



General Assembly

Seventy-sixth session

Official Records

Distr.: General
13 January 2022

Original: English

Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

Summary record of the 14th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 3 November 2021, at 3 p.m.

Chair: Mr. Edbrooke (Vice-Chair) (Liechtenstein)
later: Ms. González López (El Salvador)
later: Mr. Prvý (Vice-Chair) (Slovakia)
later: Ms. González López (El Salvador)

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In the absence of Ms. González López (El Salvador), Mr. Edbrooke (Liechtenstein), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

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1. **Mr. Domingos** (Mozambique) said that his country supported all peoples who were struggling to achieve decolonization and self-determination, in particular the people of Western Sahara, which, regrettably, remained the only Territory in Africa that had not yet achieved independence and self-determination, in spite of the adoption of Security Council resolution [1541 \(2004\)](#). All United Nations and African Union resolutions and decisions on Western Sahara should be implemented unconditionally with a view to achieving a positive, peaceful and permanent solution that would satisfy the aspirations of the people of Western Sahara. His delegation welcomed the agreement reached by the Kingdom of Morocco and the Frente Popular para la Liberación de Saguía el-Hamra y de Río de Oro (Frente POLISARIO) regarding the appointment of the new Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General for Western Sahara, which offered new hope to the people of Western Sahara.

2. His delegation was concerned by the deterioration of human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the increasing displacement of Palestine refugees. It appealed to Israel and Palestine to engage in constructive negotiations with a view to achieving a sustainable, lasting and just political solution to the Palestine question on the basis of the two-State solution, with both States living peacefully side by side. Israel and Palestine should implement the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly in order to bring peace and stability to the people of Palestine and the wider Middle East region. His delegation continued to support all initiatives launched by the United Nations or other international organizations with the aim of achieving a sustainable and acceptable political solution to the issue.

3. **Mr. Horsandi** (Israel) said that Israel had recently celebrated the anniversary of the Abraham Accords and had continued to strengthen its long-standing regional partnerships, which were a testament to its continued commitment to dialogue and peace. Against that backdrop, the Committee should reconsider the counterproductive practices and rhetoric that had been promoted under its aegis for far too long, and instead join the positive regional momentum.

4. As peace creation in the Middle East continued to be threatened by those seeking to destabilize the region, his delegation welcomed the presence of United Nations peacekeeping forces in the area and expressed its condolences for the tragic loss of a member of the peacekeeping forces in Mali on 2 October 2021. Israel had expanded its partnership with the United Nations in the provision of expertise and training to peacekeepers in order to improve the standard of medical care.

5. It was regrettable that Security Council resolution 1701 (2006), which provided for a geographical area free of armed personnel, assets and weapons other than those pertaining to the Government of Lebanon and the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), had yet to be fully implemented. Meanwhile, Hizbullah, an Iranian-backed terrorist organization, had increased its military presence throughout Lebanon, especially in the area of operation of UNIFIL, from where it had launched terror attacks against Israel. His delegation had repeatedly warned that the militarization of southern Lebanon by Hizbullah posed a threat to Israeli civilians. Its warnings had unfortunately been justified; rockets were now being fired from southern Lebanon into Israel. Hizbullah also continued to pose a threat to the people of Lebanon, whom it used as human shields for its arsenal of over 150,000 rockets and items of military equipment. The tragic explosion in Beirut on 4 August 2020, which had destroyed countless lives and livelihoods, was only a prelude to the devastating potential of Hizbullah in the region. His delegation joined the international community in demanding an impartial, transparent and thorough investigation into the explosion. Hizbullah systematically hindered UNIFIL by restricting freedom of movement, assaulting personnel, labelling military areas as private property and blocking inspections. That reality illustrated the need for a strong and effective UNIFIL. Israel held Lebanon accountable for all activity that occurred in Lebanese territory.

6. The tragedy occurring under Hizbullah had unquestionably been sponsored by the world's greatest exporter of terror, the regime of Iran, whose modus operandi was visible in countless examples throughout the region. Iran provided financial, military and training support to its regional proxies, and Hizbullah was complicit in promoting its destructive and radical agenda.

7. Israel remained committed to implementing the 1974 agreement on the separation of forces between Israel and Syria and to working closely with the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF). Israel attached great value to the secure and effective operational abilities of UNDOF, as the border between Israel and Syria needed to be freed of all foreign forces, non-State actors and terrorist organizations that sought to destabilize the area.

8. The existence and activities of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories, in addition to other anti-Israel bodies of the United Nations, damaged prospects for peace in the Middle East by undermining trust

between the parties involved. The purpose of the Special Committee had been hijacked to systematically promote one-sided, anti-Israel propaganda, thereby misappropriating resources and fundamentally contravening the core values of neutrality and impartiality. The Special Committee presented a distorted view of the Middle East, in particular through its failure to mention, let alone condemn, the countless indiscriminate attacks by Hamas on both Israeli and Palestinian civilians in its reports. Most recently, it had completely failed to condemn the terror witnessed in May 2021, remaining silent while Hamas used Palestinians as human shields and launched rockets from populated residential areas in Gaza into civilian Israeli cities, in what amounted to a horrific double-war crime. Instead, it had chosen to investigate so-called Israeli practices while entirely neglecting the systemic violation of Palestinian rights by Hamas and the Palestinian Authority. In entrenching the narrative on which it was fixated, it ignored the countless efforts that Israel was making towards achieving peace and advancing Palestinian economic development and livelihoods.

9. Despite such endeavours, Israel refused to be defined by the conflict in the region. In 2021, it had celebrated the first anniversary of the historic Abraham Accords signed between Israel and the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Morocco. The success of those agreements reflected an emerging new reality in the region and beyond, one that had begun with the historic peace agreements signed with Egypt in 1979 and with Jordan in 1994 and was paving the way for constructive dialogue, bilateral and multilateral relations and new global opportunities. By prioritizing a harmful one-sided narrative rather than recognizing the progress achieved, the Committee was cementing its infamous anti-Israel agenda, harming genuine constructive dialogue and creating obstacles in the path to peace. Israel therefore intended to vote against the draft resolutions in the "Palestinian package" and called on all delegations to join the growing group of countries that chose to do the same.

10. If the well-being of the Palestinian people was truly at the heart of the Committee's priorities, it would not stand idly by as the precious resources and facilities of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) were misused to promote a political agenda or as its classrooms and playgrounds were hijacked by Hamas. Furthermore, UNRWA had enabled the use of textbooks glorifying terror in its classrooms and the hiring of staff who promoted antisemitism, thereby failing to enforce the United Nations principles of impartiality,

transparency and neutrality. UNRWA was, moreover, committed to inflating the number of so-called Palestine refugees by allowing for the automatic inheritance of that status and by continuing to classify Palestinians as refugees irrespective of their citizenship or permanent residency status in another country. While Israel supported and actively promoted the provision of humanitarian assistance to those in need, it did not believe that a United Nations agency should engage in a politically motivated agenda by advocating against any Member State. By failing to holding UNRWA to United Nations standards, the Committee was forsaking the very people that it sought to support.

11. Israel attached great importance to the peaceful uses of outer space and was pleased that the work of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) would continue into 2022.

12. *Ms. González López (El Salvador) took the Chair.*

13. **Ms. McGuire** (Grenada) said that most of the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories were small islands in the Caribbean and Pacific regions, which remained highly vulnerable to natural disasters, in particular the increasingly violent hurricanes and cyclones resulting from climate change. Those vulnerabilities were compounded by the ongoing coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic which, by affecting the tourism industry, jeopardized the economic survival of many Territories and their ability to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

14. The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) continued to support various efforts to achieve political, constitutional and socioeconomic advancement in the Caribbean Territories, which were integral to the overall regional integration process. CARICOM had expressed concerns about the establishment of the ongoing commission of inquiry in the British Virgin Islands, which was backed by the Government of the United Kingdom, and had called for every effort to be made to ensure that the constitutional functions to be carried out by the Government could be undertaken without hindrance. Grenada and CARICOM looked forward to an early conclusion of the commission leading to a just outcome.

15. With regard to Western Sahara, Grenada continued to support the ongoing political process under the exclusive auspices of the Secretary-General with the aim of reaching a just, lasting, compromise-based and mutually acceptable political solution to the dispute, as recommended in Security Council resolution [2548 \(2020\)](#). Grenada commended the efforts of the Secretary-General and of his former Personal Envoy for Western Sahara, in particular the round tables held in

2018 and 2019 with Morocco, Frente POLISARIO, Algeria and Mauritania. Grenada welcomed the appointment of the new Personal Envoy for Western Sahara and encouraged him to build on the progress achieved. It also welcomed the Moroccan autonomy initiative, which the Security Council had welcomed as part of serious and credible Moroccan efforts to move the process forward towards resolution.

16. **Mr. Biang** (Gabon) said that it was commendable that, despite the ongoing pandemic, peacekeeping missions and special political missions had continued to pursue their mandates around the world, in particular in Africa. The United Nations conflict prevention mechanism must be strengthened, and a political approach to crisis resolution must be promoted. Peacekeeping operations should be set firmly within a global strategy based on prevention, research into the root causes of conflict and the maintenance of peace. His delegation welcomed the ever-closer partnership between the United Nations and regional organizations and the creation of a shared framework for strengthening the partnership between the United Nations and the African Union in the areas of peace and security. Regional offices formed an important bridge for conflict prevention mechanisms. Having contributed many troops to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), his country paid homage to the blue helmets, in particular those who had given their lives, and called for stronger security measures to protect peacekeepers.

17. Although the third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism had come to an end, many Non-Self-Governing Territories remained on the agenda of the Committee. The Committee needed to adapt its strategies and working methods to the challenges faced in the decolonization process. The implementation of the Declaration on decolonization could be strengthened by holding a dialogue on the participation of all States Parties. Further efforts should also be made to boost the economic and social development of the Non-Self-Governing Territories. For that purpose, administering Powers should focus on achieving the sustainable development goals and combating climate change and COVID-19.

18. With regard to Western Sahara, Gabon supported the political process under way under the exclusive auspices of the Secretary-General, in line with the relevant Security Council resolutions adopted since 2007, with a view to achieving a realistic, practicable, lasting and compromise-based political solution. His delegation welcomed the appointment of the new Personal Envoy for Western Sahara and hoped that he

would be able to build on the progress achieved by his predecessor during the forthcoming round tables to be held with the participation of Morocco, Algeria, Mauritania and the Polisario. The Moroccan autonomy initiative – which the Security Council had described as credible, practicable and consistent with international law – offered the best compromise-based approach to achieving a definitive resolution to the dispute. All stakeholders needed to be involved in the process to minimize the risks posed by terrorist activity and to consolidate peace and security in the Sahel region. His delegation encouraged Morocco to continue to pursue its development model, which had helped improve living conditions, autonomy and access to resources in Western Sahara. In that context, Gabon had opened a consulate in the Moroccan city of Laayoune in 2020.

19. **Mr. DeLaurentis** (United States of America) said that his Government remained committed to working with partners to alleviate the impact of the pandemic and to build back a better collective future. At the domestic level, it had prioritized ensuring that local governments and communities across all states and Territories, without distinction, had the tools and resources required to combat COVID-19. It had provided more than \$26 million in funding and resources from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act to enable the Territorial Governments of American Samoa, Guam and the United States Virgin Islands to respond to the devastating economic and social effects of the pandemic, including in the form of life-saving medical equipment and testing kits for the people of American Samoa, vaccines and protective gear for the front-line workers and people of Guam, and food security and income protection for suffering communities in the United States Virgin Islands. His Government would continue to provide an urgent lifeline to protect families and communities across all states and Territories of the United States.

20. The United States of America was proud to be the single largest financial supporter of humanitarian mine action in the world. Since 1993, it had invested more than \$4.2 billion in conventional weapons destruction assistance, including mine action, in over 100 countries. It had ensured that delivery of such crucial assistance had continued throughout the pandemic. In 2021 alone, funding had reached more than \$235 million, despite the significant logistical challenges caused by the pandemic.

21. His delegation welcomed the crucial work of COPUOS, which, over the preceding six decades, had fostered international cooperation in the peaceful exploration and ever-expanding use of outer space for the benefit of all of humanity. His delegation was

pleased to have sponsored the recently adopted “Space2030” Agenda, which provided a path to help ensure the attainment of the sustainable development goals and the implementation of the Guidelines for the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities (ST/SPACE/79).

22. The principles enshrined in the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies and other relevant international instruments should guide the full range of governmental and private sector space activities, including space debris mitigation, the long-term sustainability of outer space activities and the utilization of space resources, all of which were important areas of international cooperation. His delegation looked forward to further discussions on the Artemis Accords with a view to producing a framework to guide the cooperative exploration of the Moon, Mars and beyond in a safe, sustainable, responsible and transparent manner.

23. As a founding member of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation, his country remained a long-standing supporter of its work, which included formulating technical and scientific recommendations and reporting on the global health impacts of atomic radiation. His delegation was concerned by the substantial increase in the use of radiation and by the potential for major nuclear accidents, which had grave implications for public health. It paid close attention to the increasing risks posed by climate change and natural disasters for facilities at which radioactive materials were handled. More discussion should be held on the risks associated with climate change and their impact on nuclear facilities.

24. In the report of the Secretary-General on operational cost implications of increased membership of the Scientific Committee ([A/76/279](#)), it was noted that the Scientific Committee had expressed serious concern about its ability to successfully implement its future programme of work in a timely manner, in particular with regard to the increased number of experts involved in ongoing evaluations. Further increases in membership should support, and not undermine, the ability of the Scientific Committee to continue its important work on radiation safety, including with respect to the effectiveness and efficiency of its operations.

25. His delegation continued to oppose the annual submission of a number of draft resolutions biased against Israel. While fewer such documents had been

submitted than in previous years, much of the problematic content remained. Such a one-sided approach only undermined trust between parties and failed to create the kind of positive international environment critical to achieving peace. Both Israelis and Palestinians deserved to live safely and securely, with equal measures of freedom, prosperity and democracy. Firmly committed to that vision, the United States would continue to work closely with friends in the Middle East and beyond to advance the implementation of the Abraham Accords and other normalization efforts.

26. Greater humanitarian relief and recovery efforts were required in Gaza. Even though the United States had provided more than \$318 million to UNRWA in 2021, the Agency continued to face a considerable budget shortfall. His delegation encouraged Member States to provide additional financial and material assistance to help meet the needs of the people of Gaza, including in the form of funding to enable UNRWA to continue running schools and providing health services for Palestinian families. UNRWA needed to be reformed to improve its financial sustainability; his Government would work with the Agency to strengthen its accountability and transparency and ensure that it consistently abided by United Nations principles, including those of neutrality and impartiality.

27. His delegation was pleased to sponsor the draft resolution entitled “University for Peace” (A/C.4/76/L.11). It lauded the University and the host country, Costa Rica, for their noble mission of providing training for the next generation of practitioners in important fields such as security, the environment, sustainable development and gender studies.

28. **Ms. Cano Franco** (Panama) said that Panama remained committed to the fundamental and inalienable rights of all peoples to self-determination and independence, in accordance with the Declaration and the Charter of the United Nations. It had long supported the legitimate claim of the Argentine Republic to sovereignty over the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas. In line with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 2065 (XX), her delegation called for renewed dialogue between the parties with a view to achieving a peaceful and negotiated solution to the dispute. Similarly, it was important to implement the provisions of General Assembly resolution 31/49, in which the General Assembly had requested the Governments of Argentina and the United Kingdom to expedite the negotiations concerning the dispute over sovereignty and had called upon them to refrain from taking decisions that would imply introducing unilateral

modifications in the situation while the islands were going through the process recommended in the relevant General Assembly resolutions. Her delegation hoped that the two countries would soon be able to reach an understanding in furtherance of their shared responsibility to create a freer and more peaceful world.

29. **Ms. Haile** (Eritrea) said that United Nations peacekeeping was at a critical juncture owing to increasing demand and the expansion of mandates beyond traditional political and military roles. While peacekeeping missions could serve as valuable tools for saving lives and creating the space required to allow national, regional and international actors to address the causes of conflict, they were no substitute for political solutions. However, peacekeeping mandates handed down by the Security Council were often not accompanied by genuine and serious engagement towards that end. Many peacekeeping operations had been deployed for decades, eroding trust and using resources that could have otherwise been spent on international development cooperation. It was therefore important for peacekeeping operations to have broad political support, a clear exit strategy and clear and achievable mandates tailored to local requirements.

30. Her delegation welcomed the emphasis placed by the Secretary-General on the primacy of politics and on the reforms envisioned in the Action for Peacekeeping initiative. Peacekeeping missions could be successful only if they were consistent with the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of peacekeeping, namely consent of the parties, impartiality and non-use of force except in self-defence and defence of the mandate. Lastly, her delegation paid homage to all persons who had died while serving in United Nations peacekeeping operations.

31. **Mr. Geng Shuang** (China) said that colonialism had wreaked havoc on the world, giving rise to the darkest page in the annals of human history. During the colonial era, a few Western countries had subjected their colonies to slavery and ethnic cleansing, plundered local resources and committed countless heinous crimes. While that era was over, the legacy of colonialism continued to hinder the development of many former colonies and to take on new forms, such as power politics and bullying. China supported the continued efforts to decolonize all Non-Self-Governing Territories and ensure their right to self-determination. Administering Powers should take effective measures to promote development, protect the environment and safeguard human rights in those Territories. All countries that had benefited from the colonial system should demonstrate political will, shoulder their historic responsibilities, provide compensation for the negative

consequences of colonialism and desist from their colonial approach to international relations.

32. China supported the legitimate sovereignty claim of Argentina over the Malvinas Islands. As a firm supporter of the peaceful settlement of inter-State territorial disputes in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter, China hoped that the United Kingdom would respond positively to the request made by Argentina and engage in dialogue and negotiations without delay with a view to finding a peaceful, just and lasting solution in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions.

33. With regard to the question of Palestine, a long-term settlement should be sought on the basis of the two-State solution. In view of the grim humanitarian and security situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Israel should further open the ports in Gaza to facilitate the entry of humanitarian supplies and reconstruction materials, put an end to the expansion of settlements and the demolition of Palestinian houses, guarantee the safety of the people in the occupied territories and maintain the historical status quo of the holy sites in Jerusalem. The international community should scale up its political and financial support for UNRWA, which provided vital basic services to more than 5 million Palestine refugees. China supported the establishment of a fully sovereign and independent Palestinian State on the basis of the 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital. His Government would continue to work with all parties to promote an early, comprehensive, rational and just settlement of the Palestinian question and a timely, lasting peace between Palestine and Israel and in the wider region.

34. The core objectives of peacekeeping should be to advocate political solutions to conflicts; missions therefore needed clear, feasible and focused mandates. The basic principles of peacekeeping should be upheld, and consultation and coordination with troop-contributing countries should be expanded. More should be done to strengthen capacity-building, conduct targeted skills training and improve the ability of missions to cope with complex situations. Practical measures should be taken to improve risk assessments and ensure the safety and security of peacekeepers, which should be factored into all aspects of decision-making.

35. China was a major troop-contributing country and the second largest financial contributor to United Nations peacekeeping. In 2021, China had donated 300,000 doses of COVID-19 vaccines to peacekeepers. As the chair of the Group of Friends on the Safety and Security of United Nations Peacekeepers, China would

work with the other 53 members with a view to achieving substantial progress in that area.

36. Given the far-reaching impact of atomic radiation on the environment, human health and biodiversity, China supported the work of the Scientific Committee, in particular in helping countries fulfil their obligations in the areas of non-proliferation and nuclear safety and security. The disposal of water contaminated during the Fukushima Daiichi accident – one of the most serious nuclear accidents that the world had ever seen – had a bearing on public health, the marine environment and sustainable development. In April 2021, however, before exhausting all available means of safe disposal, fully disclosing all relevant information and adequately consulting with stakeholders, including neighbouring countries, the Japanese Government had unilaterally decided to discharge that contaminated water into the sea, arousing widespread opposition from the Pacific Rim countries and the Japanese public. The international community had raised many concerns about the scientific rationale behind that decision, the credibility of the data underpinning it and the reliability of the purification equipment used. There was general apprehension that the discharge would cause incalculable damage to human health, fisheries, aquaculture, the global environment and biodiversity. China hoped that the Scientific Committee would conduct an objective, impartial, science-based and comprehensive assessment of the disposal and provide sound recommendations. It expected the International Atomic Energy Agency to step up consultations with all parties, monitor and review the entire disposal process and ensure absolute safety.

37. Multilingualism was a core United Nations value and an important driver of mutual understanding and solidarity. The wisdom of the Chinese civilization was crystallized in the Chinese language, which was the most widely used mother tongue in the world and the shared wealth of all humankind. His delegation therefore hoped that the United Nations would take steps to uphold that principle and effectively eliminate the imbalance in the use of the official languages, including by allocating additional resources to the Chinese-language communication platforms and expanding its Chinese-language output.

38. **Mr. Darroux** (Dominica) said that his country remained committed to the work of the Committee, having hosted the regional seminar of the Special Committee on decolonization in August 2021. Dominica was closely following the progress of the British Virgin Islands commission of inquiry and shared the concerns of CARICOM regarding the manner in which it had been established. Dominica welcomed the full

cooperation of the Government of the British Virgin Islands with the commission and hoped that it would conclude early and produce a just outcome.

39. His delegation fully supported the political process with regard to Western Sahara and the efforts of the Secretary-General and his Personal Envoy to achieve a realistic, practicable, enduring political solution based on compromise, as recommended in numerous Security Council resolutions adopted since 2007. The round tables held in 2018 and 2019 with the participation of Morocco, Algeria, Mauritania and “polisario” had generated momentum, and his delegation welcomed the continued commitment of all participants in a spirit of realism and compromise. The recent appointment of the new Personal Envoy for Western Sahara was another positive step forward. His delegation hoped that the new Personal Envoy would be able to relaunch the political process in the same format and with the same participants, with a view to achieving more in-depth discussion of elements of convergence, in line with Security Council resolutions [2494 \(2019\)](#) and [2548 \(2020\)](#).

40. The Moroccan autonomy initiative provided a credible, serious and realistic solution for ending the regional dispute and bringing prosperity to the entire Maghreb region. His delegation welcomed the general elections held in Morocco in September 2021, in which a high proportion of the population of Western Sahara had participated. Some elected representatives from Western Sahara had addressed the Committee at the current session and had taken part in the regional seminar and other events, at which they had shared their first-hand experience.

41. His delegation called for the ceasefire in Western Sahara to be respected and for the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to conduct a registration and census of the populations in the Tindouf camps, as required under its own mandate, international humanitarian law and various General Assembly and Security Council resolutions, most recently Security Council resolution [2548 \(2020\)](#).

42. **Mr. Abdallah** (Comoros) said that, if the international community wished to put a definitive end to colonialism, it needed to support the self-determination of colonized peoples and ensure respect for their sovereign and legitimate rights. In Palestine, however, the situation had continued to worsen, most notably as a result of the repeated incursions by occupying forces into the Aqsa Mosque, an important Islamic holy site. His delegation supported the legitimate claim of the Palestinian people to independence and territorial integrity on the basis of the

recognized borders of 4 June 1967 and the two-State principle, with East Jerusalem as the capital of Palestine.

43. His delegation welcomed the appointment of the new Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General for Western Sahara and hoped that he would continue to pursue the round table negotiations among Algeria, Morocco, Mauritania and the Polisario, as part of the political process aimed at achieving a realistic, practicable, lasting and compromise-based solution to the regional dispute, in line with the Security Council resolutions adopted since 2007.

44. The Moroccan autonomy initiative provided an acceptable and legitimate solution, based on compromise, which took into account the regional context, was aligned with international norms on the devolution of power, and was consistent with international law, the Charter of the United Nations and the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council. The Sahara development model launched in 2015 had boosted the autonomy and human development of the Moroccan Sahara, not to mention facilitating the vaccine campaign and the fight against COVID-19. The establishment of consular missions was a testament to that policy.

45. The democratic life of the region had been confirmed in the recent general, legislative and communal elections, in which more than 66 per cent of the population had participated in a free, transparent, democratic and incident-free atmosphere, as confirmed by national and international observers. The involvement of Sahrawi representatives in the meetings and regional seminars of the Special Committee and the round tables in Geneva reflected the inclusive character of the democratic process.

46. The enhanced the role of the regional commissions of the National Council of Human Rights in Laayoune and Dakhla, and the resumption of bilateral cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), were significant steps towards peace and security. His delegation commended the Moroccan authorities for respecting the ceasefire in the Sahara and for the peaceful action taken on 13 November 2020 to put an end to the obstruction of the Guergerat crossing by armed elements of the Polisario and allow a definitive return to free movement.

47. His delegation remained concerned at the situation of the residents of the Tindouf camps, who should be registered in line with international humanitarian law, the mandate of UNHCR, the Secretary General's recommendations and all the relevant Security Council

resolutions adopted since 2011, including resolution [2548 \(2020\)](#).

48. **Ms. Manav** (Turkey) said that Israel continued to relentlessly pursue policies such as the expansion of its illegal settlements, forced displacement, the destruction of Palestinian homes, provocations at the Haram al-Sharif, the disproportionate use of force against Palestinian civilians and attempts to change the status of Jerusalem. The escalation of such practices in May 2021 had further aggravated the already disastrous humanitarian and economic situation in Palestine, where humanitarian conditions, in particular in Gaza, had become unbearable. Unrestricted access must be allowed to those areas to alleviate the suffering of the local population. Until Israel ceased to pursue such policies, however, new crises would continue to flare up in the region. Provisional and arbitrary measures were no replacement for a just, long-standing and comprehensive resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The only viable solution was to establish an independent, sovereign and contiguous State of Palestine, on the basis of the 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital.

49. To that end, a return to peace talks and the resumption of all efforts to revitalize the peace process were urgently required. The international community should also support the intra-Palestinian unity process. Turkey supported the use of judicial processes to hold accountable those responsible for crimes in the occupied territories. The Human Rights Council and the International Criminal Court had an important role to play that process. Any measures that undermined the status of Jerusalem should be avoided, and Member States should respect the resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly in that regard. Turkey would continue to support the Palestinian people in the realization of its legitimate aspirations and the protection of its rights and freedoms.

50. Having provided exemplary service to alleviate the effects of occupation for more than 70 years, UNRWA deserved greater international support. The services that it provided were essential for the well-being of Palestine refugees across many key areas. Its educational programme was particularly valuable, as it helped young Palestine refugees develop their full potential. The accusations made regarding that programme, which provided an antidote to hate and intolerance in the region, were unfounded and politically motivated. As the Chair of the Working Group on the Financing of UNRWA, Turkey prioritized securing predictable funding and expanding the donor base. Without an increase in voluntary contributions, however, UNRWA would be unable to manage its

financial deficit and continue to provide essential services. Her delegation therefore invited all Member States to act on the recommendations of the Working Group and the requests put forward by the Commissioner-General of UNRWA.

51. While the adaptation of peacekeeping operations to new challenges was welcome, the basic principles of peacekeeping must be maintained and integrated into mission mandates. Her delegation was pleased that the impact of COVID-19 on the implementation and funding of peacekeeping mandates and had been successfully managed and that the United Nations had been fully transparent in its communications with Member States. Her delegation supported the women and peace and security agenda, and hoped to see greater representation of women civilians within peacekeeping operations. It also supported the Action for Peacekeeping initiative, which had helped improve collective mobilization and political engagement.

52. **Mr. Sarufa** (Papua New Guinea) said that the rich and diverse contributions of petitioners during the current session of the Committee underscored the urgent need to find mutually acceptable and lasting solution to the question of Western Sahara. Inclusive dialogue with stakeholders at all levels was an important tool for developing mutual understanding and building bridges towards political settlements, which should be based on practical realities and held in a spirit of good faith and negotiated compromise. Through its autonomy initiative and its efforts to find ways forward by leveraging Security Council resolutions [2414 \(2018\)](#), [2440 \(2018\)](#), [2494 \(2019\)](#) and [2548 \(2020\)](#), Morocco had provided a positive example. His delegation fully supported the political process conducted under the aegis of the Secretary-General to bring about a mutually acceptable, negotiated and durable political solution to the dispute. It welcomed the appointment of the new Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General for Western Sahara; appreciated the two round tables held with the participation of Algeria, Morocco, Mauritania and “polisario”; was pleased that the parties had agreed to reconvene for a third round table; and encouraged them to sustain that momentum.

53. Papua New Guinea commended Morocco for continuing to promote sustainable development, political participation and human rights and to combat COVID-19 in Western Sahara. The Laayoune Declaration, adopted on 26 February 2020 at the third Morocco-Pacific Island States Forum, reaffirmed the principles of sovereign equality, political independence and the territorial integrity of States and, in that spirit, affirmed that the Western Sahara region was an integral part of Morocco.

54. UNHCR should be permitted to register the population of the Tindouf camps and provide support as necessary and in accordance with international humanitarian law, as noted in all relevant Security Council resolutions, in particular resolution [2468 \(2019\)](#).

55. **Mr. Souliyong** (Lao People's Democratic Republic) said that international cooperation and assistance had a critical role to play in eliminating the threats posed by explosive remnants of war. The international community and United Nations system had carried out commendable and significant work to that end. In his country, millions of munitions dropped during the Indochina war continued to kill and maim innocent people, as well as hindering social and economic development. His Government continued to work closely with the international community to overcome those challenges. In partnership with the United Nations, it had established a national agenda for minimizing the impact of unexploded ordnances, which would in turn help achieve other cross-cutting sustainable development goals. His Government was grateful to all the development partners, including numerous private entities and Member States, that had made that work possible.

56. **Mr. Alizada** (Azerbaijan) said that the wide-scale presence of land mines in Azerbaijan and its liberated territories was alarming and required immediate, decisive mine action on the part of the international community, in accordance with established humanitarian principles, such as consent of the affected country and respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States.

57. During nearly 30 years of conflict, Armenia had systematically placed mines throughout large portions of the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, including cemeteries and other civilian areas. Following the war in 2020, more than 300 cities, towns and villages of Azerbaijan had been liberated from occupation. On 10 November 2020, the President of Azerbaijan, the Prime Minister of Armenia and the President of the Russian Federation had signed an agreement ordering a complete ceasefire and termination of all hostilities, the withdrawal of the remaining Armenian troops from the territory of Azerbaijan, the return of internally displaced persons and refugees and the unblocking of all economic and transport connections in the region. Nonetheless, Armenia had failed to provide comprehensive and accurate maps of the hundreds of thousands of landmines that it had planted in the formerly occupied territories of Azerbaijan, thereby deliberately continuing to target human lives, delay the return of internally displaced persons and impede post-conflict

rehabilitation, reconstruction and humanitarian efforts. At least 160 Azerbaijanis had been killed or injured by those landmines since the cessation of hostilities. The Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action estimated that 75 per cent of the formerly occupied territories were at risk from landmines. Between November 2020 and October 2021, it had detected close to 27,000 mines and unexploded munitions, but many more remained to be cleared.

58. The international community must not ignore to the violation by Armenia of its international obligations, including its policy of deliberately planting mines, preventing the return of internally displaced persons to their homeland and refusing to provide accurate information on the locations of mines. The small proportion of landmine maps that Armenia had provided thus far appeared to identify the coordinates of a total of 189,000 anti-tank and anti-personnel mines in the once-occupied Aghdam, Fuzuli and Zangilan districts, but were no more than 25 per cent accurate.

59. The end of the occupation of the territories of Azerbaijan had revealed the full extent of the illegal activities that Armenia had been carrying out for decades, including extensive mining, the deliberate destruction and misappropriation of the historical, cultural and religious heritage of Azerbaijan, the plundering of natural resources and the destruction of infrastructure. The Government of Azerbaijan was taking steps to restore and reconstruct that infrastructure, ensure the safe and dignified return of the nearly one million displaced Azerbaijanis, reintegrate the formerly occupied lands into the national territory and ensure lasting peace, security and prosperity in the region. It stood ready to normalize relations with Armenia on the basis of strict observance of the principles of international law, in particular sovereignty, territorial integrity and the inviolability of international borders.

60. **Ms. Rodrigues-Birkett** (Guyana) said that, as a former colony, Guyana understood the yearning for freedom and self-determination expressed by the petitioners from the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories. Guyana therefore called on the United Nations to ensure that all those Territories were able to fully exercise their fundamental rights and freedoms without delay and urged the Administering Powers to cooperate fully with the United Nations in finalizing a constructive programme of work for the implementation of all relevant resolutions on decolonization. Consistent dialogue involving all relevant stakeholders was needed, and greater collective efforts should be made to implement the Declaration and achieve the ideal of universal peace.

61. Her delegation noted the critical assistance provided by UNRWA to millions of Palestine refugees, reiterated its solidarity with the Palestinian people in its quest for a dignified existence in its homeland, and called for constructive dialogue between the Israeli and Palestinian authorities to advance the peace process and implement a two-State solution.

62. Her delegation was concerned at the deteriorating situation in Western Sahara. It welcomed the appointment of the new Personal Envoy and urged all parties to respect and uphold the provisions of the relevant Security Council resolutions and work towards a just and durable solution to the long-standing dispute.

63. The University of Peace had proved able to respond to an ever-changing global environment, for instance by tailoring its courses to the sustainable development goals and by adopting an innovative hybrid education model in response to the pandemic. In particular, her delegation commended the successful joint education initiatives which the University had carried out around the world. She therefore urged all delegations to join consensus on the relevant draft resolution ([A/C.4/76/L.11](#)).

64. The special political missions had continued to fulfil their mandates during the pandemic, and peacekeepers had shown a high level of commitment. The women, peace and security agenda, the promotion of regional approaches to peace and security, and peacebuilding and sustaining peace were all key elements for advancing international peace and security.

65. **Ms. Andriamiarisoa** (Madagascar) said that, as the start of the fourth International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism approached, the decolonization process remained incomplete in the remaining 17 Non-Self-Governing Territories and for a number of countries, such as Madagascar, which continued to seek to restore its territorial integrity through dialogue and mutual respect, in accordance with the Charter and with General Assembly resolutions [34/91](#) and [35/123](#). Her delegation supported the decolonization process carried out under the auspices of the United Nations in a context of respect for the principles of international law and the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council.

66. Her delegation supported a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict whereby two States would exist side by side, along the 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as the capital of Palestine. On the question of the Sahara, it noted the efforts made by the Secretary-General and his nomination of a new Personal Envoy. Madagascar supported a fair and practicable solution in line with the

relevant Security Council resolutions. It commended the efforts of Morocco to find a positive solution to the dispute and combat COVID-19 in the Sahara.

67. As a troop-contributing country, Madagascar commended efforts to protect uniformed peacekeeping personnel and ensure that operations were conducted safely and securely, in particular through vaccination. Given the need for strengthened capacities, improved pre-deployment training and enhanced equipment, her delegation reiterated its support for the Action for Peace initiative and took note of the Action for Peace Plus action plan, which showed a renewed emphasis on producing concrete results in support of the initiative. The Secretariat and the Member States had a shared responsibility to work together to identify ways of improving the effectiveness and coherence of operations, including by implementing the priorities set out in the initiative.

68. The special political missions helped to prevent conflict and restore and build peace; but they needed clear mandates and adequate resources. Madagascar commended the role played by women in the maintenance and consolidation of peace. It supported their participation in political life and throughout peace processes, in line with Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#).

69. Her delegation noted the efforts of the Department of Global Communications to counter disinformation and ensure the effective dissemination of information. It encouraged the Department to take further steps to help overcome the digital divide. Because multilingualism helped achieve the objectives of the Organization, it was important for the Department to ensure the equal use of the six official languages during meetings, in documents and on the Organization's website and social media accounts.

70. **Mr. Hilale** (Morocco) said that, on 29 October 2021, the Security Council had adopted resolution [2602 \(2021\)](#), in which it had reaffirmed, as it had done in every such resolution since 2004, that the regional dispute could be resolved only through a realistic, practicable, enduring political solution based on compromise. The Security Council asked the new Personal Envoy for the Moroccan Sahara to facilitate the round table political process with the participation of Morocco, Algeria, Mauritania and the "polisario". It reaffirmed the pre-eminence, seriousness and credibility of the Moroccan autonomy initiative, which provided the only solution to the regional dispute that respected the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Morocco. In doing so, it assumed its responsibility to maintain

international peace and security, while at the same time confirming the path already taken in the peace process.

71. Conversely, Algeria and a number of delegations had adopted an ideological, obsolete approach that was entirely detached from the historical, political, legal and humanitarian reality of the dispute, instead proffering topics and plans that had long been dead and buried. While Algeria clung to the past, the resolutions adopted by the Security Council looked to the future, seeking a political solution to the regional dispute. It was precisely in order to avoid such political disjunction that, under Article 12 of the Charter of the United Nations, the General Assembly was prohibited from making recommendations with regard to situations or disputes assigned to the Security Council. For those reasons, the continued consideration of the question of the Moroccan Sahara by the Committee was an anachronistic, as the decolonization of that area of Morocco had been completed definitively in 1975, following the signature of the Madrid Accord on 14 November 1975 with the former colonial power, Spain, in line with Article 33 of the Charter. The Accord had been duly deposited with the Secretary-General on 18 November 1975 and subsequently approved by the General Assembly in resolution 3458 B (XXX). It met all the requirements of the General Assembly, which had encouraged the adoption of a political solution negotiated between the colonial power, Spain, and the party with the claim, Morocco. It therefore had legal validity, historic force and political legitimacy as the final act of decolonization of the Moroccan Sahara.

72. Within the Committee, the delegation of Algeria had rehashed the same old selective reading of the Declaration in a vain attempt to mislead the Committee members. As declaratory or soft law, that resolution did not solely enact the principle of self-determination; in paragraph 6, it contained an imperative to respect and preserve the national unity and territorial integrity of States, principles that had, over the centuries, been enshrined in numerous treaties and multilateral agreements, including the Charter.

73. Moreover, the implementation of any domestic or international legal principle was contingent on the adoption of implementing provisions. In the case of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), the means of implementation had, within 24 hours of its adoption, been codified in General Assembly resolution 1541 (XV). Ten days later, those implementing provisions had been finalized and brought into effect through General Assembly resolution 2625 (XXV), which also emphasized respect for territorial integrity and set out the obligation of States to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity of other States

and from organizing or encouraging the organization of irregular forces or armed bands, including mercenaries, for incursion into the territory of another State. Member States had wisely introduced those provisions to protect States against abuse or piecemeal interpretations of resolution 1514 (XV). Little did they know that Algeria would be so dogged in its attempts to prevent Morocco from achieving territorial integrity.

74. Notwithstanding its denials, Algeria was the reason why that regional dispute had persisted at the political, diplomatic, military, legal and humanitarian levels. The day after the Madrid Accord had been signed, in a letter from the representative of Algeria to the Secretary-General (A/10373-S/11881), Algeria had officially referred to itself as one of the “parties concerned and interested” in the matter of the Moroccan Sahara, alongside Morocco and Mauritania. That claim was a landmark, as it confirmed Algeria – ahead even of Morocco – as a party concerned and made no reference whatsoever to the “polisario”, even though the latter had recently been created by Algeria. In addition, Algeria had directly participated in the first and second battles of Amghala and, according to Algerian newspapers, had spent more than \$375 billion over the previous 46 years in its war of attrition against Morocco, including in arming the “polisario”.

75. The diplomatic corps of Algeria served a single agenda, that of the Moroccan Sahara. In 2001, Algeria had refused to sign the draft Framework Agreement drawn up by the then Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General. In 2002, Algeria had proposed partitioning the Moroccan Sahara, and between 2009 and 2012 it had taken part in the Manhasset negotiations. Two different Ministers of Foreign Affairs had participated in the round tables held in Geneva in 2018 and 2019. Indeed, the Security Council considered Algeria to be a party to the dispute; in its most recent resolutions, the latest being resolution 2602 (2021), it had encouraged Algeria to participate in the round tables just as frequently as it had Morocco.

76. Despite legitimately claiming concern for its own sovereignty, Algeria had ceded part of its territory – and, consequently, its sovereignty – to an armed separatist group, the “polisario”, in the camps at Tindouf. For close to five decades, the populations confined to the camps had experienced horrific violations of their most basic human rights. Most alarmingly, children were being forcibly enrolled by the armed militias of the “polisario”, in one of the most severe human rights violations ever perpetrated in Algerian territory, in contravention of its international obligations as a host country. Morocco therefore called on the international community to demand that Algeria, as the host country,

take action to prevent the children of Tindouf from being sent to the military training camps of the “polisario”, and to allow them to attend the school funded by the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and international non-governmental organizations in the camps. Algeria and its “polisario” must be prevented from turning today’s children into tomorrow’s potential terrorists, as they had already done with Adnan Al-Sahraoui, the founder and former leader of Da’esh in the Sahel.

77. Lastly, his delegation reiterated its unwavering support for the full sovereignty of the United Arab Emirates over the occupied islands of Greater Tunb, Lesser Tunb and Abu Musa, and for the legitimate right of that country to restore its territorial integrity.

78. **Ms. Metcalf** (Observer for the International Committee of the Red Cross) said that modern conflicts involved dense networks of actors and were often fought in coalitions with partners, allies and proxies, with States and non-State armed groups providing each other with various types of support, including through private military security companies. Partners supported each other in a range of ways, including through the provision of advice, training, equipment and arms, force generation, partnered detention operations, and logistical and ideological support. For United Nations peacekeeping operations, such support activities made an already complex task even more challenging: each partnership or support relationship had the potential to reduce or worsen human suffering.

79. As a neutral and impartial humanitarian organization with operations in more than 100 countries and expertise in international humanitarian law, the International Committee of the Red Cross was uniquely positioned to evaluate how the evolution of conflict affected the suffering of civilians. It had observed that, where armed actors operated alongside each other with unclear coordination, the lines of accountability were blurred and responsibilities diluted, thereby heightening risks. Nonetheless, partnerships also offered opportunities to leverage influence to increase respect for international humanitarian law and improve protection outcomes. As peacekeeping missions involved numerous types of support relationships between Member States, they were in a privileged position to encourage the parties to the conflict whom they supported directly, such as the security forces of the host State, to respect international humanitarian law, by, for example, adopting measures to reduce the risk of ill-treatment during detention.

80. The International Committee of the Red Cross therefore recommended that all Member States that

participated in any kind of support relationship, including peacekeeping missions, exercise their influence by implementing practical measures and introducing mechanisms to oversee entities supported by peacekeeping missions. The human rights due diligence policy on United Nations support to non-United Nations security forces offered a sound framework for that purpose.

81. It was crucial that peacekeeping missions acknowledge their responsibility to ensure that all measures were taken to protect civilians and guarantee the humane treatment of wounded individuals and detainees, especially during the deployment of national forces and when conducting joint security operations. The document “Allies, Partners and Proxies: Managing Support Relationships in Armed Conflict to Reduce the Human Costs of War”, published by the International Committee of the Red Cross in April 2021, provided detailed guidance on practical measures, including training on international humanitarian law, the development of military doctrines, and monitoring.

82. A consideration of the risk to civilians should be paramount when developing support relationships within and around peacekeeping operations. With that end in mind, roles and responsibilities should be clarified in order to improve accountability and compliance with international humanitarian law. Steps should be taken to ensure that effective structures were in place in the host country at the point where the United Nations began handing over security and protection tasks in preparation for the end of a given mission.

83. **Mr. Abdelaziz** (Observer for the League of Arab States) said, over the previous seven decades, the Committee had participated in establishing the international terms of reference underpinning the efforts to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict and the question of Palestine, which included the relevant United Nations resolutions, the Madrid terms of reference, the Oslo Accords and the Arab Peace Initiative, with the ultimate aim of establishing a Palestinian State on the borders of 4 June 1967 with East Jerusalem as its capital, on the basis of the two-State solution.

84. Israel continued to pursue its illegal settlement policy with the aim of unilaterally imposing new facts on the ground, in contravention of Security Council resolutions, including resolution [2334 \(2016\)](#). Other Israeli practices in violation of international law, international humanitarian law and international human rights law included demolition of homes, forced displacement and unlawful detention. The League once again condemned the violations perpetrated by Israel in the occupied Arab territories, including the occupied

Syrian Golan, and called for Israel to be held criminally accountable. It supported the proposal made by the President of the State of Palestine for the Secretary-General of the United Nations to hold an international conference to re-launch the peace process, and to immediately resume the high-level meetings of the international Quartet with a view to reviving direct negotiations between Palestine and Israel and, ultimately, establishing a Palestinian State along the 4 June 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital. Urgent measures needed to be taken to ensure that the displaced Palestinian people under occupation were granted the necessary international protection. The League called on the international community to develop a new, innovative mechanism for that purpose.

85. The international community had a duty to support all Palestine refugees living in the UNRWA areas of operation, whose right of return was enshrined in General Assembly resolution 194 (III), and to overcome the Agency's acute financial crisis, which had been exacerbated by the pandemic. UNRWA continued to provide essential services, not to mention helping to preserve regional stability in the refugee camps and in the host States. It was essential that donors honour their financial obligations in a spirit of transparency and accountability, and disregard the false allegations made by the Agency's detractors in an attempt to undermine its work, tarnish its reputation, weaken the Palestinian cause and deny Palestine refugees their right of return.

86. The Department of Global Communications had played a leading role in publicizing Arab causes; it had provided good coverage of issues related to Syria, Yemen, Iraq, the Sudan and Somalia. The Department's media strategy must draw attention to the suffering of the Palestinian people living under Israeli occupation, including through the dissemination of periodic reports from UNRWA and other relevant United Nations entities handling questions related to Palestinian rights. It should also contribute to repudiating extremist religious and social narratives by promoting multilingualism, non-discrimination and dialogue among civilizations, religions and cultures. For its part, the League of Arab States had adopted a media strategy to address fake news and support key causes of the Arab world, in particular that of Palestine.

87. Given the vast potential of radio to reach people in remote, less developed and technologically underdeveloped areas of the Arab world, the Arabic-language section of United Nations Radio should receive due attention. United Nations media operations should carve out a role for national and regional Arabic-language media platforms, especially radio and

television, and should increase investment in social media.

88. Lastly, the League of Arab States endorsed the calls made by the Secretaries-General of the League of Arab States and of the United Nations for a global ceasefire with a view to promoting international solidarity in combating the health, economic and social impacts of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

89. *Mr. Prvý (Slovakia), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.*

Statements made in exercise of the right of reply

90. **Mr. Abdelhamid** (Observer for the State of Palestine), said that, as demonstrated by the debate in the Committee, the overwhelming majority of States believed in the indispensable role played by UNRWA in the provision of assistance critical to the well-being, development and protection of Palestine refugees and in ensuring regional stability. The constant attempts of Israel to libel and undermine UNRWA were shameful and should be completely rejected. Member States should focus on the facts, namely the proven efficacy of the Agency and the imperative nature of its mandate, and remain steadfast in their principled political and financial support for the Agency. Such support was a testament to their ongoing commitment to ensuring the dignity of Palestine refugees pending a just solution to their plight in accordance with General Assembly resolution 194 (III).

91. His delegation rejected the aspersions cast by the Israeli representative against the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories, which was dutifully upholding its mandate in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and international law. Claims that its reports were one-sided, biased and anti-Israeli were offensive and were intended merely as distractions. The reports reflected the facts of the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and corroborated the reports compiled by numerous human rights organizations, including Israeli human rights groups. To claim that all those parties were lying or conspiring to unfairly single out Israel beggared belief.

92. Throughout the 54 years of its belligerent colonial occupation, Israel had repeatedly proven the extent of its disrespect for international law. Its representatives continued to attempt to recruit the international community in order to help it violate the Palestinians' human rights, including the inalienable right to self-determination. Every day, Israel demonstrated its complete disregard for international law by intensifying

its crimes while demanding more of the impunity to which it had become addicted, believing itself to be above the law. Such violations were constant; Israel viewed the absence of accountability as a green light.

93. For generations, the Palestinian people had ensured unspeakable suffering, devastation and violent dehumanization. Close to 700,000 illegal Israeli settlers lived in some 300 illegal settlements and outposts scattered throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. Those colonial settlements were designed to strategically fragment Palestinian territorial contiguity and enable Israel to maintain control over the territory and its people. Such an apartheid reality had no place in the modern world.

94. Whether through its systematic attacks on UNRWA and international law, or its attempts to distract the international community from its ongoing crimes, the narrative provided by the Israeli delegation reflected a perverse distortion of reality. Given the abundance of United Nations resolutions on the topic, in addition to the landmark ruling of the International Court of Justice and the principled international consensus reached on the question of Palestine, Israel, the occupying Power, could no longer deny the reality of its violations against the Palestinian people. The Israeli delegation must accept that, like all past occupying forces, the Israeli occupation regime was unsustainable and would not be able, or permitted, to occupy and subjugate the Palestinian people indefinitely.

95. **Mr. Fairlamb** (United Kingdom), replying to the comments made by the representatives of Panama and China, said that the United Kingdom had no doubt about its sovereignty over the Falkland Islands and South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas of both territories, nor about the right of the Falkland Islanders to self-determination as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and in article 1 of the two International Covenants on human rights, by virtue of which they freely determined their political status and freely pursued their economic, social and cultural development.

96. None of the resolutions to which reference had been made modified or diluted the obligation of nations to respect the legally binding principle of self-determination. Consequently, no dialogue on sovereignty was possible unless the Falkland Islanders so wished.

97. The 2013 referendum, in which 99.8 per cent of those who had voted had wanted to maintain their current status as an Overseas Territory of the United Kingdom, had sent a clear message that the people of

the Islands did not want a dialogue on sovereignty. Those wishes should be respected.

98. **Mr. Assadi** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that it was ironic that the Israeli regime, which, as had been documented by the United Nations, was famous for unlawful acts, apartheid policies and war crimes, thought it its place to make false and sinister accusations against others. It had made a habit of deception and claiming victimhood in order to cover up its expansionist policies, its destabilizing practices in the region, its criminal conduct and its brutality against Palestinians in particular. During its ruthless 11-day war on Gaza in May 2021, the Israeli regime had killed 256 Palestinians, including 66 children and 40 women. The Israeli regime was not a State but a terrorist garrison deployed not only against Palestinians, but against all independent and freedom-loving countries. The international community must take action against its illegal actions, which flagrantly violated human rights and United Nations resolutions.

99. The Islamic Republic of Iran had sovereignty over the Iranian islands of Abu Musa, Greater Tunb and Lesser Tunb in the Persian Gulf. All decisions and measures taken by the Iranian authorities with regard to those islands were based on the principle of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The unfounded claims made by Morocco constituted a flagrant interference in the domestic affairs of Iran, in violation of the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other States as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. His delegation categorically rejected all such claims.

100. His Government had always pursued a policy of friendship and good neighbourliness towards all surrounding neighbouring countries. It remained ready to engage in bilateral talks with the United Arab Emirates with a view to continuing to strengthen bilateral relations and removing any existing misunderstandings. However, the territorial integrity of the Islamic Republic of Iran and its sovereignty over the three islands were non-negotiable.

101. **Mr. Shibuya** (Japan), replying to the comments made by the representative of China, said that his Government had continued to share relevant information with the international community regarding the handling of treated water at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power station, including through briefings and at meetings of relevant international organizations. The International Atomic Energy Agency had acknowledged that the discharge of the treated water was technically feasible and in line with international practice. His Government would continue to explain its efforts to the

international community with full transparency and to cooperate with the Agency in implementing the relevant reviews. It stood ready to discuss all scientific data with relevant experts through the appropriate forums.

102. **Mr. Knyazyan** (Armenia) said that his delegation rejected all the manipulations and distortions put forward by the representative of Azerbaijan, whose rhetoric had nothing to do with the work of the Committee. For almost three decades, the people of Nagorno-Karabakh and the border communities of Armenia had been severely affected by large-scale mine contamination resulting from military aggression by Azerbaijan in the early 1990s. Mine accidents had led to the death and injury of many civilians, including children, and had significantly impeded socioeconomic development. Meanwhile, Azerbaijan had consistently obstructed demining activities as part of its wider policy of politicizing and impeding humanitarian access to Nagorno-Karabakh. The large-scale military aggression unleashed by Azerbaijan against Nagorno-Karabakh in 2020 represented yet another gross violation of international humanitarian law by Azerbaijan and had led to further contamination of civilian settlements with unexploded ordinances.

103. The trilateral statement referred to by the representative of Azerbaijan contained no mine action obligations. By creating the impression that Armenia had failed to comply with the statement, Azerbaijan sought to conceal its own violation of numerous provisions of the statement. In particular, Azerbaijan had failed to return all prisoners of war and civilian hostages without preconditions, in stark violation of the trilateral statement and international humanitarian law.

104. Armenia stood ready to continue cooperating with the United Nations to deliver the humanitarian relief response to Nagorno-Karabakh with a view to mitigating the consequences of landmines, explosive remnants of war and improvised explosive devices. A human rights-based, people-centred, inclusive and conflict-sensitive approach was key to effective international mine action in Nagorno-Karabakh.

105. **Ms. Ighil** (Algeria) said that her delegation resolutely rejected the deceptive Moroccan narrative aimed at distorting the legal and political realities of the conflict in Western Sahara and at whitewashing Moroccan colonial practices in that Non-Self-Governing Territory. The question of Western Sahara had been on the agenda of the United Nations since 1963 as an issue of decolonization within the scope of the Declaration.

106. In accordance with General Assembly resolution [1514 \(XV\)](#), among others, and the advisory opinion

issued by the International Court of Justice on 16 October 1975, the decolonization of Western Sahara should be completed through the exercise by the people of Western Sahara of its inalienable right to self-determination. The recommendations adopted at the 2021 regional seminar of the Special Committee on decolonization and Security Council resolution [2602 \(2021\)](#) recalled the need to achieve a just, lasting and mutually acceptable solution that would provide for the right to self-determination of the people of Western Sahara.

107. The far-fetched and hollow rhetoric used by the Moroccan authorities in an attempt to paint Algeria as the protagonist of a so-called regional conflict was merely a smokescreen to conceal the cruel colonial rule and expansionist appetite of Morocco and to evade responsibility for creating and perpetuating a colonial situation. In its resolution [380 \(1975\)](#), the Security Council had deplored the invasion and called on Morocco to withdraw from the Territory. In resolution [34/37](#), the General Assembly had urged the Kingdom of Morocco to join the peace process and terminate its occupation of the Territory of Western Sahara.

108. The statement delivered by the representative of Morocco was a futile attempt to deflect attention from the situation in Western Sahara by, among other tricks, interpreting Security Council resolutions in a one-sided manner and making irresponsible attacks against Algeria. A simple reading of the numerous United Nations reports on the issue of Western Sahara showed that, ever since its inception, the conflict in Western Sahara had been between the Kingdom of Morocco and Frente POLISARIO, as the elected representative of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic, a fellow member State of the African Union.

109. Since its establishment in 1991, and throughout all subsequent Security Council resolutions extending its mandate, the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) had been tasked with organizing and ensuring a free and fair self-determination referendum. The prospect of such a referendum was therefore far from dead and buried.

110. The support that Algeria showed for the right to self-determination of all peoples under colonial rule was part of its culture and heritage, rooted in a democratic principle that had universal validity. The fickleness and inconsistency of the approach taken by Morocco to the peace process was deplorable and had directly led to the current situation.

111. The highest authority authorities of the European Commission and the World Food Programme had refuted the slanderous, unfounded and cynical

allegations of repression against Sahrawi refugees in the Tindouf camps. Algeria maintained exemplary collaboration with UNHCR, which organized regular visits to the camps, in addition to UNICEF, the World Food Programme and the International Committee of the Red Cross. The work of those humanitarian actors in the camps served as a categorical refutation of the false allegations made by Morocco regarding the alleged confinement of refugees and militarization of the camps.

112. **Mr. Alvarez** (Argentina) said that his delegation reiterated the statements made by the President of Argentina to the General Assembly on 21 September 2021 (A/76/PV.4) and by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Argentina to the Special Committee on decolonization on 24 June 2021 (A/AC.109/2021/SR.6). The Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas were an integral part of Argentine territory and, being illegally occupied by the United Kingdom, they were the subject of a sovereignty dispute between the two parties, which was recognized by a number of international organizations. That illegal occupation had led the General Assembly to adopt 10 resolutions on the issue, all of which recognized the existence of the sovereignty dispute over the Malvinas Islands and called on the Governments of Argentina and the United Kingdom to resume negotiations with a view to finding a peaceful and lasting solution to the dispute as soon as possible. For its part, the Special Committee on decolonization had repeatedly adopted resolutions in the same vein, most recently the resolution adopted on 24 June 2021.

113. The representative of the United Kingdom had implied that the resolutions of the General Assembly were non-binding. However, in its advisory opinion on the legal consequences of the separation of the Chagos Archipelago from Mauritius in 1965, the International Court of Justice had concluded decisively that the General Assembly played a crucial role in overseeing the implementation of the obligations of administering Powers and ensuring that they had given sufficient consideration to the modalities required to ensure the completion of decolonization, as well as in determining in which cases, and how, referendums on self-determination should be held.

114. In addition, the Court had clearly underscored the normative value of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) and the principles set out therein, including the principle of territorial integrity, the nature of which as a customary norm had been confirmed through State practice and *opinio juris*. The Court had recalled that self-determination was not applicable to populations that did not constitute peoples with that right.

115. In line with the Charter of the United Nations, all Member States had a responsibility to resolve disputes peacefully and negotiate in good faith. The resumption of negotiations was not dependent on the desire of the population implanted on the islands by the administering Power, but rather was an obligation under the Charter and the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly.

116. The principle of self-determination of peoples, which the United Kingdom used as the basis for its refusal to resume negotiations on sovereignty, was inapplicable to the dispute in question, as affirmed in the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Special Committee. The interests and way of life of the inhabitants of the Malvinas Islands were adequately addressed by resolutions of the General Assembly and by the Constitution of Argentina.

117. Lastly, Argentina reaffirmed its legitimate sovereignty rights over the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas, which were an integral part of its national territory.

118. *Ms. González López (El Salvador) took the Chair.*

119. **Mr. Jardali** (Lebanon), said that Israel was attempting to divert attention from its daily violations of Lebanese sovereignty by portraying itself as the victim, while in reality Israel had invaded Lebanon three times, occupied the south of Lebanon for 22 years and caused Lebanon immeasurable pain through the loss of civilian lives and damage to infrastructure. Israel violated Lebanese territorial sovereignty by air more than 10 times a week, and the Israeli occupation of parts of Lebanese territory was the root cause of the tension experienced along the Lebanese border, just as the continued Israeli occupation of the Palestinian land fuelled the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

120. For more than 70 years, the United Nations, representing the will of the international community, had been calling on Israel to abide by international law and implement the relevant Security Council resolutions, notably resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 497 (1981), 1701 (2006) and 2334 (2016), all of which called on Israel to end its occupation and withdraw from occupied Arab lands. The international community was calling for a peaceful solution based on United Nations resolutions; it was high time that Israel listened to its will.

121. **Mr. Horsandi** (Israel) said that the comments made by the Palestinian representative perfectly encapsulated the Palestinian approach to the conflict, namely a preference for blame-shifting and for discussing the issue in international forums, rather than around a

negotiation table. The Palestinian delegation preferred to reject the potential of a new Middle East led by moderate, rather than extremist, forces and to ignore reality in favour of a false and unrealistic perspective. It was lamentable that the Palestinian delegation chose not to condemn the real perpetrators and supporters of terrorism and extremism, thereby ignoring the grave, systemic disregard for civilian rights displayed by Hamas and other terrorist organizations.

122. The Iranian goal of destabilizing the region could not be clearer. Numerous terrorist proxy forces spread throughout the Middle East received training, funding and support from Iran, with the sole goal of exporting the Iranian revolution. The Iranian regime would stop at nothing to achieve that goal, whether that meant violating the human rights of its own citizens, subjecting Palestinians to the terror of Hamas and other terror organizations, or encouraging its proxies to attack neighbouring countries. The Iranian regime sought to derail not only the Middle East and freedom-loving countries, but also any prospect of genuine dialogue within the United Nations. Members of the Committee should consider whether allowing themselves to be lectured by one of the world's worst perpetrators of human rights violations and the main exporter of global terror placed them on the right side of history.

123. **Ms. AlMatrooshi** (United Arab Emirates) said that the three Emirati islands of Greater Tunb, Lesser Tunb and Abu Musa in the Arabian Gulf were an integral part of the territory of the United Arab Emirates. Her delegation categorically rejected the continued occupation of the islands, which was entirely unjustified. Her Government would continue to call on Iran to respond positively to its invitation to work towards a peaceful settlement of the issue of the three United Arab Emirates islands occupied by Iran, through either direct negotiation or recourse to the International Court of Justice.

124. **Mr. Alizada** (Azerbaijan) said that the cheap comments made by the delegation of Armenia represented yet another failed attempt to deny the facts and mislead the international community. For nearly 30 years, Armenia had kept close to 20 per cent of the territory of Azerbaijan under occupation, in violation of numerous Security Council resolutions. As a result of ethnic cleansing carried out by Armenia, more than 1 million Azerbaijani citizens had become refugees or had been internally displaced. Following decades of occupation, Azerbaijan had exercised its inherent right to self-defence in response to yet another illegal use of force by Armenia. Azerbaijan had acted exclusively on its sovereign soil, liberating occupied territories and allowing refugees and internally displaced persons to

return to their homes. The liberated areas provided overwhelming evidence of the scale of destruction carried out by the Armenian aggressors. Hundreds of historical, cultural and religious sites had been looted, vandalized and destroyed. Natural resources had been plundered, and entire cities and villages had been left in ruins.

125. The so-called Nagorno-Karabakh had long ceased to exist as an administrative and territorial unit. Through a presidential decree published on 7 July 2021, the Government of Azerbaijan had established the Karabakh and East Zangezur economic regions in Azerbaijan. Furthermore, the Constitution stated that the territory of Azerbaijan was unitary, inviolable and indivisible and that its administrative and territorial structure fell within the exclusive sovereignty of the State.

126. The delegation of Armenia should abandon its provocative position and fully abide by the letter and spirit of the trilateral statement of 10 November 2020 and 11 January 2021, which had been signed by the President of Azerbaijan, the President of the Russian Federation and the Prime Minister of Armenia. The agreements put an end to the armed conflict, set out agreed parameters for durable peace and established a trilateral task force to promote communication and transport links in the region. Azerbaijan had continued to implement the provisions of the trilateral statement in good faith, for instance by transporting natural gas through its own territory to Armenia to help that country ensure a steady supply of energy resources. The international community must compel Armenia to provide Azerbaijan with accurate mine maps for all liberated territories.

127. Following the end of the conflict, Azerbaijan had repeatedly stated its intention to embark on a process of border delimitation and demarcation and to enter into negotiations on a peace agreement with Armenia, on the basis of mutual recognition of sovereignty and territorial integrity, with a view to achieving peace and cooperation in the region. It was evident, however, that no such goodwill had yet been shown by the Armenian delegation.

128. **Mr. Kadiri** (Morocco) said that the comments made by the representative of Algeria were irresponsible and untrue. Following the adoption of the historic Security Council resolution [2602 \(2021\)](#) and the statements made by numerous delegations and groups expressing support for Moroccan sovereignty over the Moroccan Sahara, the Moroccan autonomy initiative and the achievement of a realistic, practicable, lasting and compromise-based political solution through the round table process, Algeria should have realized that it

was on its own, and that its lies had been exposed. Unfortunately, however, it persisted in distorting reality and fixating on the Moroccan Sahara, ignoring all other agenda items. Its pathological attacks on its neighbour showed that it was living in a parallel world, in which it hoped to convince others of the veracity of its fake news and stubbornly denied the Moroccan character of the Sahara, which had been proven both on the ground and at international level. It was highly unusual, if not schizophrenic, that Algeria, having rejected Security Council resolution 2602 (2021), now invoked it before the Committee.

129. Algeria claimed to be a simple observer in the dispute over the Moroccan Sahara, while at the same time sheltering, funding, arming and directing the armed separatist “polisario” group, at the expense of the basic needs of its own people, and devoting all its diplomatic corps to the question of the Moroccan Sahara. Indeed, Algeria was mentioned as frequently as Morocco in Security Council resolution 2602 (2021).

130. Algeria had created and maintained the Moroccan Sahara dispute in order to vent its hostility towards Morocco, obstinately encroach on the latter’s territorial integrity, advance its plans for North Africa and distract from its own problems. Algeria was highly selective in its application of the principle of self-determination. Notwithstanding its claims, the provisions on self-determination contained in the Declaration on decolonization had not applied to the Moroccan Sahara since it had been irreversibly reinstated as Moroccan territory in 1975. If the Algerian delegation truly wish to defend the principle of self-determination, it should speak on other relevant issues.

131. The concept of a referendum in the Moroccan Sahara had been dead and buried since 2001. No resolution of the Security Council or report of the Secretary-General had referred to a supposed referendum for more than 20 years; instead they called for a realistic, practicable and lasting political solution, based on compromise. All Security Council resolutions adopted since 2007 expressed support for the Moroccan autonomy initiative.

132. The population in Algeria referred to by the representative of Algeria were confined to a militarized area, guarded by Algerian and “polisario” military forces which allowed no one to leave. Algeria opposed their registration because it wished to hide the fact that it had inflated the population size.

133. **Mr. Assadi** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that the repulsive and racist Israeli occupation lay at the heart of all conflicts in the Middle East, causing horrific suffering, a multitude of crises and widespread instability and anger. The occupation was the main

reason why peace and stability had yet to be achieved in region. The regime’s extensive record of crimes and atrocities, such as State terrorism, crimes against humanity and frequent encroachment upon countries in the region, posed a uniquely grave threat to regional and international peace and security. Its empty rhetoric against other countries and its propaganda against the Islamic Republic of Iran were intended to conceal its own land grabs and other crimes. As the collective conscience of the international community, the General Assembly had a duty to condemn the Israeli military aggression and ethnic cleansing and hold Israel accountable for its war crimes and crimes against humanity.

134. The three islands of Abu Musa, Greater Tunb and Lesser Tunb had been an integral part of Iran for thousands of years and would remain so. By raising an unfounded claim irrelevant to the work of the Committee, the delegation of the United Arab Emirates was abusing the Committee’s processes in order to advance its political interests in the Persian Gulf region. His delegation called on the United Arab Emirates to fully observe the principle of good neighbourliness, respect international law and avoid policies and practices that undermined peace and security in the Persian Gulf region.

135. The term “Persian Gulf” had been established as the correct appellation for the body of water between the Arabian peninsula and the Iranian plateau for millennia and would remain so indefinitely. It was a standardized geographical term recognized by the international community, including the United Nations, and should not be tampered with for political purposes.

136. **Mr. Abdelhamid** (Observer for the State of Palestine) said that Palestine had repeatedly reaffirmed its readiness to negotiate on the basis of international law and international consensus, whereas Israel, the occupying Power, had flatly and repeatedly rejected all forms of negotiation. The international community must use all available means under international law to hold Israel accountable for its violations and crimes against the Palestinian people and to bring a conclusive end to the longest colonial occupation in modern history. To that end, the work of the Committee and the United Nations as a whole remained imperative. His delegation therefore urged members to support the draft resolutions submitted under agenda items 54 and 55.

137. **Mr. Knyazyan** (Armenia) said that the right of reply exercised by the delegation of Azerbaijan had nothing to do with the work of the Committee. Such propaganda, which was repeatedly put forward by the Azerbaijani delegation before each and every United Nations body, did not merit a response. It should,

however, be recalled that the representative of Azerbaijan had remained silent in response to the clear-cut comment by the delegation of Armenia that the trilateral statement made no reference to mine action. Any assertions to the contrary were a pure fallacy.

138. **Ms. Ighil** (Algeria) said that the Moroccan delegation continued to believe that it could subdue positions and principles by force. Frente POLISARIO was the legitimate representative to the United Nations of the people of Western Sahara, a Territory which, since 1963, had remained on the list of Non-Self-Governing Territories and which continued to be denied its right to self-determination. Those facts were clearly reflected in all resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council. Most recently, in its judgment of 29 September 2021, the European Court of Justice had stated that Frente POLISARIO was recognized internationally as a representative of the people of Western Sahara and was one of the parties to the self-determination process of that Territory, and had established that the so-called local elected representatives did not represent the interests or the consent of the people of Western Sahara, but rather those of the country under whose laws they had been elected, namely Morocco. That country had no right to preach to others given its lack of respect for international law and human life.

139. Having conducted regular visits to the refugee camps in Tindouf, UNHCR, UNICEF, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the World Food Programme all bore witness to the lies spread by Morocco regarding the alleged confinement of refugees, militarization of the camps and indoctrination of Sahrawi children.

140. Conversely, in refusing to allow non-governmental organizations, United Nations human rights monitoring mechanisms, parliamentarians or journalists to visit the occupied Territory, Morocco clearly feared that its serious human rights violations and multiple abuses perpetrated against the people of Western Sahara would be exposed to the international community, something that testified to its bad faith and its refusal to engage sincerely in the settlement process. The Moroccan authorities should bring an end to their short-sighted strategy, which would lead only to lingering instability in the region, and engage in the United Nations process in good faith with a view to reaching a just and lasting political solution that would provide for the right of self-determination of the people of Western Sahara.

141. **Mr. Alizada** (Azerbaijan) said that the comments made by the representative of Armenia were, as usual, filled with distortions and fabrications and illustrated the consistent attempts of Armenia to deny the facts of

its policy of aggression, hostility, hatred and falsification. The delegation of Armenia had directly contradicted the letter and spirit of the trilateral statement, and should abandon that harmful position.

142. **Mr. Kadiri** (Morocco) said that the reference made by the representative of Algeria to a so-called occupation reflected its ignorance of international law. The Moroccan Sahara was part of Morocco and would remain as such. Morocco was not defined as an occupying Power in any of the reports of the Secretary-General, resolutions of the Security Council or legal opinions of the United Nations. Conversely, since 1975, Algeria had taken a hegemonic, expansionist and colonial approach to the Moroccan Sahara by supporting, in every way possible, the separatist “polisario” movement, which had links to terrorism in the Sahel and was little more than a proxy for Algeria.

143. Notwithstanding the Algerian delegation’s wholly biased reading of the judgment issued by the European Court of Justice, Morocco and the European Union had built a solid and privileged partnership which neither Algeria nor the “polisario” would be able to undermine. However, given that reference was being made to European institutions, his delegation recalled that, its resolution of 26 November 2020, the European Parliament had strongly condemned the escalation of arbitrary and unlawful arrests, detentions and judicial harassment of journalists, human rights defenders, trade unionists, lawyers, civil society and peaceful activists in Algeria. On 3 November 2021, the head of the Delegation for relations with the Maghreb countries and the Arab Maghreb Union, including the EU-Morocco, EU-Tunisia and EU-Algeria Joint Parliamentary Committees, had released a statement expressing grave concern at the decision of Algeria to stop the supply of gas to Europe via the Maghreb-Europe gas pipeline, adding that the use of the gas supply as leverage was not a valid solution. Furthermore, the European Anti-Fraud Office had found evidence confirming the systematic misappropriation, over more than 46 years, of humanitarian aid destined for the populations of the Tindouf camps by the “polisario” and Algeria authorities. In the most recent report of the Secretary-General (S/2021/843), reference was made to that misappropriation.

144. That report, along with reports compiled by the special procedures mandate holders of the Human Rights Council and OHCHR, also documented numerous human rights violations committed within the camps and in Algeria, including the death of two residents of the camps at the hands of Algerian armed forces in October 2020.

The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.