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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 48th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. RODRIGUEZ-MEDINA (Colombia)

later: Mr. MUBAREZ (Yemen)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 68: ISRAEL'S DECISION TO BUILD A CANAL LINKING THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA TO THE DEAD SEA: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/37/328 and Corr.1; A/SPC/37/L.41/Rev.1 and L.42)

1. Mr. RADA (Czechoslovakia) said that the Israeli Government's unilateral decision to build a canal approximately 114 kilometres long to link the Mediterranean Sea to the Dead Sea was clear evidence that Israel had no respect for the norms of international law. The facts stated by the United Nations experts in document A/37/328 showed that the construction of a canal between the Mediterranean Sea and the Dead Sea would bring a number of undesirable risks and changes. It was obvious that the envisaged construction of the canal would not be without direct negative consequences for Jordan, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. Such consequences included the unlawful confiscation of land, the moving of the shore-line of the Dead Sea, which would cause damage to agriculture, undesirable hydrological changes, and the impact on tourism, the transportation network and archaeological excavations. The existence of the canal would also force the population in the flooded areas to move and become dispersed.
2. It was beyond understanding that the Israeli Government could feel free to take such a momentous decision without the consent of the sovereign State directly involved. Such a course of action represented another gross violation of the norms of international law. Israel's expansionist and arrogant foreign policy, which applied also to the canal project, was aggravating the situation in the region and obstructing a just settlement of the Middle East problem. It also showed that the separate Camp David deals could not lead to the restoration of peace and security in the Middle East. The only way out was through a comprehensive settlement of the problem on the basis of the complete withdrawal of Israeli troops from all the occupied Arab territories, the realization of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and the recognition of the right of all States in the region to an independent existence within secure borders. His delegation believed that joint efforts by Member States would prevent further damage to the vital interests of the Arab people in the territories occupied by Israel.
3. Mr. BOUAZZA (Morocco) said that the crux of the matter before the Committee was essentially political. It involved another example of the Zionist State's constant breaches of international conventions, including the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949. Israel's leaders were totally disregarding the rights of the Palestinian people, whom they were attempting to annihilate, and the interests of neighbouring Arab States, at the expense of which they were seeking to expand Israeli territory even further.
4. There was no doubt that the construction of the planned canal would seriously affect the future of the Arab peoples of the region. According to the Israeli plan, the canal would have its intake at El Qatif, on the shore of the Gaza Strip. He wondered what right the occupying Power had to exploit the Arab heritage. The construction of the canal would mean confiscation of land and other deprivations

(Mr. Bouazza, Morocco)

for the population of Gaza. The rise in the level of the Dead Sea would affect agricultural production and cause damage to tourism and archaeological sites. A large part of Jordan bordered on the Dead Sea, and the execution of the Israeli project would deal a serious blow to Jordan's sovereignty and economic development. The Israeli plan also called for the construction of a dam to the north of Lake Tiberias; water would be pumped from the River Jordan and diverted to Israel through the occupied territories, where new Israeli settlements would be established. The Jordan itself would be reduced to a minor river, to the detriment of the Jordanians.

5. Israel's intention to construct nuclear reactors along the canal was causing understandable concern among the Arab States, especially as Israel had not signed the convention limiting nuclear armaments and was not authorizing visits to its installations by inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency. To those factors were added the risks of pollution and fundamental geographical, demographic and economic changes. Accordingly, the execution of the project would cause direct and irreparable damage to the rights and legitimate vital interests of the Palestinian people and of Jordan.

6. Israel's plan to build the canal was part of a general plan for territorial and economic expansion and was a clear manifestation of the intention to defy the international community by maintaining Israeli occupation of Arab territories and even seeking, by all means, to consolidate and expand that occupation. Further proof of that policy were the invasion of Lebanon and the ensuing holocaust. The reaction of world opinion should induce Israel's leaders to be more realistic, for they could not annihilate an entire population determined to secure its legitimate right to attain self-determination and establish its own State. It was therefore to be hoped that Israel's leaders would move towards a policy of global peace and overall security guaranteed by the United Nations in the region as a whole. The Arab countries, for their part, had voted for peace, as was reflected in the resolutions adopted at the recent Arab summit at Fez.

7. Mr. AL-ANBARI (Saudi Arabia) said it was the first time that the international community was considering a measure which Israel proposed to take; that country was in the habit of presenting the community with faits accomplis and then preventing the General Assembly or the Security Council from adopting or implementing the necessary resolutions. At its thirty-sixth session, the General Assembly, in resolution 36/150, had demanded that Israel cease forthwith the implementation of its project of a canal linking the Mediterranean Sea and the Dead Sea. It was safe to assume, however, that Israel would not suspend the execution of its project, whatever resolutions might be adopted on the subject. Accordingly, Saudi Arabia, as a member of the international community and as one of the States of the region, was determined to spare no effort to prevent that new Israeli act of aggression, especially in the light of all the suffering experienced in the region over the past 34 years as a result of Israel's constant acts of aggression.

(Mr. Al-Anbari, Saudi Arabia)

8. The project, which was only one of many links in the chain of such aggression, had been designed by Israel for two clear purposes: to give it exclusive material benefits and to consolidate its hold over the rest of Palestine, in defiance of a number of Security Council and General Assembly resolutions, which had stressed the inadmissibility of any measure to change the legal status or geographical or demographic nature of the occupied territories, and in defiance of the United Nations Charter and other international instruments.

9. The building of the canal would involve major excavation work for several years in a section of the Gaza Strip, which was under Israeli military occupation. That would give Israel a pretext for perpetuating its domination of that territory. Moreover, the flow of sea water into the Gaza Strip would increase soil salinity, thus aggravating the economic problems of the inhabitants of Gaza, who were already suffering the impact of arbitrary measures that prevented them from exporting their agricultural produce. The salt water flowing into the Dead Sea would inundate substantial areas of agricultural and non-agricultural land in the West Bank and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, causing considerable losses in the production of Jordanian potash and salt, and flooding roads and historical relics in Jordan.

10. The study of the canal project confirmed Saudi Arabia's concerns about the adverse effects in the Gaza Strip and parts of the West Bank and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. The project was in violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention, which prohibited such charges in occupied territories. The project was also in violation of the rules of international law and General Assembly and Security Council resolutions relating to any charges by Israel in the occupied Arab territories. The project was an act of aggression against the occupied territories and against the sovereignty of a neighbouring State, Jordan. Saudi Arabia therefore urged the General Assembly to adopt a resolution that would firmly and explicitly demand that Israel renounce all the measures it proposed to take for the construction of the canal.

11. Mr. LEVIN (Israel)* said that the Israeli delegation felt that the title of the item being considered by the Committee, "Israel's decision to build a canal linking the Mediterranean to the Dead Sea", should be changed to that of "Israel's offer to co-operate in building a conduit from the Mediterranean to the Dead Sea". Despite what the representative of Jordan had inferred, nothing alarming could be found in the study submitted by the Secretary-General (A/37/328 and Corr.1), and the contention that the project would cause flooding in the Jordan Valley was completely erroneous. In fact, the projected conduit would have no harmful effect whatsoever on the Jordan River or the Jordan Valley. Paragraph 32 of the report explicitly confirmed that the rise in the Dead Sea level would counteract a process which was currently underway, as increased abstractions from the inflows and the increased consumption by the Israeli and Arab potash works currently resulted in a relatively fast draw down of the Dead Sea. According to the Israeli projections,

* The full text of this statement will be issued as document A/SPC/37/PV.48.

(Mr. Levin, Israel)

during the first 12 years of the project, 1.6 million cubic metres of water would be allowed to flow each year into the Dead Sea until it stabilized at its natural level of 393 metres below sea level. Israel's plan was not to construct a "canal", as stated in the title of the agenda item, but to build a predominantly underground water conduit (87 of its 109 kilometres) the purpose of which would be to generate hydroelectric power. With 99 per cent of Israel's current energy consumption dependent on foreign sources of supply and in view of the exorbitant price of oil as a result of the world wide energy crisis and the persistent efforts of the Arab oil-producing States, excluding Egypt to strangle Israel economically by denying it oil, Israeli experts were making every effort to identify and develop local sources of energy, including the waters of the Mediterranean.

12. Some of Israel's neighbours could also benefit from the power to be generated by the Mediterranean-Dead Sea project. It was therefore both astonishing and disappointing that Jordan, which had no source of hydroelectric energy, had found it necessary to reject and condemn the project for political reasons. Israel was prepared to co-operate with Jordan in every aspect of the Mediterranean-Dead Sea project in order to produce oil-free energy. It was also surprising to note that the Jordanian Government had submitted a national report to the United Nations Conference on New and Renewable Sources of Energy including a plan for cutting its own canal between the Red Sea and the Dead Sea an estimated cost of \$850 million. It was therefore clear that the statements made by Jordan with respect to the potential damage which might result from the Israeli project were ludicrous.

13. Israel had conducted a thorough study of the environmental impact of the project, socio-economic as well as ecological, long-term as well as short-term, during and after construction. Israel's concern for environmental protection was clearly demonstrated in paragraphs 65, 66, and 70 of the report. Israel stood ready to co-operate with Jordan and other neighbouring countries in developing ecologically beneficial forms of energy, not only in connection with the Mediterranean-Dead Sea project, but also in all other fields of research and development. The following factors had been clearly set forth to the United Nations group of experts which had visited the Dead Sea region: the project had been designed so that most of the facilities between the Mediterranean and the Dead Sea would be underground and would therefore have very little effect on land use; intake systems, canals, tunnels and shafts would minimally affect surface infrastructures and rural development; the pumping station would be buried 30 metres below the surface of the El-Qatif sand dunes; the more than 22 kilometres of canal and the 80-kilometre long tunnel would be protectively lined to prevent any leakage of sea water into the ground water aquifers; given that the restoration of the Dead Sea level would be spread over 30 years and that Israeli and Jordanian potash works needed periodically to raise their dikes, those activities could be co-ordinated to prevent any interruption of operations at the potash works. In fact, Israel was ready to explore with Jordan prospects for the joint development of the potash and other mineral resources in the Dead Sea. In order to ensure maximum mutual enjoyment by both countries of those common resources, Israel hoped that sincere and practical negotiations would soon take place between Israel and Jordan.

(Mr. Levin, Israel)

14. It seemed clear that Jordan's rejection of Israel's offer to co-operate was motivated only by its hostility towards Israel, as explicitly expressed in the letter of 9 April 1981 from the representative of Jordan to the Secretary-General (A/36/180-S/14432), which stressed that Jordan's opposition was based mainly on the project's potential contribution to the alleged political and military strengthening of Israel. In that connection, he reaffirmed that Israel was prepared to co-operate with all its neighbours in developing a regional electricity grid connecting the States of the Middle East. The lack of a positive response could not prevent continued progress on the Mediterranean-Dead Sea project.

15. With regard to the Dead Sea water balance, he said that the water level would in no case exceed 390.5 metres so as not to conflict with Israeli and Jordanian interests along the shore. That level was below the natural level which had persisted until 1933. The salty mud flats which had been exposed following the recession of the Dead Sea were an ecological blemish. Their resubmergence would restore the ecological balance and would affect only a few light structures and short stretches of road built since the 1960s, given that there were no known mineral resources or archeological sites in that area. As a result of thorough hydrological and limnological investigations of the Dead Sea and its watershed, and employing specially developed simulation models, several water balances had been calculated for various conditions, with and without the implementation of the Mediterranean-Dead Sea project. The results had provided the forecasts and basic parameters necessary for planning the project. As part of those investigations, evaporation had been intensively studied. The Jordanian remarks on paragraphs 20 and 36 of the Secretary-General's report showed a lack of understanding. In fact, Dead Sea water evaporated faster when diluted by Mediterranean water and that fact, which was beneficial to the project, had been taken into account. As stated in paragraph 36 (b) of the report, gypsum precipitation would affect neither evaporation nor the potash industry, that had proven by large scale experiments in the Dead Sea.

16. As far as earthquake risks were concerned, he said that the truth was precisely the opposite of the Jordanian claim: it was the ongoing recession of the water-level that was bringing an ever-increasing risk of earthquakes. That was due to the removal of the natural water load that had existed for thousands of years. As a result of the project, the natural balance would be restored and stresses would be stabilized.

17. With respect to the potash industry, he said that both the Israeli and Jordanian potash works would have problems if the Mediterranean-Dead Sea project was not carried out. Joint studies by the Mediterranean-Dead Sea Co. Ltd. and the Israeli Dead Sea Works had shown that any adverse effects of the project on potash works would be much smaller than the grossly exaggerated Jordanian claims. It should be emphasized that, in the long run, prevention of the recession of the Dead Sea would prolong the economic potential of both the Jordanian and the Israeli potash works.

(Mr. Levin, Israel)

18. The contention that the conduit would lead to the acquisition of territory, the confiscation of property, and the depopulation of certain areas within the Gaza district was totally unfounded. The project would not infringe upon the rights of the local population. He reaffirmed that the project would benefit the whole region and he hoped that Jordan and other countries would welcome the opportunity to take advantage together of the geographical and physical features of the area for the benefit of all its inhabitants. He requested that his statement should be reproduced in extenso.

19. Mr. Mubarez (Yemen) took the Chair.

20. Mr. HAMADNEH (Jordan) said that, if the Committee accepted the request of the representative of Israel, his delegation would like the report of 11 May 1982 of the Mediterranean-Dead Sea Co. Ltd. to be annexed to the in extenso statement of the representative of Israel.

21. Mr. ABOUCHAER (Syrian Arab Republic) said that he had no objection to the request of the representative of Israel, but pointed out that it was customary in the Main Committees of the General Assembly that that type of request should be made by a delegation other than the one which had made the statement considered to be interesting.

22. Mr. SHEAR (United States of America) supported the request of the representative of Israel but asked whether it would have any financial implications.

23. The CHAIRMAN replied that the request would have no financial implications. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to have the statement made by the representative of Israel issued in extenso and to have the report mentioned by the representative of Jordan annexed to the statement.

24. It was so decided.

25. Mr. AL-THANI (Qatar) said that the Israeli plan to build a canal linking the Mediterranean Sea to the Dead Sea entailed considerable dangers, for not only did it constitute a further violation of international law and of the principles of the United Nations Charter but it would result in demographic and economic changes in the occupied territories. Accordingly, it must be stressed that the project was essentially expansionist in nature. Indeed, studies undertaken by Jordan demonstrated that, following the construction of the canal, Israel's energy output would be up by 7 per cent at the start of the year 2000, whereas the raising of the level of the Dead Sea would flood agricultural land on both banks of the Jordan, destroy industrial firms which were just nearing completion on the southern shores of the Dead Sea and deal a severe blow to tourism which was vital to the region. If Israel's real aim was to increase its energy output it should not be the Jordanian and Palestinian people who paid the price.

(Mr. Al-Thani, Qatar)

26. There was no doubt that there were political designs involved in the implementation of the Israeli plan to build a canal linking the Mediterranean Sea to the Dead Sea and that Israel was seeking to alter the topography of the occupied territories and their demographic composition in order to establish a fait accompli.

27. Because of its geographic position, Jordan controlled more than half of the shores and waters of the Dead Sea while almost one quarter of those shores and waters were in the occupied Palestinian territories. The Israeli project was therefore a flagrant violation of Jordan's rights and of its territorial sovereignty and furthermore constituted a violation of the Geneva Convention of 1949 which the General Assembly had recommended should be applied in the occupied Arab territories.

28. Furthermore, since the waters on the canal which Israel planned to build would be used to cool Israeli nuclear reactors that would expose the region to the dangers of pollution, particularly since Israel had not ratified the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and had refused to accept the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency in respect of its nuclear facilities.

29. In view of all those facts, his delegation urged the Special Political Committee to condemn that further aggression of Israel and to prevent Israel from going ahead with construction of the planned canal.

30. Mr. AL-QAISI (Iraq)* said that when the item under consideration had been debated, Israel had contended that its efforts to harness the waters of the Mediterranean Sea to generate energy must be seen against the background of the energy crisis and the exorbitant price of oil. However, members of the United Nations had expressed deep concern at Israel's actions and had requested the Secretary-General, in resolution 36/150, of 16 December 1981, to submit the study now before the Committee (A/37/328).

31. His delegation was grateful to the Secretary-General for having prepared the report but wished to point out that the content of the report could only be assessed against the background of the Arab-Israeli conflict. It was more than evident by now that the Israeli decision was part of the Zionist strategy aimed at creating a greater Israel stretching from the Nile to the Euphrates. The focal point of that programme was the policy of fait accompli which, as was well known, had brought about tremendous suffering and destruction.

32. According to the report of the Secretary-General, as envisaged by Israel, the Mediterranean-Dead Sea project essentially consisted of a hydro-electric scheme which was intended to provide an alternate source of energy because of the world crisis, but historical facts did not support that contention. The Zionist designs on the water resources of the region dated back to the late nineteenth century when the Swiss engineer, Max Bogart, had suggested to Theodore Hertzl, that two canals be

* The full text of this statement will be issued as document A/SPC/37/PV.48.

(Mr. Al-Qaisi, Iraq)

built, the first to bring water from Lake Tiberias to Palesine and the second to bring water from the Mediterrean to the Jordan Valley. Hertzal had welcomed the suggestion and had referred to it in 1902, in his book Twin Land. Later, in 1938, the Jewish Agency had had an American hydrologist draw up a report on the water courses in Palestine and in other Arab territories with a view to ensuring that when the Arab areas were annexed the Zionist settlements would have ample water resources. The recommendations of that hydrologist had included the drying up of a lake in an Arab area occupied by force, the diversion of the waters of the Jordan and two of its tributaries, the seizure of the waters of the Litani (the latter had now been achieved through Israel's invasion of Lebanon) as well as the project to link the Mediterrean Sea to the Dead Sea by a canal. When the Zionist entity was established, water resource planning fell within the competence of the Ministry of Agriculture which had entrusted an engineer, John Keyton, with the task of preparing a comprehensive plan to develop the irrigation system and hydroelectric energy. Between 1950 and 1955, that engineer had presented six reports proposing seven possible routes for linking the Mediterrean Sea to the Dead Sea. Early in the 1970s, several commissions had been entrusted with studying the project and, in 1977, the present route of the canal had been recommended. On 24 August 1980, the Israeli Government had decided to go ahead with the project.

33. It was clear from that account that the projected canal was not the product of a so-called energy crisis, as the Israelis alleged, but was part of the Zionist schemes for achieving the total colonization of Palestine and the other Arab territories as a step towards the achievement of greater Israel. The Zionist colonization had been going on at least since 1948 and it had extended to all the natural and human resources of Palestine and the other Arab territories; the Zionist grip on the entire economy of those territories was a vital component of the policy of occupation, annexation and eviction; consequently, the projected canal was a political rather than an economic project.

34. At the same time the comments on the hydrological aspects of the project contained in paragraphs 10 to 30 of the report raised two points of a legal character. In the first place, what was indicated in paragraph 25 of the report amounted to complete "diversion" of water resources to which the Arab and Palestinian territories and their population had a right. Such diversion violated an established norm of international law which considered a river basin a natural and indivisible unit. There was nothing in State practice, judicial decisions, the works and studies of international law institutions or jurisprudence which yielded any support for such an act as that being planned by Israel. He referred, in that connection to Whiteman's Digest of International Law (vol. 3) and to the third report on the law of the non-navigational uses of international watercourses prepared by the Special Rapporteur of the International Law Commission issued under the symbol A/CN.4/348.

35. The mission's conclusion, noted in paragraph 30 of the report, was not difficult to comprehend. The calculations made by the representative of Jordan on the basis of the technical data set out in the report, showed clearly that the level of the Dead Sea would continue to rise causing repeated flooding of Jordanian

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(Mr. Al-Qaisi, Iraq)

territories. That fact was corroborated by paragraph 34 of the report which indicated that the projected rise of the Dead Sea level raised problems regarding the flooding of some infrastructure (roads, tourist resorts, etc.) which surrounded the Dead Sea, of the newly-emerged lands earmarked for agricultural development, of archeological sites and of some mining projects. If one added the effects of the Israeli project on Jordan (A/37/328, sect. IV), it would be difficult, from the legal point of view, to argue that the Israeli project did not constitute an unlawful act under international law. Given the past history and the present situation of Zionist aggression against the Palestinian people and the independent Arab States, that unlawful act could be considered an unlawful act committed with aggravated circumstances.

36. Concerning the adverse effects of the Israeli project on the rights and interests of the Palestinian people, he recalled that the construction of the canal would start from, and pass through, the Gaza Strip, a Palestinian territory which had been taken by force. In terms of international law, the Israeli project was an illegal initiative because it was incompatible with the principle of non-acquisition of territory by force and its corollary, the principle of non-recognition of situations resulting from the use of force. Moreover, under general international law and, in particular, in accordance with the Fourth Geneva Convention, Israel, as an occupying Power, had no right whatsoever to change the geographic, demographic and economic features of the occupied Palestinian territory of Gaza. It was unfortunate that the mission had not solicited the opinion of the Palestinian people, represented by the Palestine Liberation Organization, with regard to the Israeli project, given the fact that paragraph 3 of the General Assembly resolution 36/150 made a clear reference to the Palestine territories.

37. The conclusion to be drawn from the above-mentioned political, economic and legal aspects of the Israeli project was that members of the international community must not only condemn Israeli actions but also refrain from encouraging, assisting or enhancing, either directly or indirectly, the perpetration of such acts. Participation of any sort by third parties in carrying out the unlawful acts amounted to complicity for which those parties would be held internationally responsible. Economically, the alleged benefits of the Israeli project would benefit only the Zionists' design, that of colonizing the totality of the Middle East region, step by step. Politically, the scope and implications of the Israeli plan were part of the Zionist programme of colonization by settlement. The Members of the United Nations were bound under the Charter to take all necessary measures to prevent Israel from achieving its ominous aims.

38. Finally, recalling that Israel had claimed that its aim in digging the canal was to produce cheap, clean and efficient hydroelectric power which would benefit all the Middle East, he said that Israel had committed an act of aggression against a reactor intended to produce nuclear energy for peaceful purposes on the pretext that Iraq, since it had oil, did not need nuclear energy.

39. The CHAIRMAN announced that the Committee had completed the general debate on item 68.

40. Mr. HAMADNEH (Jordan) asked to speak in exercise of the right of reply at the following meeting.
41. Mr. ELSHEIKH (Sudan) requested that the text of the statement of the representative of Iraq should be reproduced in extenso.
42. The CHAIRMAN said that, if there was no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to approve that request.
43. It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 66: INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION TO AVERT NEW FLOWS OF REFUGEES: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued)

44. Mr. WEEDY (Afghanistan), exercising the right of reply to the allegations made against his country by the representative of Pakistan in his statement of 6 December, said that Afghanistan had made its stand on the matter clear on a number of occasions. Its various statements made in 1980 and 1981 (A/35/154, A/35/238-S/13951 and A/36/77) testified to that fact.
45. In an effort to obtain large amounts of assistance and to attract sympathy, the Government of Pakistan was grossly exaggerating the number of refugees in its territory. Included in that category were a large number of nomads who traditionally migrated in winter to the land of Pushtoos and Baluchs. That was a typical example of the way in which the Pakistani authorities distorted the truth.
46. He reiterated that his country had invited all Afghans who had temporarily left their homes to benefit from the general amnesty declared by the Afghan Government and to return proudly to their country. Their security and freedom was guaranteed by the Government, in accordance with its fundamental principles. They would be able freely to choose their place of residence and their occupation, would have the same rights as their compatriots and would be able to participate in the peaceful construction of a prosperous Afghan society. The number of Afghans returning to their homes was increasing, while many of them were being prevented from doing so because of the influence of malicious propaganda, the spread of disinformation and other obstacles imposed by counter-revolutionary armed bandits with the connivance of Pakistani authorities.
47. The Afghan Government therefore invited neighbouring countries, especially Pakistan, to stop opposing the revolution and preventing those peoples from returning to their homeland. By refraining from such manoeuvres, those countries would not only facilitate the return of displaced Afghans, but would also play an effective role in strengthening friendly relations in the region.
48. Mr. NOORANI (Pakistan), exercising the right of reply, categorically rejected the unfounded allegations and the slanderous accusations to which the representative of the Kabul régime had resorted in an attempt to support his ludicrous claims.

(Mr. Noorani, Pakistan)

49. The international community, and the United Nations in particular, was perfectly aware of the fact that the foreign military intervention in Afghanistan was a violation of the principles of international law and of the Charter, and that that intervention was provoking heroic and fervent resistance on the part of the Afghan people. Following acts of terrorism and cruel repression, some 3 million Afghans had had to seek refuge in Pakistan. The location of the refugee camps was known and they were open to inspection. Officials of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and other international humanitarian organizations paid regular visits to those camps and had been able to note that the activities inside them were exclusively humanitarian. His delegation stressed that there was not a single training centre within the refugee camps. Pakistan fervently hoped that the refugees could, in the near future, return to their homes with dignity and in total safety.

50. If living conditions had improved to such an extent in Afghanistan, as the representative of the Kabul régime claimed, how was it that a fifth of the population preferred exile and suffering in the neighbouring countries of Pakistan and Iran?

51. The problem of Afghan refugees - who numbered some 3 million in Pakistan, a figure verified by UNHCR - had not been caused by Pakistan but was the result of the crisis caused by the foreign military intervention. To label those millions of men, women and children forced by pitiless persecution to flee their homeland as reactionaries and bandits defied common sense. The fact that a foreign army, more than 100,000 strong and armed with the most modern weapons, had been unable to check the resistance of the Afghan people, which was still as strong as ever throughout the country, was a testimony to that people's tenacity and its desire to regain its freedom and to fight foreign domination, in accordance with its age-old traditions and its love of freedom.

52. Pakistan's policy was one of non-interference in the internal affairs of other States, as could be seen, indeed, from the relations it had maintained with Afghanistan for more than 30 years. As a country affected by the repercussions of the Afghan crisis, Pakistan co-operated sincerely in all efforts at the international level, including the initiatives of the Secretary-General of the United Nations in order to reach a fair political solution, in accordance with the demands of the international community. He hoped that those efforts would make it possible to restore peace in Afghanistan and to consolidate peace and stability in the region.

53. Mr. WEEDY (Afghanistan), exercising the right of reply for the second time, regretted that the delegation of Pakistan continued to make unfounded allegations against Afghanistan.

54. It was clear that Pakistan had become a major base for training and arming mercenaries and terrorist bands and the principal source of aggression against Afghanistan. The allegations of the representative of Pakistan were by no means accidental, since his Government was making every effort to justify the growing militarization of Pakistan and to obtain further military aid from imperialist circles.

(Mr. Weedy, Afghanistan)

55. The Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, a staunch supporter of friendly relations with neighbouring States, had made constructive proposals in that field right after the second phase of the revolution, in December 1979. At a time when the Geneva talks were going in the right direction, the allegations of the representative of Pakistan might have unfortunate repercussions. The validity of Afghanistan's approach towards the solution of the problem was being proved with time; it was only by showing good will that the other party would help solve the situation.

56. Mr. NOORANI (Pakistan) said that he simply wished to state categorically that Pakistan did not arm Afghan refugees. The fact that, of the refugees, 48 per cent were children, 28 per cent women, and 24 per cent men, the majority of whom were elderly or infirm, made it all the easier to refute that accusation.

The meeting rose at 5.05 p.m.