

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE TWENTY-SECOND MEETING  
held on Tuesday, 7 May 1968, at 10.45 a.m.

President: H.I.H. Princess Ashraf PAHLAVI Iran

RESPECT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN OCCUPIED TERRITORIES (agenda item 12)  
(A/CONF.32/22, A/CONF.32/27, A/CONF.32/29, A/CONF.32/L.19 and Corr.1,  
A/CONF.32/L.20 and L.21) (continued)

Mr. NEDBAILÓ (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that it was because of Israel's war of aggression against the Arab States that the Conference had included in its agenda the question of the respect and implementation of human rights in occupied territories. The primary task was therefore to restore peace in that unfortunate part of the world and to insist on the implementation of the decisions of the United Nations and its subsidiary organs, beginning with the resolution of November 1967 calling upon Israel armies to withdraw immediately from the provisionally occupied Arab territories. Considering the draft resolution (A/CONF.32/L.19) from that standpoint, his delegation found that it had certain shortcomings. While it was prepared to vote for it, with the appropriate amendments, it would also be glad to vote for a stronger text.

The very fact of having occupied the Arab territories after aggression constituted a flagrant violation of human rights - and that was not the only instance. The Arab representatives had already referred to the reign of terror to which the Israelis were subjecting the Arabs in order to force them to flee. In support of their contentions, he quoted a letter addressed on 3 March 1968 to the Ukrainian Press. The ninety signatories - writers, students, doctors and persons engaged in industry and agriculture - protested against the violations of human rights in the occupied territories: restriction of the freedom of communication and transport, collective reprisals, dynamiting and the forced expulsion of Arabs from Cisjordania. They denounced the dangers of a policy which could only result in hardening resistance and which risked sparking off a new war. They protested against oppression, which was degrading for oppressor and oppressed alike.

Journalists corroborated that the systematic policy of oppression and collective reprisals pursued by the Israeli forces was aimed at terrorizing the Arabs and forcing them to leave. Martine Monod had written in L'Humanité that the Arabs were being expropriated and their villages destroyed, that they lacked schools and electricity and that they were reduced to unemployment.

The report submitted by the Secretary-General of the United Nations to the General Assembly, which was based on the information gathered by Mr. Gussing, established clearly that the Israeli forces were committing serious and flagrant violations of human rights in the occupied territories. The sufferings of the refugees were described in the Note by the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) (A/CONF.35/22).

The Israel representative claimed that Arab resistance was non-existent owing to the appreciable improvement in living standards. In fact, the shellings and acts of repression proved that resistance was hardening. The Ukraine, mindful of its own struggle against the forces of occupation, understood and approved the legitimate and sacred fight of the Arab partisans.

Israel maintained that the Jews were ill-treated in the socialist countries. That was a diversionary manoeuvre. On the contrary, the Jews in those countries had the same patriotic feelings as the rest of the population and condemned Israel's aggression against the Arab States.

The Conference should insist that Israel should withdraw its troops from the occupied territories and respect the rights and freedoms of the Arab population as long as the occupation lasted. The sponsors of draft resolution A/CONF.32/L.20 were attempting to divert attention from the facts which had caused that item to be included in the agenda. The aim of the Conference, on the other hand, was to remove the root of the evil. For that reason, it should adopt draft resolution A/CONF.32/L.19 and the amendments to that draft (A/CONF.32/L.21).

Mr. BENAMAR (Algeria) said that he had believed that the debate would be confined to the item included in the agenda. The Arab representatives were unfortunately bound to accompany the representative of Tel Aviv in the historical excursions on which he had thought fit to embark in spite of being called to order and despite the President's warnings. The tendentious presentation of isolated facts, moreover, really had little to do with genuine history, which involved the entire reconstruction of the past.

The actual origin of the present situation resided in the concept of the return of the Jews to their so-called homeland, stretching allegedly from the Nile to the Euphrates; that idea had first appeared in Theodor Herzl's book, The Jewish State, published in 1896. The basic fact was that the State of Israel had been established amidst and at the expense of the Arab States, by fraud and with the connivance of imperialists.

He referred in that text to the view of the Palestinian question expressed by the Algerian Minister of Justice in a speech in which he had firmly laid the responsibility for aggression at the door of Israel, which was like an intruder who, without either right or title, had taken someone else's house and protested vociferously every time an attempt was made to evict him, the de facto occupant, who,

no doubt finding that he had not yet sufficiently plundered his victims and using their will to resist as a pretext, hurled himself upon them, shouting that he would not yield what he had just wrested from them by brute force.

The Minister of Justice had gone on to say that theft upon theft and violence upon violence could hardly have the singular merit of conferring rights upon their perpetrators, legitimizing the forced expropriation of millions of Palestinians and Jordanians. If so, it would mean that international law had given its sanction to practices which the internal law of States censured under a variety of headings, such as trespass, outright theft, association with criminals, and murder. It was clear that the Zionists were persecuting the Arabs as if they were attempting to make the only people which had never persecuted the Jews pay for the horrors of Treblinka and Auschwitz.

It was astounding to see the Zionists taking over the theory of Lebensraum in the footsteps of the Nazis. Peace would be impossible if each community claimed the right to return to the lands of its ancestors.

But the Israelis were aware that they were not in the right. It was otherwise difficult to explain why the representative of Tel Aviv had carefully avoided mention of the military parade held at Jerusalem in spite of the virtually universal disapproval which it had aroused, and why he had avoided all reference to the arrogant speech by Moshe Dayan.

Such reticence was pointless, since history proved that aggression never went hand-in-hand with humanity and that no benefits could result from the usurpation of land. There was no need to draw up a list of the violations committed in the occupied territories. Anybody could refer to the accounts and reports published by fair-minded observers.

Draft resolution A/CONF.32/L.19, was a considerable understatement of the true situation and testified to its sponsor's anxiety to display moderation, but care should be taken to ensure that such moderation was not exercised to the detriment of the hundreds of thousands of Arabs who were living under oppression, either as refugees or as a colonized people.

The PRESIDENT requested speakers not to digress from the subject under consideration.

Mr. WIJEGOONAWARDENA (Ceylon) said that his delegation would vote for draft resolution A/CONF.32/L.19 and the amendments which were a considerable improvement on the original. His country continued to believe that by including the item in its agenda, the Conference had recognized that there was no more topical or urgent problem than that of the sufferings of the Arabs living in territories occupied by Israel troops.

Some had wondered whether the Teheran Conference was competent to consider the item. What was being sought was to invite the General Assembly to give urgent consideration to the matter of the observance of human rights in occupied Arab territories, in other words to launch a purely humanitarian appeal entirely divorced from any political consideration. In that context there were no friends or foes: there were only suffering men, women and children; there could be no harm in extending a helping hand and alleviating their suffering.

Mr. DAOUDY (Syria) said he would reply as briefly as possible to the long speech by the representative from Tel-Aviv, but before doing so he wished to make it clear that what had led the Arab States to participate in the Conference was their desire to contribute to a solution of all human rights problems. It would never have occurred to them that any State other than Israel could suggest that the Conference was not competent to consider the question of the observance and implementation of those rights in the Arab territories occupied by Israel.

They failed to see how anyone could question the similarity between the Zionists and the Nazis when in fact they had so much in common, from the theory of a chosen people to the systematic use of violence and aggression with complete disregard for human life and suffering. The Zionists had truly distinguished themselves by uprooting a whole nation from its native land and setting up a European enclave in the midst of the Arab peoples.

He was ready to concede that the Arabs - Christian and Muslim - were not the only victims of discrimination. Jews from oriental countries were hardly any better treated. Mr. Comay must remember how Jews who had come from India, attracted by propaganda from Israel, had been compelled to return to their country because of the ill-treatment they had received at the hands of Jews from Europe. The Indian Press had echoed their disappointment.

The representative of Israel had opposed the inclusion of the item, on the pretext that the competent organs of the United Nations already had it under review. That concern for United Nations interests was something new. When the General Assembly had met urgently in June 1967 at the request of the Soviet Union to consider Israel's

aggression on the Arab countries, Mr. Abba Eban had made it clear that his country would not bow to the wishes of the Assembly even if it decided unanimously barring one vote, that Israel should retreat to the cease-fire line. The truth was that Israel cared nothing for the prestige of the United Nations. Its only purpose was the tactical one of preventing the Conference from looking into violations committed in the territories it occupied.

Mr. Comay presented Israel as a tiny country of 2.5 million inhabitants, surrounded by 50 million Arabs backed in their turn by 200 million Soviet citizens. He omitted to mention that Israel enjoyed the support of the United States, which could hardly be called a tiny country. Those who had followed the Security Council debates at the time of the aggression in June would recall that it looked as if Mr. Goldberg, ostensibly representing the United States, was in fact speaking for Israel. Many American citizens had had the impression that Israel had two representatives.

The fact that the Soviet people, whose heroism had spelt the downfall of Hitler's Germany, had sided with the Arab States was because their cause was just. They did not hide the fact they had that backing. On the contrary, they were proud of it. Israel, on the other hand, sought to conceal the fact that since it came into being it had received \$7,000 million from the Western Powers, and that the Americans, who had always given it their support, had supplied it a year ago with forty-eight Skyhawks - a decision they had announced on 5 October 1967, the very day after the wholesale destruction of Suez. He remembered lodging a protest with the Security Council the same day against deliveries of arms to the aggressors.

The representative of Israel had been at pains the previous day to show that his country had never been condemned for aggression by the United Nations. Yet the Security Council had adopted resolution after resolution condemning Israel for outright acts of aggression. Suffice it to quote resolution 101 of 24 November 1953 condemning Israel for its attack on Qibya in Jordan; resolution 106 of 29 March 1955 condemning Israel for its aggression on Gaza; resolution 111 dated 19 January 1956 condemning Israel for its aggression at Lake Tiberius on the Syrian side; resolution 171 of 9 April 1962 condemning Israel's attack on Syrian territory; the resolution of 13 November 1966, condemning the attack on Es-Samou in Jordan, and the resolution of 24 March 1968 condemning Israel's aggression against the refugee camp of Karameh in Jordan.

It was a list without precedent in the annals of the United Nations. Nor was the list complete; to it should be added Israel's three wars on Arab countries, the most recent being that which had broken out on 5 June 1967. Israel could never have defied international opinion with impunity had it not been for imperialist support. That was in the main what the Syrian delegation had to say in reply, and it helped to explain how a Jewish writer such as Maxime Rodinson could call Israel a colonial phenomenon.

Turning in conclusion to draft resolution A/CONF.32/L.17, he expressed his gratitude to the three delegations which had submitted it, though the Arab countries had felt it could be improved still further. Accordingly they had drafted the amendments to the draft, which he was presenting officially on behalf of the twelve sponsors, who hoped that they would be adopted by a large majority. They could not accept the draft resolution submitted by the Netherlands and Uruguay (A/CONF.32/L.20) since it failed to convey the genuine concern of the international community about the breaches of human rights being committed by Israel.

Mr. HAKIM (Lebanon) said that although he was in a position to reply to the long speech delivered the previous evening by the representative of Israel, his delegation had already made known its views on Israel's attitude to the Palestinian Arabs; in the interests of the Conference he would therefore confine himself to the question on the agenda.

Before doing so he would like to reply to the representative of the Netherlands, who had expressed the view that the Conference was not competent to deal with specific problems and should confine itself to general principles. He reminded him that the Conference itself had agreed to the inclusion of that question at the request of the three Arab countries concerned, by 46 votes to none, with 32 abstentions. Its intention in so doing was to show its concern for the observance of human rights in those countries and the humanitarian principles at issue.

The Conference was master of its own procedure in the matter and was not prevented by any legal limitation from tackling a given problem. Moreover, the competence of the Conference was the same as that of the Commission on Human Rights. In that connexion he called the attention of the Conference to the Secretary-General's Note (A/CONF.32/27), which reproduced the text of resolution 6 (XXIV), adopted unanimously by the Commission on Human Rights on 27 February 1968, and dealt specifically with the problem of the Middle East. It was addressed to the Israel Government by name. The document also reproduced the text of a telegram from the Commission calling upon the Israel Government to respect human rights. The inference was that like the

Commission the Conference was competent to deal with the question and adopt resolutions in the matter and that it was under no obligation to confine itself to general ideas. Draft resolution A/CONF.32/L.19 had a twofold object: it aimed at one and the same time at ensuring the observance of human rights in occupied territories and at preventing the Zionists from continuing to pursue their expansionist policy. The adoption of that resolution was accordingly a matter of urgency.

The aim of the amendments was to strengthen the original draft, and he hoped that they too would be adopted. Draft resolution A/CONF.32/L.20 dealt with the question in too general a manner, and was, moreover, too mildly worded to be effective. The action it envisaged could simply be entrusted to the Commission on Human Rights.

Mr. WAMBURA (United Republic of Tanzania), speaking on a point of order, reminded the representative of Lebanon that the Conference still had other matters to consider and that it would be well if the discussion were not allowed to drag on.

Mr. RATSIMAMANGA (Madagascar) said that he was sorry that the discussion had become so heated. Such an atmosphere would not lead to a constructive solution. The only solution was to concentrate, not on condemning any one country but on fighting against war itself, which was always harmful and inevitably led to violations of human rights. It was vital therefore that the belligerents should agree to sit down at the conference table under the auspices of the United Nations, which might perhaps have sufficient authority to bring about a fair solution. If that initial step were not taken, nothing could be done, and the Middle East, like other small countries was liable to become a testing ground for new weapons. Madagascar felt friendship for both parties and hoped that a truly just solution would materialize. Unambitious though it was, the text of draft resolution A/CONF.32/L.20, submitted by the Netherlands and Uruguay, contained an indispensable recommendation. The delegation of Madagascar, wishing to rally the greatest number of votes in favour of that draft resolution, and would therefore vote for it in preference to draft resolution A/CONF.32/L.19.

Mr. FORSELL (Sweden) said that the position of Sweden with regard to the Middle East problems was well known. It had been one of the sponsors of General Assembly resolution 2252 (ES-V) and had recently supported resolution 6 (XXIV) of the Commission on Human Rights. The difficulties which his delegation saw in draft resolution A/CONF.32/L.19 were certainly not attributable to any lack of understanding of the humanitarian aspects of the situation. The reason was rather that the Middle East problems were essentially political. It was true that human rights were suffering, but, in the final analysis, the political aspects were dominant, and the

Conference was not the right forum for discussing political matters. His delegation would therefore have to abstain in the vote on paragraphs 1 and 2 of draft resolution A/CONF.32/L.19. It could accept paragraph 3 as drafted, but could not accept the proposed amendment. If that amendment were accepted, it would also have to abstain in the vote on paragraph 3. It would be able to accept paragraph 4 if it was worded in the same way as the corresponding paragraph of resolution 6 (XIV) of the Commission. The action proposed in the amendment to paragraph 5, regarding the appointment of a Special Committee, appeared to be outside the terms of reference of the Conference. His delegation would abstain when the draft resolution as a whole was put to the vote. It would, on the other hand, be in a position to support draft resolution A/CONF.32/L.20.

In conclusion, he stated that, in giving an explanation of the Swedish vote, he had been speaking also on behalf of Denmark, Finland and Norway.

Mr. HELIOUI (Tunisia) considered that draft resolution A/CONF.32/L.19 properly dealt with the question of human rights in occupied territories, and he referred to the countless victims of the Israel-Arab conflict. There was much to be learned from the Note on the Palestine refugees submitted by the Commissioner General of UNRWA. The representative of Israel had denied the complaints against his country and had attempted to persuade the Conference of his Government's good intentions towards the populations of the occupied territories. In that representative's opinion, a peace treaty was all that was required to restore prosperity in the entire region. Yet surely, it would be much simpler to conform to the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the United Nations Charter. It was vital that the Conference should adopt draft resolution A/CONF.32/L.19 with a very large majority, thereby proving that the conscience of the international community was not insensible to the protection of the rights of those who were themselves unable to ensure their respect.

Mr. PAOLINI (France) said that when it had first been proposed that the additional item should be placed on the agenda, his delegation, both in the General Committee and in the Plenary, had voted in favour of its inclusion, while indicating clearly that, as the text was worded, the Conference should study more general rather than specific, local aspects of the problem of human rights in occupied territories.

That consideration applied equally to all other agenda items. The Conference had met to evaluate the past and to work out the broad outlines of a future programme, and should, as far as possible, eschew political differences and private disputes. Hence it should not deal with the merits of specific cases relating to any one country or area. It lacked the authority, the time and the means.

It was the universal, current aspects of the general problem of human rights in occupied territories which deserved the attention of the Conference, for it was a very important part of a much bigger question, that of human rights during periods of armed conflict, whether international or internal.

Mr. René Cassin, head of the French delegation, referring to agenda item 9, had expressed the hope that that issue should be the subject of special study at the Conference. It should be emphasized, however, that the question was not related solely to the Middle East crisis and the occupied Arab territories. On 19 May 1967, before the commencement of Israel-Arab hostilities in June 1967, the International Committee of the Red Cross had written to all Governments to draw their attention to the need for more up to date guarantees for the protection of the civilian populations and other victims of armed conflicts, and had emphasized that in view of the technical development of weapons and methods of war, and in view of the nature of conflicts, civilian populations were more and more exposed to the dangerous consequences of hostilities.

The general problem of rights during periods of armed conflict had also been the subject of an examination and a special recommendation at the Assembly for Human Rights at Montreal in March 1968. The problem of human rights in occupied territories had been one of the most important issues discussed on that occasion.

His delegation considered it a matter for regret that, after having challenged the competence of the Conference to deal with the situation in occupied Arab territories, one of the first speakers had, at great length, gone into the various aspects of the Palestine question, and had thus reopened a discussion - which others had done nothing to discourage. The Middle East problem as such was not on the agenda, and the Conference was not the right forum for settling the Israel-Arab dispute. Polemics only harmed the debate, and the International Conference on Human Rights should not become an occasion for the parties to the dispute to carry on their war by other means.

Draft resolution A/CONF.32/L.20, which recommended a study of the general principles applicable to the rights of civilians in areas of conflict and occupied territories deserved the approval of the Conference. Perhaps, however, it should go a little further in the same direction and take up the idea set out in the letter from the International Committee of the Red Cross.

His delegation would be prepared to examine with interest any text calling for a study in depth of the conditions that would lead to fuller application of the 1949 Geneva Conventions either by the adoption of international control procedures, or even, if necessary, by amending or adding to the Conventions in Force.

Draft resolution A/CONF.32/L.19 dealt with the specific case of human rights in occupied Arab territories. In his opinion, however, the Conference was not competent to give a ruling on the substance of a specific case of that sort. Draft resolution A/CONF.32/L.19 was nevertheless within its terms of reference, for it could hardly be argued that legitimate concern for human rights in occupied territories was out of order.

In its conclusions, however, the Conference should take account of the limitations of its own terms of reference and of those placed on its authority by the competence of the Security Council and General Assembly themselves with respect to the problems of the Middle East and their humanitarian aspects.

Furthermore, the proposed text made no mention of one very important matter: the mission entrusted to the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General for humanitarian matters, as a result of the Secretary-General's letter of 28 February 1968 quoted in the Secretary-General's Note (A/CONF.32/29). The Conference was not entitled to suggest measures that would conflict with the Special Representative's mission, prejudge his conclusions or hamper him in the dispassionate and objective performance of his mission. He drew the attention of the sponsors of the amendments to that aspect, in view of the unfortunate and unexpected consequences that might be caused by their amendments.

Paragraphs 1 and 2 of draft resolution A/CONF.32/L.19 appeared to raise most objections. The Conference could not be asked to give a ruling on, or condemn even implicitly, facts which were precisely those to be investigated by the Special Representative. That point would probably cause many delegations to hesitate, despite their endeavours to examine the problem conscientiously.

In any event, the position that France would adopt with regard to any particular proposal should not be interpreted as a change in its previous votes, such as its vote in support of the resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council concerning the fate of the populations of occupied territories.

The text would have a much greater chance of being accepted if, in operative paragraph 1, the words "the violation" were replaced by the words "the problem", and if paragraph 2 was so redrafted that it would not give the impression that the Conference was giving judgement without any investigation.

It would perhaps be enough in paragraph 5 to draw the attention of the Commission on Human Rights to the matter without requesting it to keep the matter under constant review.

With such changes, it would be possible for the Conference to approve the draft resolution almost unanimously. It would then look like a humanitarian appeal, and its effectiveness would be all the greater in that the resolution would not have been adopted by a fortuitous majority.

Mr. POPPER (United States of America) said that his delegation could not support draft resolution A/CONF.32/L.19. Although the present item was general in character, the draft resolution was quite specific. The Arab States had made clear from the beginning precisely what they had in mind and they had now plunged the Conference into a bitter controversy; the proposed resolution touched on a delicate matter and, if adopted, might complicate the task of Mr. Jarring and the Secretary-General's humanitarian mission.

Furthermore, the Conference had no right to take up a question which was before the Security Council and on which the General Assembly might well deliberate before its resumed session was adjourned.

Lastly, the draft resolution was based on a series of assertions which had not been impartially investigated. The Conference had heard both sides of the case but was in no position to determine the actual facts, still less to render a judgement on the situation.

For those reasons, the United States delegation would vote against operative paragraphs 1 and 2 of draft resolution A/CONF.32/L.19 and against the new operative paragraphs 3 and 5 proposed in the amendments to the draft. If those paragraphs were retained, the United States would vote against the resolution as a whole. It would abstain on all the other operative paragraphs of the resolution.

Draft resolution A/CONF.32/L.20 was a constructive contribution to the work of the Conference and had the full support of the United States.

Mr. BAHNEV (Bulgaria) deplored the cynical way in which the representative of Israel had spoken of the problem of the Palestinian refugees. It was a unique problem: as a result of the war, almost the entire population of Palestine had found themselves driven from their native land and turned into refugees as part of a systematic plan prepared in advance by Israel. The reports placed before the various organs of the United Nations left no doubt about the methods employed by the occupation forces; in cruelty and scope, those methods were no different from those used by the Nazis. In the course of the most recent stage of the implementation of Israel's plan,

in June 1967, some 400,000 more persons had been forced to flee their country. On 14 June 1967 the Security Council had urged the Government of Israel to guarantee the safety and welfare of the inhabitants of the regions affected by the fighting and to help the refugees to return, but Israel had utterly disregarded that resolution. It had never seriously considered the return of the refugees; the Prime Minister of Israel had, on the contrary, announced that Israel was ready to receive 40,000 immigrants a year. In face of the reaction from world opinion, Israel had had to alter its attitude, and 150,000 refugees had expressed a desire to return. Israel had obstructed and delayed matters, so that at present no more than 14,000 persons had received permits to return to their country. During that time, however, as the representative of Jordan had said, more and more people had fled.

The question of the return of refugees was the crux of Security Council resolution 237 (1967). It was also repeated in resolution 6 (XXIV) of the Commission on Human Rights. There was no denying that Israel had violated those resolutions.

Moreover, it was common knowledge that the Arab inhabitants of the territories behind the 1948 armistice line were also deprived of their rights. To justify that situation, Israel argued that peace had not been signed. Yet everyone knew that in that area Israel was the aggressor. He laid particular stress on that point because of the allegations that the Israel representative had made against Bulgaria in the course of his speech. As far back as 1956, the Prime Minister of Israel had announced that his country did not accept the 1949 armistice agreement with the United Arab Republic. Thus for eighteen years Israel had consistently refused to co-operate in implementing the armistice agreements with the Arab countries. At the present time, Israel even had it in mind to alter the status of the occupied territories and Israel's leaders had stated that the present cease-fire line was the country's natural boundary.

The implementation of the Security Council resolution of 22 November 1967, for which Bulgaria had voted, would be a first step towards solving the problem of the refugees in the Middle East. It was because Israel was a member of an imperialist bloc, which supported it, that it could dare to disregard that resolution.

Mr. GHOUZY (Afghanistan) said that the problem of human rights in occupied territories was a source of concern to the international community and that the Palestinian refugees and the other victims of the Israel aggression of June 1967 were placing their hopes in the Conference. The situation under consideration involved a question of law, and it was the law which would have to be invoked to right any wrongs.

From the beginning of the Conference the Israel representative had been saying that his country sought peace. If that were so, why had Israel organized a military parade to display its military power at Jerusalem, in spite of the decision to the contrary taken by the Security Council?

The Afghan delegation requested all peace-loving countries to support the rights of the Palestinians and the other victims of the Israel aggression. It supported draft resolution A/CONF.32/L.19 and the amendments to the draft and would vote in favour of them.

The PRESIDENT gave the floor to the USSR representative to exercise her right of reply.

Mr. COMAY (Israel), speaking on a point of order, pointed out that his delegation was on the list to speak in the discussion on the draft resolutions before the Conference and that according to normal procedure he should be allowed to take the floor before representatives wishing to exercise their right to reply.

The PRESIDENT said that the USSR delegation had asked to exercise its right to reply towards the end of the 21st meeting but that, in view of the late hour, it had not been able to do so. It would therefore exercise its right of reply now.

Mrs. SERGEEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the lies and slanders directed against the Soviet Union by the Israel representative were unworthy of notice.

The USSR was a multi-national State founded on the brotherhood of all its nationalities. The allegations of the Israel representative had only one purpose to cover up the crimes of Israel against the population of the occupied Arab territories. In fact, the Israel statement had nothing to do with the agenda item and should not even appear in the summary record of the meeting.

Through the fault of the Israel Government, some two million Arabs were reduced to poverty, condemned to live without any rights and denied all dignity.

It was time that Israel returned the territories, now transformed into real scenes of bloodshed, to the millions of Arabs whom it had plundered. It was time to put a stop to practices which recalled the worst nazi crimes.

Mr. EL-SAYAD (United Arab Republic), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, recalled that at the 21st meeting the representative of the Tel Aviv authorities had expressed anxiety with regard to the Jewish minority in the United Arab Republic, which had allegedly declined to a considerable extent in the previous twenty years. The representative of the Tel Aviv authorities appeared to forget that it was the authorities which he represented which had invited that minority to leave the United Arab Republic. They had, moreover, cause to regret it at the present time, since the Jews who had remained in the United Arab Republic and had not been misled by Israel's propaganda were living in much better conditions than their compatriots in Israel.

They fully enjoyed the same rights as all the other citizens. One of them, a rabbi, had until his death been a member of the Academy of the United Arab Republic. Another, one of his own colleagues at the University, had been given the Chair of Chemistry without his religion being any obstacle to his professional career. He was willing to give the name and address of that colleague to anybody who wished to get in touch with him.

Any reduction in the Jewish population of the United Arab Republic had been the result of the emigration imposed by Israel. The representative of the Tel Aviv authorities had stated proudly that the standard of living of the Arabs was higher in the territories occupied by Israel than in the Arab States themselves. Apart from the fact that that was untrue, it should not be forgotten that the spiritual aspect was just as important as the material one.

The representative of the Tel Aviv authorities had also claimed that the United Arab Republic had been the only country to refuse negotiations. The fact was that all the Arab countries were acting in concert. If Tel Aviv wished to negotiate it would have to negotiate with the Palestinians themselves, who had been driven from their homes in order to make room for immigrants and who had so far received no compensation.

Mr. Gussing's report left no illusions with regard to the Arab attitude to the Israel occupation. It was well known that the Israelis had gone to the length of changing the school textbooks in order to stamp out Arab culture completely. The report which the Secretary-General had submitted to the General Assembly and the Security Council in September 1967 showed, moreover, what was Israel's idea of the welfare of the people.

Finally, the representative of the Tel Aviv authorities had described the freedom fighters as murderers. In so doing he showed that he had no respect either for international law or for the Conference. One of the Committee had in fact just adopted a resolution on the liberation movements and the right of the freedom fighters was also mentioned in the Ganji report.

Mr. COMAY (Israel), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, asked the representative of the United Arab Republic whether his country would be willing to co-operate fully in the event of an inquiry being opened by the Secretary-General's representative on the way in which the Jews had been treated in Egypt since 1957 and their present situation. It would be useful to have a clear reply to that question.