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Statement to the International Conference on the Question of Palestine**

Submitted by Mr. A. Ibragimov, President of the Soviet Committee of Solidarity with the Countries of Asia and Africa at the International Conference on Palestine, a non-governmental organization accredited to the International Conference on the Question of Palestine.

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S T A T E M E N T

of Comrade M. AJBRAGIMOV, President of the Soviet Committee of solidarity with the Countries of Asia and Africa at the International Conference on Palestine

(Geneva, 29 August - 7 September 1983)

Dear Mr. President,

On behalf of non-governmental mass organizations invited to this historic Conference I would like to warmly greet and wish successful work to this representative forum which is an important contribution to the struggle of the Palestinian people for its inalienable national rights.

The Soviet Committee of Solidarity with the Countries of Asia and Africa which I have the honour to represent, firmly stands, together with other organizations in the USSR and all over the world, for full implementation of appropriate UN decisions on the Palestinian question. The Soviet people, guided by lofty principles of international solidarity, have always been supporting the peoples struggling for their national rights.

Such struggle, deserving respect of all the honest people of the earth, is carried on by the Arab people of Palestine led by the Organization of Liberation of Palestine.

We want to pay tribute to the ancient and talented Arab people of Palestine which, under the brutal Israeli occupation, makes efforts to achieve its noble goals, to defend itself and its culture. This people gave the world excellent writers, artists, actors, who glorified its struggle. What can surpass the supreme happiness of giving all of one's forces and thoughts, giving one's life to the cause of the struggle for freedom and independence and prosperity! If you read the verses of Palestine poets your heart could not have remained indifferent to the feelings, expressed in their creative work by the sons and daughters of this people, who had suffered so much!

The Palestinian soldiers together with their Lebanese and Syrian brothers demonstrated wonderful endurance and heroism, when last summer they stood in the way of the Israeli military machine. They upset the principal goal of the Israeli aggressors - to destroy the OLP, to drown in blood the Palestinian revolution. One can physically exterminate thousands and thousands of people but one cannot destroy the spirit of the people. The Palestinian people is alive, the Palestinian people is fighting for its legitimate rights!

The present International Conference is held in an exceptionally important period of the evolution of the situation in the Middle East. This period is characterized by continued barbarous aggression of Israel against the Arab states. The invaders enjoy military and political support of the United States, use fascist methods of suppression and violence. The bloody events in Sabra and Shatila camps afforded striking evidence of this. They caused angry indignation and protests of the people throughout the world.

The Soviet public opinion participates with growing enthusiasm in all actions in support of the Palestinian Resistance. Rallies and manifestations are taking place in our country, where the participants resolutely condemn Israeli aggression and the hostile position of the United States. The Soviet hospitals treat the Palestinians who were wounded during the Israeli aggression against Lebanon. Our educational institutions teach hundreds of Palestinian students. The Soviet public organizations maintain active ties with the Palestinian Resistance, with international and national organizations, concerned with assistance to the struggle of the Arab people of Palestine.

My Committee maintains good relations with the UN Committee on the implementation of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. The visit of the delegation of the Committee to the USSR, headed by its President Mr. Makambo Sarre has played an important role in their extension. During the visit the delegates acquainted with the multifaceted activities of the Soviet organizations and scientific centres dealing with the Palestinian problem and met the representatives of the official instances of our country.

Last summer the barbarous war in Lebanon against the Palestinian and Lebanese peoples raised a strong tide of protest all over the world. The Soviet people - workers, engineers, scientists, peasants, physicians, teachers - have supported the Palestinian and Lebanese peoples and demanded that the aggression be immediately ceased the troops withdrawn from Lebanon. The Soviet Solidarity Committee has transmitted to the Palestinian Red Crescent four transport airplanes of medicaments, tents, clothes, and other basic necessities to help the victims of the aggression.

A group of skilled Soviet physicians has been sent to the Palestinian camps, who worked there for more than two months. They operated on and rendered medical care to, wounded Palestinian combatants and civilian population.

An important initiative to support the struggle of the Palestinian people has become creation of the Soviet public commission entrusted with the investigation of Israeli aggressors' crimes in Lebanon. Its participants have done a considerable work in order to reveal and qualify the crimes committed by the Israeli military establishment during and after the aggression in Lebanon in summer, last year. Delegations of Soviet physicians, lawyers, cultural workers and public leaders have visited Lebanon after the Israeli aggression. The international community has obtained irrefutable evidence of Israeli use against the Palestinian and Lebanese peoples of types of American weapons as phosphorous, cluster and vacuum bombs.

The United States - Israel's "strategic ally" - have been found to be accomplice of the aggression against Lebanon.

We urge that all the necessary assistance be provided to the Arab people of Palestine in its struggle for its national rights to establish an independent Palestinian State!

I wish to conclude by quoting the words of Comrade Y. Andropov, Chairman of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Council, who noted that "the Soviet Union took and will continue to take the side of the rightful cause of Arab peoples, of their struggle against the Israeli aggression, for freedom and independence, for just peace in the Middle East".

Let me express my appreciation to the sponsors of the Conference for the work they have done to prepare and hold such an important international forum.

I would like to voice my confidence that the Conference would promote increased and enhanced international solidarity movement with the struggle of the Palestinian people for the implementation of its inalienable rights.

Thank you.