired Ba'athism of Saddam, based on the racist and anti-Islamic notion of the superiority of the Arab race. Thirdly, the mass murder of thousands of innocent Palestinian people in occupied Palestine and the mass murder of thousands of innocent civilians in the occupied section of my country by the criminal gangsters of Saddam al Takriti. Fourthly, the torture and expulsion of tens of thousands of innocent Palestinians from occupied Palestine because of their not being Jews, thus creating a continuous flood of refugees all over the Middle East, and the torture and expulsion of tens of thousands of Moslem Iraqi citizens from their homeland because of their ancestral racial ties with the Moslem Iranians. Fifthly, the illegal occupation of various Arab countries by Zionists, and the illegal invasion and continuous occupation of our beloved country in disregard of all existing international laws by Saddam's cannibalistic army. Sixthly, the complete support by the United States imperialists for the Israelis, and the position of support repeatedly taken by the Fascist United States imperialists for Saddam's régime—open secrets of which we have on several occasions given documented proof. Seventhly, the spoliation and plunder of the largest portion of the economic resources of the area and the transformation of both lands for the purpose of stockpiling the military hardware of imperialism in occupied Palestine and in the territory of the Saddamite régime. Eighthly, the confisca-

tion of the land and personal property of innocent people by force and coercion by the Zionists in occupied Palestine and by Saddam's régime inside Iraq and occupied Iran. Ninthly, the bombardment of the Iraqi nuclear reactor by the Zionists and the barbaric bombardment of Iran's oil refineries. Tenthly, the creation of a world-wide campaign of propaganda through radio, television, newspapers and so on against the noble religion of Islam and the Islamic Republic of Iran by both régimes. Apart from the artificial and tactical differences between the two illegal régimes, what are the real differences between the régime of Israel and its leader, the notorious Menachem Begin, who started his criminal profession as a terrorist, and the racist Ba'athist régime of Iraq, whose very foundation was terrorism, and its leader Saddam al Takriti, who started his criminal career as a dangerous terrorist gangster in the dark alleys of Baghdad?

157. If we were to try to complete this unfinished list one or even two hours would not suffice. The crimes of both Hitlerite régimes are so widespread and extensive that it would take years to register their damaging impact.

158. In fact, the similarity of the nature of the two régimes is so profound that we firmly believe that were it not for the pressure of public opinion in Moslem Iraq, Saddam's representative would not have indulged in any argument with the Zionist ambassador and there would not have been any contradiction between the two régimes; there would have been total unity in their deeds and actions against the Moslem people of the region and they would maintain cordial relations, in the interests of United States imperialism.

159. Today it is clear to everybody that the two important elements in the instability and the critical situation in the Middle East, in the interest of imperialism, are those two criminal régimes. We have total confidence that in the final analysis, with the help of Almighty God, our heroic Palestinian brothers and sisters and the Moslem Arab and Iranian people will defeat both régimes and make them pay for their years of cruelty and aggression, not only against the Middle Eastern people but against the whole of humanity.

160. Not for a single moment do we consider even a single step taken by imperialism and its puppets to be an isolated and unrelated event. The recent acts of intimidation and provocation by the United States imperialists against the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya are but one more example of the never-ending conspiracies of this notorious beast, the Government of the United States.

161. Along with the noble people of the Middle East and all the freedom-loving people of the world that wish to take their destiny into their own hands, we consider the following steps to be the most fundamental course for the resolution of the problems of the Middle East and the attainment of a realistic peace there: first, the total expulsion of all the foreign forces that have unjustifiably imposed themselves on the people of the area; secondly, the complete removal of all the military bases in the region that some régimes have either overtly or covertly given to the super-Powers; thirdly, the breaking-off of all diplomatic and economic ties by all nations with the Zionist régime of occupied Palestine; and, fourthly, the joining together of all countries in the area in the united anti-Zionist Islamic front.

The meeting rose at 1.30 p.m.

NOTES

¹ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-ninth Session, Annexes*, agenda item 101, document A/9693/Add.1.

² Declaration concerning the situation in the Middle East, published in Venice on 13 June 1980 by the heads of State and Government and the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the nine member States of the European Community, meeting as the European Council. See *Official Records of the Security Council, Thirty-fifth Year, Supplement for April, May and June 1980*, document S/14009.

³ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, No. 973, p. 287.

⁴ Expounded in a radio interview broadcast by Riyadh Domestic Service on 7 August 1981. For a transcription of the interview, see Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *Daily Report*, FBIS-MEA-81-153, of 10 August 1981, vol. V, No. 153, p. C 3.

⁵ See *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* (Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1978), vol. 14, No. 38, p. 1523.