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SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE
27th meeting
held on
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at 3 p.m.
New York

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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 27th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. MUBAREZ (Yemen)

later: Mrs. OULD DADDAH (Mauritania)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF HIS EXCELLENCY MR. LEONID ILYICH BREZHNEV, PRESIDENT OF THE PRESIDUM OF THE SUPREME SOVIET OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS AND GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE SOVIET UNION

1. The CHAIRMAN, speaking on behalf of the Committee, expressed deep regret at the death of His Excellency Mr. Leonid Ilyich Brezhnev, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and extended to his family and to the Government and people of the Soviet Union profound condolences.
2. On the proposal of the Chairman, the members of the Committee observed a minute of silence in tribute to the memory of His Excellency, Mr. Leonid Ilyich Brezhnev, President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.
3. Mr. KOTSEV (Bulgaria), speaking on behalf of the Eastern European States, expressed profound regret at the death of Mr. Brezhnev and paid a tribute to the memory of that great Statesman and his untiring efforts to bring about world peace.
4. Mr. KASINA (Kenya), speaking on behalf of the African States, expressed his sorrow at the death of Mr. Brezhnev and extended his condolences to the Government and people of the Soviet Union.
5. Mr. BA-ISSA (Democratic Yemen), speaking on behalf of the Asian States, expressed his profound sadness at the death of Mr. Brezhnev and extended his sympathy to the people of the Soviet Union.
6. Mr. RODRIGUEZ MEDINA (Colombia), speaking on behalf of the Latin American States, expressed profound sorrow at the death of Mr. Brezhnev and extended condolences to the Soviet Government and people.
7. Mr. HUMFREY (United Kingdom), speaking on behalf of the Western European and other States, expressed sorrow at the death of Mr. Brezhnev and conveyed his condolences to the Soviet people.
8. Mr. BENCHEKROUN (Morocco), speaking on behalf of the Arab Group, expressed profound regret at the death of Mr. Brezhnev and conveyed his condolences to the Soviet Government and people.
9. Mr. OVINNIKOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), speaking on behalf of the Soviet delegation and the delegations of the Ukrainian SSR and the Byelorussian SSR, expressed gratitude to the Chairman of the Committee and all delegations which had extended their condolences in connection with the death of Mr. Brezhnev. Mr. Brezhnev had played an outstanding role in the formulation and execution of

(Mr. Ovinnikov, USSR)

Soviet foreign policy on the basis of peaceful co-existence, détente, disarmament, the need to avert a nuclear catastrophe, assistance to national liberation movements and a firm rejection of the policy of aggression and war. The foreign and domestic policy elaborated under the leadership of Mr. Brezhnev would continue to be conducted consistently and purposefully.

10. Mrs. OULD DADDAH (Mauritania) took the Chair.

AGENDA ITEM 65: UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY FOR PALESTINE REFUGEES IN THE NEAR EAST (continued)

- (a) REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER-GENERAL (A/37/13, A/37/479)
- (b) REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON THE FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY FOR PALESTINE REFUGEES IN THE NEAR EAST (A/37/591)
- (c) REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONCILIATION COMMISSION FOR PALESTINE (A/37/497)
- (d) REPORTS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/37/425 and Corr.1, A/37/426, A/37/427, A/37/488 and Corr.1, A/37/599)

11. Mr. MAIMBO (Zambia) said that, since its establishment, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) had carried out its humanitarian duties with great courage and often under very difficult conditions. The precarious financial situation of the Agency had been further aggravated by the recent Israeli invasion of Lebanon in June 1982. That invasion had caused extensive destruction of property, loss of life and untold suffering to Palestinian refugees, particularly women and children.

12. The collapse of UNRWA owing to lack of funds would be a great disaster for the Palestinian refugees and would have dire consequences for the political situation in the Middle East and for international peace and security in general. His delegation appealed to the international community, particularly those countries with stronger economies, to increase their financial contributions to the Agency so that it could continue providing humanitarian services to the Palestinian refugees. The projected deficit for 1983 called for a greater degree of commitment from the international community. He expressed satisfaction at the efforts of all the countries which had enabled UNRWA to continue to render its invaluable services.

13. The continued denial of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people was the core of the Middle East conflict. Until a lasting and durable peace acceptable to all parties concerned was achieved in the region, the Agency must be allowed to carry out its role. In that regard, his delegation called upon the Government of Israel to withdraw its forces from all Arab territory which it illegally occupied since 1967. Like any other people, Palestinians were entitled to a State of their own and to the full realization of their national right to self-determination and to a homeland of their own under the sole and legitimate leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization. The continued occupation of the Arab territories was inadmissible and in violation of international law.

(Mr. Maimbo, Zambia)

14. The security of Israel could only be achieved through peaceful co-existence with all its neighbours in the region, not by military might. His delegation, therefore, called upon Israel to desist from its policy of arrest and repression directed against innocent Palestinian refugees. That policy often involved UNRWA staff members and thus impeded the Agency's vital services. He also deplored the occupying authority's practice of taking punitive measures against the defenceless refugee community.

15. During the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in June, UNRWA's vital installations had not been spared. Schools, medical centres, water supplies and refugee camps had been destroyed. Thousands of Palestinian refugees and Lebanese civilians had been displaced and were currently without food and shelter. His delegation urged the international community to exert increased efforts to resolve the underlying political problems in the Middle East which had necessitated the establishment of UNRWA. Until the Palestinian people had a State of its own and until a durable peace had been restored to the region, the international community should continue to support fully the commendable work of the Agency.

16. Mr ABOUCHAER (Syrian Arab Republic) said that his delegation greatly appreciated the services rendered by the Commissioner-General and his staff to the Palestinian refugees in extremely difficult circumstances brought about by the deteriorating financial position of UNRWA in recent years and by the security conditions prevailing in the areas of its operations. The continuing occupation of Arab territories and the results of the barbaric Israeli attack against the Lebanese and Palestinian peoples had added new burdens to those already borne by the Agency. Hundreds of thousands of refugees had been displaced from camps destroyed by savage Zionist bombardment.

17. The report of the Commissioner-General contained in document A/37/13 did not give the issue of the Palestinian refugees the attention which it deserved. It reminded all that the issue concerned a people and a homeland, and only secondarily relief and contributions, and then called upon the international community to remedy the situation on that basis. His delegation believed that any approach which ignored the truth, whether intentionally or not, or which aimed at restricting the issue to one of relief was mistaken and destined to failure. For more than 34 years, the United Nations had adopted, at successive sessions, numerous resolutions affirming the inalienable rights of the refugees, among them the right to return to their homeland, to receive compensation and to have access to essential services. The international community must be reminded of those resolutions, of the need to play an effective role in their implementation and of the fact that any attempt to leave the issue without a comprehensive and just solution would have the gravest consequences.

18. The terrible disaster that had befallen Lebanon, one of the host countries of the Palestinian refugees, clearly showed the danger of leaving that problem without a just solution in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions. It had shown the world the true nature of the expansionist aspirations of Israel and of the kind of peace which it sought. That disaster had revealed, to whoever still

(Mr. Abouchaer, Syrian Arab Republic)

had doubts, how Israel did all in its power to exterminate the Palestine refugees and pursue them wherever they might be. The international community was still reverberating from the shock of the pictures of the terrifying slaughters which had taken place in Beirut in mid-September. Today, all could still hear the sound of the bombs and shells launched against the refugee camps and innocent civilians from land, sea and air, when use had been made of the most up-to-date means of mass destruction provided by successive American Governments to Israel. That could rightly be described as one of the most abominable crimes ever committed against mankind.

19. His delegation could have wished that the special report of the Commissioner-General contained in document A/37/479 had given more of the horrifying details of the results of Israeli war crimes in Lebanon and that it had been clearer and more precise in identifying the author of those crimes. It was to be noted that some parts of the special report, for example, paragraphs 4, 9, 25, 44, 51 and 52, might give the impression that the destruction of the Agency's installations had been the result of a natural disaster, whereas everyone knew that its destruction had been caused by the Zionist invasion forces. In the paragraphs mentioned, however, the special report had used the passive voice. It was to be hoped that such reticence had not been due to concern on the part of those who had drafted the report for the feelings of the Zionist invasion forces.

20. One of the tragic consequences of the Israeli invasion had been the return of hundreds of thousands of refugees to a condition worse than that which they had known more than 30 years before. Once again, as time after time in the past, they had been forced to leave their shelters and had found themselves without accommodation, food, medicine and clothing. Sometimes, they found themselves even without drinking water, as had been the case when the Israeli invasion forces had imposed repeated blockades on Beirut and as the Commissioner-General had himself testified in the special report. Israel, acting from the hatred of humanity dictated by its Zionist ideology, had destroyed in a few moments all that had been achieved and built up over decades and all the services and facilities provided to the refugees by UNRWA. His delegation would have been pleased if the special report had contained an affirmation that the disaster of the Palestinian refugees had happened once again and would be repeated as long as they continued to live outside their homeland and as long as the Zionist usurpers, the enemies of mankind, continued to occupy that homeland. The struggle would continue as long as the refugees did not return to their homes and property and to the homeland for which they would accept no substitute, in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the United Nations and the provisions of international law.

21. In view of the severe winter conditions in Lebanon, his delegation agreed with the Commissioner-General on the need for urgent action within and outside the United Nations to provide shelter for those hundreds of thousands of Palestinian refugees who had once again been displaced. It also supported the endeavours of the Commissioner-General to urge all Member States to increase their voluntary contributions to UNRWA, so as to ensure that emergency expenditures for the

(Mr. Abouchaer, Syrian Arab Republic)

provision of shelter could be met. His delegation also called for the relocation of the headquarters of UNRWA, at the earliest possible opportunity from Vienna to its original site in the region, so that it would be close to its field of operations.

22. The question of direct and indirect assistance to the Palestinian refugees from the host countries and the political and security difficulties which those countries underwent as a result of the refugee problem remaining unsolved had not been accorded sufficient attention in the Commissioner-General's report (A/37/13). Under the heading of table 13, showing direct assistance to Palestinian refugees (annex I of the report), there was a note to the effect that UNRWA was unable to verify all data shown independently. That note awakened doubts as to the veracity of such data. Nothing prevented the Agency from investigating and verifying the accuracy of the data submitted by the Arab host countries on their direct assistance to Palestinian refugees domiciled in their territory, assistance which, his delegation firmly believed, exceeded in value all of that provided by the entire international community.

23. His delegation wished to state its categorical rejection of the inclusion of Israel in the list of States providing direct assistance to Palestinian refugees and demanded the deletion of its name from table 13. As far as concerned the West Bank and the Gaza Strip as UNRWA fields of operation, Israel was to be considered an occupying and usurping Power, to say nothing of its being the basic cause of the plight of the refugees, because of its plunder of their property and land. Israel's inclusion in the list was incompatible with established facts and was completely unacceptable. It should adhere to the resolutions of the United Nations concerning the return or compensation of refugees in accordance with paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 194 (III).

24. His delegation noted that the drafters of the report of the Commissioner-General had adopted a style which led one to believe that they had wished to anticipate and avoid any Israeli criticisms and had taken no account of objective and established facts, a matter which in some respects made the report unbalanced. By way of example, in paragraphs 29, 31, 187 and 188, the savage and destructive Israeli invasion of Lebanon and all the bloody massacres and crimes of mass slaughter committed against Palestinian refugees by the Zionist invasion forces were referred to as "Israeli military action", an expression corresponding to that used by the Israelis. Having heard the statement of the Commissioner-General introducing his reports at the beginning of the deliberations on the agenda item under discussion, his delegation was pleased to record its deep satisfaction at his decisive use of the term "Israeli invasion" instead of "Israeli military action".

25. The report dealt with the general and security situation in the West Bank, Palestinian Arab territory forcibly occupied by Israel since 1967, in paragraphs 53 to 66. The international community had unanimously condemned the occupation and had on various occasions, expressed its support for the struggle of the Palestinian people for the restitution of its usurped rights, including its right to self-determination. However, those who had drafted the report had wished

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the name and character of the occupation authorities to remain obscure, and, in all of those paragraphs mentioned, they had not once used the term "Israeli occupation authorities" but had contented themselves with the term "the occupation authorities" without mentioning any name. His delegation disapproved of such vagueness, which might, in its view, lead to the despicable identity of the Israelis being concealed from the international community.

26. In the context of its discussion of the Agency's operations in the Syrian Arab Republic, the report had adopted a perplexing and worrying approach. Five times, in paragraph 9 of the Commissioner-General's foreword and paragraphs 42, 87, 103, and 140 of the report itself, mention was made of the effects of disturbances caused by outlaws in the city of Hama for a few days in February 1982 on the Agency's activities and installations. The report had inflated those incidents, leading the reader to believe that the installations of the Agency and the services which it provided for Palestinian refugees in the region had been their intended object. His delegation had listened with interest to what the Commissioner-General had had to say on the subject in his statement introducing his reports and wished that he would not become embroiled in matters which were of purely internal concern to one of the host countries and which were outside the frame of reference of UNRWA, either in his reports or in his statement. His delegation would like to record its objection to the assertions included in the report and to welcome with caution the subsequent correction that it had noted in the statement.

27. His delegation would also like to record its objection to the Commissioner-General's practice of showing the draft report to the Israeli occupation authorities, given the illegal character of their occupation of Arab and Palestinian territories. It also protested against the open discrimination shown in the letter of transmittal, the last paragraph of which made specific reference to the fact that the Commissioner-General had shown the draft report to the Israeli authorities and that he had given consideration to their comments. At the same time, he had contented himself with saying that he had consulted the UNRWA Advisory Commission and had taken into account members' opinions. He would have done well to have revealed the content of the so-called comments of the Israelis.

28. With reference to the financial deficit in the annual budget of the Agency, talk of such deficits and of the deteriorating financial situation of UNRWA had been often repeated since its establishment. Every year, UNRWA announced a financial deficit in its budget and announced, at the same time, measures to be taken to remedy that deficit, measures based primarily on the reduction of some services offered to Palestinian refugees and the elimination of others. That subject had, in itself, become a serious issue which had had repercussions on the Palestinian refugees and on the Arab host countries. The time had now come, particularly after the new disaster which had overtaken the Palestine refugees in Lebanon, for the international community to face up to the responsibilities imposed on it by that problem and to take radical action to solve it, so as to correct the situation and extricate the Agency from continuing and repeated crises.

(Mr. Abouchaer, Syrian Arab Republic)

29. The Palestinian refugees' need for relief did not arise from a natural disaster but from a political and military disaster which had led to their expulsion from their homes and the establishment of an extraneous, aggressive Zionist entity in their place. The refugee issue had now become an integral part of the issue of the Palestinian people which had been acknowledged by the United Nations as one of established rights. The solution of the refugee issue had also, therefore, become linked with that of the main issue, which involved enabling the Palestinian people to return to its homeland, to exercise its right to self-determination and to establish an independent state in its own land. Until those rights were put into effect, the continuation by the Agency of its work was a matter of international necessity dictated by the same humane considerations which had led to its establishment.

30. The colonialist Powers which had created Israel and which supplied it with the means for life and for survival, had wanted UNRWA to be an instrument for the liquidation of the refugee issue. They had, from the beginning, been successful in making its financing dependent on voluntary contributions restricted to a limited number of States, instead of having all States contribute to its budget as Members of the United Nations. Those colonialist Powers had wanted the Agency to remain permanently subject to financial pressures, and consequently political pressures, in order to ensure that it remained under their tutelage and that they dictated its policies. That became clear when a comparison was made with the limitless amounts of money that those countries had given to Israel, in addition to those means of mass destruction whose effects and consequences had recently been seen in Lebanon. It was truly saddening that the Government of the United States of America should have had recourse to financial pressure in withholding the sum of \$15 million from the Agency on the pretext that it had been late in submitting its report on the Sibliin Training Centre. That was another example of the kinds of political pressure and attempts of evasion to which the Agency was exposed because of the system of voluntary contributions. Any continuation of the budgetary deficit would, in the light of such data, incline his delegation to believe that the deficit had been intentionally caused in order, among other reasons, to create additional difficulties for the Arab host countries.

31. In implementation of the policy on the basis of which the Agency had been established, it had adopted a particular mode of operation and had come to consider the financial deficit in its annual budget as a foregone conclusion, just as it had come to consider its relinquishment of its task before the settlement of the Palestine refugee issue as a matter which could be contemplated. As a result, it had set the standard of services which it offered the Palestinian refugees below the minimum required by human needs and had adopted the reduction of some services and the elimination of others as a basic means of meeting the recurring and increasing deficit in its annual budget. The services of the Agency could no longer tolerate any reduction. Some services were provided to less than one half of the total number of Palestine refugees and had been withheld from the remainder. While the total number of refugees registered as of 30 June 1982 was 1,925,726 the number of those receiving basic rations was 831,729. From the beginning of September 1982, the gradual phasing out of the basic ration programme had begun, and the amount of

(Mr. Abouchaer, Syrian Arab Republic)

food aid distributed to refugees had been reduced and standards of living lowered accordingly, particularly in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. A delegation of representatives of the Palestinian camps in those two areas had, to no avail, delivered a memorandum of protest to the Deputy Commissioner-General in which they had demanded the reversal of the decision to suspend the distribution of food aid and the improvement of other services.

32. The annual budget of the Agency was not drawn up on the basis of the real needs of the Palestinian refugees and it had, consequently, concealed the true nature of what was required for their relief. If it did draw up its budget on the basis of real needs, it would then become apparent that the amount required would be twice its present budget. The Agency had previously reduced its budget without any justification and had exempted the international community, and in particular those States responsible for the creation of the problem, from a large part of their responsibility.

33. His delegation was convinced that the reduction in services was an independent policy making of the financial deficit a pretext for the gradual winding up of the Agency's operations and the transfer of the burden of all the services provided by it onto the shoulders of the Arab host countries, before or without the settlement of the refugee problem. The Syrian Arab Republic rejected all attempts aimed at reducing the level of services or their abolition in any field whatever, whether education, health or relief. The international community had a duty to come to the rescue of the Agency, in order to avoid an explosive situation which, as daily events in its area of operations made clear, would affect not only the Palestinian refugees or the Arab host countries but also peace and security in the region and in the world as a whole, as long as an entire people remained in exile, was deprived of its homeland or remained under occupation.

34. His delegation did not agree with the Commissioner-General that an increase in contributions continued to be the only sure way of providing the Agency with the necessary means for implementing its programmes. The past 30 years, as well as recent events, had proved conclusively that the fact that the budget remained dependent upon contributions was harmful to the interests of the refugees. It was, therefore, not possible that an increase in contributions could be the only way, as the Commissioner-General had said. In the view of his delegation, the best possible solution would be to make the budget of the Agency a part of the regular United Nations budget or to establish a supplementary budget, annexed to the United Nations budget, to which all States would contribute according to assessments to be determined by Member States in such a manner as to alleviate or entirely remove the burden falling upon poor countries and, at the same time, to increase the assessments of those countries able or willing to bear a greater share.

35. His country was deeply appreciative of the efforts made by the Commissioner-General and his staff and would not hesitate to co-operate with him to the greatest extent possible in order to ensure that the Agency could fulfil its humane function which enjoyed his Government's total support.

36. Mr. WAHBI (Saudi Arabia) said that "from tents to tents in 34 years" was the fate of the Palestinian people and the Palestinian refugees, as a result of the failure of the United Nations, and the Security Council in particular, to implement the resolutions of the Organization. After 34 years, the Palestinian refugees were experiencing the harshest living conditions, housed in tents, while their only food consisted of small amounts of flour, sugar and tea and some canned goods. They were afflicted with epidemics and disease, which their bodies were unable to resist, particularly in the case of infants and old people.

37. Israel had no sooner become a State than it had passed to the stage of colonialism and oppression, at a time when all colonial peoples were being liberated. The centuries-old Palestinian people was no less entitled to the right of self-determination than the other peoples. However, Israel had incorporated in its opportunistic colonialist scheme elements of historic linkage, religion and celestial promises, so as to guarantee the arousal of a tendency for fanaticism, arrogance and denial of the rights of others, particularly the rights of the Palestinian people uprooted unjustly by aggression from its country.

38. He was not surprised that the reports of the Commissioner-General of UNRWA (A/37/13, A/37/479) stated that all UNRWA's operations in Lebanon and all its centres of activity and training, health and relief programmes in the south and in west Beirut had come to a halt because of the Israeli invasion and the destruction and bulldozing of the remaining housing, schools, service centres and hospitals for refugees, in the areas where they had been set up. There was no doubt that the Israeli air raids on refugee camps and civilian quarters in preparation for the Israeli invasion had aimed at killing the greatest possible number of Palestinian refugees, in order to annihilate them and force the survivors to leave the camps in which they were living as a result of their forced departure from their homes in Palestine in 1948 and 1967. The Israeli army had not been content with dropping phosphorus bombs and cluster bombs on the refugee camps but had brought its bulldozers, after occupying the camps, and set about destroying all signs of most of the dwellings, in order to prevent the surviving refugees from rebuilding their homes and to force them to leave for other areas or countries. The victims of those savage operations were estimated by the Commissioner-General at 198,000 out of a total of 239,000 refugees in Lebanon. The situation had now reached the stage where it was wondered whether it was possible to set up temporary housing for the surviving refugees to protect them from the cold during the winter and rainy season. There seemed to be differences in political circles even with regard to the erection of tents. Even children's schools would be under tents.

39. The Commissioner-General had stated in his special report (A/37/479) that, in south Lebanon alone, there had been 75,000 homeless people and 33,000 others in need of food. He had stated in his main report (A/37/13) that UNRWA was in urgent need and had issued an appeal, dated 24 June 1982, for the provision of \$39 million to supply 175,000 Palestinian refugees with emergency relief for a six-month period. He had stated, however, that that amount would only suffice to cover limited relief. According to the report the deficit in the Agency's regular budget prior to the Israeli invasion and the total destruction sustained by the Agency's installations and by the Palestinian refugees had been \$43,500,000.

(Mr. Wahbi, Saudi Arabia)

40. His delegation believed that the reports of the Commissioner-General (A/37/13, A/37/749) by no means did justice to the topic. They were confined to material losses affecting the Agency's installations and services. That was not intended as a criticism of the Commissioner-General, who had been and was doing his utmost in that humanitarian work. However, he would have expected the reports to mention the losses of lives caused by the Israeli army's deliberate and savage bombing of populated quarters, using the various kinds of advanced weapons and, in particular, those prohibited by all international laws of war. He would have expected the report to contain a mention of the numbers of hospitals and clinics serving Palestinian refugees that had been destroyed, burnt or looted by the Israeli army. The report should also have mentioned the current situation with regard to medical facilities for refugees. The hospitals and clinics which had provided care for the refugees in south Lebanon and Beirut were no longer operative, because of the constant bombing and destruction. Thus, the more than 200,000 Palestinian refugees in Lebanon had no health services at all.

41. UNRWA had been established as a result of the expulsion of the Palestinian people from its home by the Zionist entity in 1948. The General Assembly had considered that situation temporary until such time as Israel implemented United Nations resolutions and the refugees were able to return to their homes or receive compensation instead, if they so preferred. However, Israel had refused to implement all the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and the Security Council. It had deliberately disregarded and even challenged them and had persisted in occupation and annexation and the expulsion of Palestinian inhabitants. Israel would not have dared to follow such a course without the unlimited support which it had received and was still receiving from certain of the big Powers, in particular the United States of America. What the Zionist entity had done to the Palestinian people over the past 34 years was the most abominable and unjust act committed against any people in modern times.

42. Saudi Arabia had made its contribution to the Agency's budget and had also made voluntary contributions annually. However, the primary responsibility for the current situation of the Palestinian refugees lay with those States which had helped in the establishment of the Zionist entity and were still giving it financial and moral support and providing it with weapons of destruction in order to annihilate the Palestinian people and to prevent the implementation of the resolutions of the world Organization and the triumph of right and justice.

43. He urged States to be generous in the financing of UNRWA's programmes, which must cover the reconstruction of the refugees' housing and their provision with the necessities of life, such as schools, medical services and food. His delegation insisted that those programmes should be implemented speedily before the onset of the winter, which might otherwise wipe out a large proportion of the survivors.

44. Mrs. TNANI (Tunisia) said that the latest example of Israeli aggression in June 1982 had affected areas in which approximately 198,000 of the 239,000 Palestine refugees in Lebanon had been living. Much of the work carried out by UNRWA over three decades had been destroyed, and approximately 15,000 families had lost their homes in the areas of Tyre, Sidon and Tripoli.

/...

(Mrs. Tnani, Tunisia)

The latest Israeli aggression was yet another manifestation of the policy pursued since 1948 in order to chase the Palestinian people from its lands through terror and violence. The sole solution to the problem of the Palestinian people remained the free exercise of its right to return to its home in the territories occupied by Israel. Any agreement which in any way restricted the return of the displaced Palestinian people was unacceptable. The Palestinian people, which had been living in refugee camps for more than three decades, refused to accept the fait accompli brought about by Israeli aggression and rejected any limitation of its right to return.

45. She expressed satisfaction at the work of the Commissioner-General and the staff of the Agency, whose task had been made much more difficult because of the latest Israeli aggression. The programme reductions brought about by the budget deficit were regrettable. Her delegation agreed with the Commissioner-General that increased contributions in cash remained the only way of providing the Agency with means to continue its programmes. Originally, assistance provided by the United Nations to the Palestine refugees had been envisaged as strictly provisional in nature, pending the return of the Palestinians to their homeland. At its third session, the General Assembly had established the Conciliation Commission and instructed it to take steps to assist the Governments and authorities concerned to achieve a final settlement of all questions outstanding between them. Her delegation felt that, after the Arab Summit Conference in Fez, such an event was possible and desirable. The States in the Middle East were in need of peace and security based on the full exercise by the Palestinian refugees of their right to return and the exercise by the Palestinian people as a whole of its right to self-determination and independence.

46. Mr. ONYIGE (Nigeria) expressed satisfaction at the excellent reports of the Commissioner-General of UNRWA and commended the staff of the Agency for their dedication to duty under very difficult circumstances. His Government viewed with grave concern the current dangerous trends in the world in which the peaceful settlement of disputes was gradually giving way to the use of force and called upon all nations to renew their commitment to the principle of the peaceful settlement of disputes as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. Nigeria condemned the invasion of Lebanon by Israeli military forces in June 1982. The practice of settling political and territorial conflicts by the use of force was totally unacceptable to his Government. The issue of a Palestinian homeland was at the heart of the refugee situation in the Middle East. No enduring peace could be achieved in that region until that problem was solved in a manner acceptable to the Palestinians. It was hoped that the international community would continue to strive for peace and bring about a just settlement to the refugee situation in that region.

47. Over the years, Nigeria had regularly and faithfully contributed to the budget of UNRWA, so that the Agency could continue its humanitarian activities. His Government was always ready to do all that it could to help alleviate human suffering anywhere in the world. In response to the needs of the thousands of Palestine refugees who had been the victims of the Israeli onslaught in June 1982,

(Mr. Onyige, Nigeria)

Nigeria had sent medical supplies worth \$150,000 to the refugee camps in Lebanon. In spite of its meagre and dwindling resources, Nigeria had made that great sacrifice because of its commitment to the humanitarian cause. It was hoped that Member States would respond generously to the appeal made by the Commissioner-General of UNRWA for funds both for the regular and for the emergency programmes for 1983. Lastly, his delegation expressed the hope that the world would never again witness such massacres as those perpetrated in the refugee camps in Sabra and Shatila in September 1982. Those crimes against humanity should strengthen the resolve of the international community to create a new world where conflict, war and suffering had no place.

The meeting rose at 5 p.m.