



President: Mr. Imre HOLLAI (Hungary).

AGENDA ITEM 34

**The situation in the Middle East: reports of the
Secretary-General (continued)**

1. Mr. FISCHER (Austria): In the long and troubled history of the Middle East, the past year has brought yet another climax in the cycle of violence, war and human suffering. This year's events and, above all, the war in Lebanon have again highlighted the threat to international peace and security inherent in the Arab-Israeli conflict.

2. The images of the tragic events in Lebanon, of death and destruction, are still fresh in our minds. They will not easily be forgotten. Austria has on several occasions expressed its strong condemnation of Israel's invasion of Lebanon. The Austrian Government and people were particularly appalled by the massacres of Palestinian refugees in the camps of Sabra and Shatila. We were deeply shocked by these atrocities because they were committed against refugees, the most helpless of all people and the most in need of protection.

3. But at the same time, the tragedy and renewed affliction of the Palestinian people and of war-ravaged Lebanon have generated a momentum for peace and underscored the urgent necessity of arriving at a solution of the Middle East conflict. Political leaders all over the world have brought their creativity and their personal influence to bear in a move towards this goal.

4. Each attempt to resolve the Middle East conflict requires, first of all, the recognition of the right of all States in the area, including Israel, to exist within secure and recognized boundaries and the recognition of the national rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to have a State of its own. Furthermore, the Palestinian people has the undisputed right to participate in the search for a solution to the Middle East conflict. It has the right to participate in this process through representation of its own choice. The Austrian Government recognizes the Palestine Liberation Organization [PLO] as the representative of the Palestinian people. A further essential element for any solution is the withdrawal of Israel from the territories occupied in 1967, including Jerusalem.

5. The last months have seen the emergence of various proposals in which those necessary elements are included either partially or in full. Austria has welcomed the constructive approach taken by the

Arab Governments which led to the plan submitted by the Twelfth Arab Summit Conference, held at Fez in September 1982 [A/37/696]. The importance of this plan has been widely recognized. Above all, we regard it as a clear indication on the part of the Arab States and the PLO of their willingness to continue working for a negotiated settlement and a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East. The proposals submitted by United States President Reagan in his address of 1 September 1982¹ seem to us of great importance. As a major factor in the political equation of the Middle East, the United States has thus taken a great step beyond previous positions. The proposals contain many constructive elements for compromise and reconciliation. We hope that, on this basis, negotiations will soon materialize and produce concrete results. We also studied with great interest the proposal submitted by Egypt and France to the Security Council² and we believe that the Security Council should further explore its potential. This exploration could lead to establishing common ground in the Security Council which might lead beyond previous resolutions.

6. All the various initiatives and proposals serve the same valuable purpose—they aim at bringing the conflicting aspirations and hostilities of the past decades to an end through peaceful means. It is in this spirit that they have to be viewed by all parties to the conflict. They should be given time to develop and prosper. In the meantime, the parties concerned should refrain from any action that could spoil the fragile chances for a peaceful solution.

7. Austria has consistently maintained that a just and comprehensive solution of the Middle East problem can be achieved only through negotiations among all parties concerned, including the PLO. There is no alternative to dialogue and negotiation. Resort to violence and use of force can only aggravate the situation, lead to further violence and create new obstacles on the road to peace. Therefore, we reject unequivocally the use of force, as well as all acts of terrorism from whatever side. Austria has in the past repeatedly urged Israel and the PLO to enter into exploratory talks without any pre-conditions. We reiterate this call and are convinced that such talks could assume an essential function in the endeavours to find a peaceful and durable settlement.

8. The future status of the occupied territories is one of the central elements of any negotiated solution. Israel must therefore reverse its policies towards the occupied territories and respect the duties defined for an occupying Power by the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949.³ The continued expansion of the Israeli settlements, the expropriation of land for this purpose, the eviction, displacement and

harassment of the local population and the expulsion or imprisonment of elected officials are in clear violation of international law and seriously jeopardize chances for a negotiated settlement.

9. We are confident that, as the representative of the Palestinian people, the PLO will exercise restraint and wisdom and desist from any action that might further complicate the achievement of a peaceful and just solution of the Middle East problem.

10. Europe's relations with the Middle East has been and will continue to be close and intense, for historical as well as geographical reasons. In order to allow these relations to prosper and develop in a constructive and mutually fruitful manner, stability must prevail in the region and a just and lasting solution of the Middle East conflict must be found for the benefit of all people.

11. It is certainly difficult to reverse the process of mutual fear and distrust which has built up over the last decades. But it would be a highly dangerous illusion for any party to this conflict to believe that durable results can be obtained by force rather than by negotiation. On the basis of this recognition, we should trust that the political will and the courage will be found to stop the vicious circle of violence which has cast this region into turmoil for so long.

12. Mr. PASTINEN (Finland): The erosion of the authority of the United Nations and the weakening of its role in acting for the maintenance of international peace and security has been one of the central themes of this session of the General Assembly. The Secretary-General has devoted his report on the work of the Organization [A/37/1] to this issue. In response to his appeal, the General Assembly only last Friday adopted by consensus a resolution designed to provide a basis for dealing with the question [resolution 37/67].

13. The situation in the Middle East is the most graphic example of this erosion of the authority of the United Nations. The Middle East has been the foremost concern of the Organization for more than 35 years. Five major wars have been fought between Israel and Arabs during this time. They have all been as destructive as they have been indecisive. The conflict continues. For its part, the United Nations has been instrumental in negotiating armistice agreements. In Security Council resolution 242 (1967), it laid down a blueprint for a peaceful solution which still remains basically valid. In response to the use of force and acts of violence, it has adopted scores of resolutions, by both the General Assembly and the Security Council, on various aspects of the question of the Middle East. The United Nations has sent tens of thousands of peace-keeping troops to the area. It has mounted large-scale operations to alleviate the human suffering resulting from the conflicts. The efforts of the United Nations have no doubt been useful. Yet the advent of peace is not within sight. The United Nations is an instrument for peace, but that instrument cannot operate in a vacuum. It can only be of service if the parties to the conflict show a minimum of willingness to use it both in their own interest and in the interest of the international community as a whole.

14. This year has put the United Nations security system to a harsh test. Rarely has the international environment been less amenable to the peaceful

resolution of disputes by collective action through the United Nations. The notion that it pays to use force to solve international problems has been gaining currency.

15. The Israeli invasion of Lebanon and the massacres at Sabra and Shatila are tragic evidence of this development. Both the General Assembly and the Security Council have time and again requested Israel to respect the territorial integrity and national sovereignty of Lebanon. Israel has systematically ignored these calls and defied the authority of the only universal Organization established for the maintenance of international peace and security. Yet the State of Israel was created by the very same Organization that Israel has now chosen to ignore.

16. Finland has joined the rest of the international community in condemning Israel for its violence in Lebanon, which has caused grievous suffering to tens of thousands of innocent civilians. Yet the crisis in Lebanon is but a consequence of the unresolved situation in the Middle East as a whole. In recent years, that has been made even more intractable by a series of illegal acts by Israel. Israel has continued its settlement policies; it has illegally changed the status of Jerusalem; it has extended its jurisdiction to the Golan Heights, which the international community considers tantamount to annexation. All these acts have been duly censured by the Security Council and have been declared null and void by that primary organ of the United Nations responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security.

17. The events in Lebanon are the latest demonstration of the dangers inherent in the absence of peace in the Middle East. Yet the basic principles of a peaceful settlement were defined long ago and are nearly universally recognized. The acquisition of territories by force is inadmissible. Israel must therefore withdraw from territories occupied since 1967. It is equally imperative that the right of Israel and of all other States of the area to exist, and not only to exist but to live within secure and recognized boundaries, should be guaranteed. These principles are embodied in Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), which we continue to consider basic to a peaceful solution. Furthermore, provision should be made for the legitimate rights of the Palestinians, including their right to self-determination. This would presuppose the right of the Palestinians and of the PLO, as the most significant representative of their national aspirations, to participate in negotiations on their own future within the framework of a comprehensive solution in the Middle East.

18. Finland has given, and continues to give, its support to all proposals and initiatives aiming at a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East. We accordingly supported the joint statement by the United States and the Soviet Union, issued on 1 October 1977. We also supported the Camp David process, the initiatives by the European Community and the proposals of the King of Saudi Arabia. In the same general context, the recent initiatives by President Reagan¹ and President Brezhnev [A/37/457] and the proposals made at the Twelfth Arab Summit Conference [A/37/696], held at Fez, are of great significance. While these initiatives approach the problem from different premises, they all have a common

denominator: the achievement of peace in the Middle East through a process of negotiation. In substance, they also have a number of elements that are similar or basically the same. Thus, we have recently seen some promising departures from rigid positions held previously. A process towards a negotiated settlement, however slow and painful, seems to be getting under way. It is nevertheless of the essence that this process be maintained and encouraged.

19. While this process is evolving, the United Nations continues to play a crucial role. In practical terms, one of the most important features of that role is the vast peace-keeping activity of the United Nations in the Middle East.

20. In accordance with its policy of neutrality, Finland has taken a balanced and conciliatory position on the various controversial issues in the Middle East. We have thus maintained good relations with all the nations concerned, including the most immediate parties to the dispute. It is our firm intention to continue this policy and thereby preserve the confidence of all parties to the conflict in the Middle East. It has enabled us to render peaceful services to all concerned, as required.

21. A tangible expression of that is the sizeable contribution which Finland has made, and continues to make, to the United Nations peace-keeping activities in the area, ever since they began in 1956. The Government of Finland, in line with that policy, recently responded positively to a request by the Secretary-General to send a battalion needed to maintain and strengthen the capacity to act of UNIFIL. We consider that UNIFIL continues to have a vital role in all efforts to normalize the situation in Lebanon. With our participation in UNDOF and UNTSO, we are thus participating in all ongoing United Nations peace-keeping activities in the Middle East, with one of the largest contributions in men and in money. In this we are motivated by our desire to contribute to the achievement of peace in the Middle East and to do whatever we can to uphold the authority of the United Nations and its capacity to act.

22. The situation in the Middle East is often perceived as a regional conflict. Such a view belittles the pivotal political, strategic and economic importance of the region, transcending the regional confines of the conflict. The situation in the Middle East continues to pose the most persistent threat to international peace and security. The international community therefore has an urgent responsibility to join in a common effort to create at last conditions of peace in the Middle East through the United Nations.

23. Mr. KODING (Malaysia): The situation in the Middle East has been discussed in the General Assembly since the inception of the United Nations. During the past four decades, numerous attempts have been made to find solutions to this complex problem. Ironically, solutions have indeed been found, and they are manifested in the various resolutions adopted by the Organization, but unfortunately, despite the availability of solutions, peace in the Middle East continues to elude us, because one of the parties to the conflict adheres to its policy of aggression and does not believe in peace and co-existence with its neighbours. Here I am referring specifically to Israel, whose aggressive

and intolerable behaviour impedes the search for a peaceful solution to the Middle East problem.

24. Be that as it may, my delegation is convinced that the United Nations must persevere in its search for a comprehensive settlement to the Middle East question. The situation in that part of the world today continues to be precarious, causing deep and serious concern to the peoples and Government of Malaysia, and to peace-loving peoples everywhere. Because the stability of the Middle East is vital—and, indeed, central—to the security and stability of the entire world, any further deterioration in that area could have grave ramifications for the overall issue of peace and security.

25. Since the convening of the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly, the Middle East region has been fraught with additional sources of tension. Israel's unprovoked and premeditated attack on Lebanon and its collaboration with the Phalangist militiamen in the massacre of several thousand innocent Palestinian men, women and children at Sabra and Shatila have introduced fresh discord into the area, which is already saturated with tension and conflict. Recent developments in the Middle East have made it clear that Israel prefers the perpetuation of conflict to peace in the Middle East. The attack on the nuclear plant in Iraq, which is a signatory of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons [*resolution 2373 (XXII), annex*], illustrates the Israeli penchant for aggression. As regards the massacre of innocent men, women and children in Lebanon, there is ample evidence to show, despite a litany of denials to the contrary, Israeli complicity in this shameless act against humanity. These new developments in the region have further aggravated the already tense situation, rendered a peaceful solution infinitely more difficult, and called into question Israel's sincerity about wishing to live in peace with its neighbours.

26. While Israel's provocative actions against its Arab neighbours clearly demonstrate its tendency to aggression, its policy with regard to the occupied territories confirm that peace is remote from the Israeli mind, unless, of course, peace can be achieved completely on its terms. The Israeli aggression in the occupied territories manifests itself in many ways. It has enforced the applicability of Israeli laws and administration in the Syrian Golan Heights through legislation which reduces the territory to being a mere adjunct of Israel, with a view to changing its demographic character and obliterating its Arab identity. It has replaced democratically elected mayors of the West Bank, dissolved its indigenous political institutions and replaced them with Israeli military and civilian officials. It has desecrated the sanctity of the Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock, one of the holiest of the Islamic shrines, and tried to alter the character and identity of the Holy City of Jerusalem, which is revered by Christians and Muslims alike. In the face of these outright acts of aggression, peace in the Middle East will be increasingly difficult to achieve and violence will continue to characterize developments in the area.

27. The situation in the Middle East is being aggravated by the dynamics of international politics in general. Because of this, we should not exclude the involvement of super-Powers in the event of an

other outbreak of conflict in the area. Although their involvement thus far has been limited and restrained, there is no guarantee that this pattern of involvement will continue indefinitely. If it changes, there will be neither victor nor vanquished, for ultimately we will all be the losers.

28. A few days ago, my delegation stated in the debate on the question of Palestine [87th meeting] that we regard the Palestinian issue as being the core of the whole Middle East problem. But Israel seems impervious to this very vital point and is adamant and obsessed in its refusal to recognize the legitimate aspirations and rights of the Palestinian Arabs. As I stated earlier, the framework for a comprehensive political settlement can be found in the various resolutions adopted by the United Nations. Three essential elements must be accorded recognition by the parties concerned. They are immediate, unconditional and total Israeli withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories; the fulfilment of Palestinian aspirations, including their aspiration to exercise their right to return to their homeland and to self-determination and independence; and the restoration of Jerusalem to the Arabs.

29. In reviewing the events in the Middle East, my Government notes with regret the ongoing conflict between the brotherly countries of Iran and Iraq, countries with which we share close and abiding relations. In this regard, my delegation would like to urge those two countries to cease fighting and to resolve whatever conflict they may have by peaceful means, in accordance with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. We hope that, to this end, they will intensify their co-operation in the conciliation efforts of the Secretary-General's Special Representative, the non-aligned countries and the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

30. Despite the diversionary incidents, most of the conflicts which have taken place in the Middle East during the past year seem to have revolved around the Arab-Israeli conflict. In this regard, my delegation appreciates the efforts which the United Nations is making to reduce tensions and to mitigate the various destabilizing factors in the Middle East. It is tragic that the United Nations has on several occasions been paralysed by some of its Members and prevented from playing a more effective role to bring about a rapid, just and equitable solution of the Palestinian problem. We are all aware of the rationale and the circumstances which brought about the inception of this body, yet we have placed limitations on its capacity to act. In this connection, my delegation fully concurs with the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization [A/37/1], in which he decried the ineffectiveness of the United Nations which has resulted from various impediments and obstructions caused by Member States themselves.

31. My delegation believes that the unified determination of the international community, complemented by the efforts of the countries of the region, has become more imperative in solving international conflicts. It is only on this basis that we can compel Israel to comply with the United Nations resolutions and the norms of international behaviour. My delegation is prepared to support any effective measures that could in the end bring peace again to the Middle

East, because the alternative to peace is too horrendous to contemplate.

32. Mr. ABULHASSAN (Kuwait) (*interpretation from Arabic*): The debate on the situation in the Middle East is characterized every year by a certain pattern, in that whenever the time comes to discuss it the international community finds itself facing a new dimension in the series of dimensions which keep being added to this question, thus adding to its complications. In previous years, the list of new dimensions included the Israeli annexation of Holy Jerusalem and the Syrian Arab Golan Heights, and the treacherous Israeli aggression against the Iraqi nuclear installations.

33. This year, as we meet here to discuss this item, the perfidious Israeli invasion of Lebanon last June is still reverberating. That invasion constitutes not only a serious violation of the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of a peaceful State Member of the United Nations—Lebanon—but also a new dimension in the question of how far Israel can go in violating international humanitarian and moral laws and practices in order to achieve its expansionist objectives.

34. The crimes which Israel has committed against the Palestinian and Lebanese people in Lebanon, whether in the shelling of densely populated residential areas and the blowing up of houses over the heads of their defenceless occupants or through its invasion of Lebanon and the subsequent dreadful massacre planned and perpetrated by Israel against the defenceless Lebanese and Palestinians in the Sabra and Shatila camps, have shocked the conscience of mankind in an unprecedented way. This is especially so since the crimes that were committed were seen on television screens throughout the world and showed the Israelis as they really are and demonstrated their criminal nature, which the American mass media, in particular, had previously covered up.

35. Almost six months have passed since Israel launched its sinister invasion, which is still not over because Israel still occupies Lebanese territory. Despite the repeated resolutions adopted unanimously by the Security Council demanding unconditional Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon, we find that Israel is not content with setting one condition after the other for its withdrawal but acts as if it intends to stay in Lebanon as an occupying Power, not only to achieve its well-known objectives but also to attain other objectives according to its political whim.

36. The Israeli invasion started, as we all remember, on a flimsy pretext—namely, that it was necessary to provide protection for the inhabitants of Galilee. The invaders then exceeded this objective by continuing to advance until they ended up blockading the capital, Beirut. That blockade demonstrated the aggressive and inhuman spirit of the Israeli military and political establishment. The invaders then lifted the siege, only to occupy Beirut once the Palestinian fighters had left, in order to commit their atrocious crimes in Sabra and Shatila.

37. The Israeli invasion started, as we all remember, while the Israelis were repeating boldly, and in complete disregard of Lebanese national sovereignty, that one of their basic objectives was to give the Lebanese the opportunity to establish their legitimate Government. However, their troops have continued to

besiege B'abda and other areas. We also find that their pledges evaporated and it became certain that they were no more than lies—if we still needed any affirmation that Israeli opportunism can come out with anything but lies.

38. By instigating sectarian dissent among various Lebanese communities, on the one hand, and making endless demands of the Lebanese Government, on the other, Israel proves indisputably that it is planning to stay in Lebanon indefinitely.

39. When we discuss the situation in the Middle East in all its dimensions, including the new dimensions that Israel keeps adding in what looks like an endless chain, we should take into account the fact that Israel always acts with a single objective in mind: the establishment of Greater Israel, that is, a State which includes all the land of Palestine plus some territories from adjacent countries. Hence, when discussing or tackling the situation in the Middle East, the international community must take this objective into consideration. Against this background, what has happened and has been happening in Lebanon for the past six months and what is happening in the occupied territories in the West Bank and Gaza are but aspects of one and the same Israeli objective.

40. In the land of Lebanon and in the land of occupied Palestine, Israel uses the following methods to achieve that objective: first, it imposes military hegemony on the Arab region in its entirety in order to impose the Israeli political will in its familiar dimensions; secondly, it attempts to seize Arab land either by invasion, as was the case with the Syrian Golan Heights and now southern Lebanon, or by confiscation, seizure and stealing, as was the case with the occupied territories in the West Bank and Gaza; and, thirdly, it attempts to expel the inhabitants through either deportation or expropriation of land in an effort to force its inhabitants to leave the fatherland, or by planning massacres to create panic which will force people to leave.

41. It is no surprise that the present Prime Minister, Menachem Begin, who planned the Deir Yassin massacre of 1948 and who since then has boasted that that massacre played the greatest role in the creation of Israel, through the resulting evacuation of the land in order to allow the creation of Israel, also planned the Sabra and Shatila massacres.

42. The entire international community is aware of the fact that the core of the Middle East situation is the Palestine question, which was debated last week in the General Assembly. Therefore, any effort to settle the Middle East crisis should concentrate on that issue. There are two essential factors in any such effort: first, the big Powers must shoulder their major responsibilities regarding the solution of this issue; secondly, the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, must play an active part in all the efforts to achieve a settlement of the crisis.

43. We want to reaffirm our conviction that it is the duty of the countries which bear the major responsibility for the creation of the Palestine issue to be the first to recognize the PLO and to recognize that there can be no permanent peace and no just and comprehensive settlement until they themselves embark upon the right course, which is to address the

core of the problem by addressing the real party to the issue through its legitimate representatives.

44. We note that the big Powers which bear the largest share of responsibility for what happened and is still happening in the Middle East, particularly the United States, which actively contributed to the creation of Israel and provides it with the instruments of power and arrogance, insist on certain trivial procedural conditions, such as demanding that the PLO should recognize Israel before any dialogue can take place, or insist on one specific resolution or another, disregarding other resolutions which have been adopted and are still being adopted by the world Organization in an effort to settle the Middle East crisis. We see in that conduct a contradiction of the spirit of justice and fairness—indeed, a contradiction of reality—for the following reasons.

45. First, the resolutions which the PLO is requested to recognize before any dialogue is conducted with it are resolutions which were adopted to deal with a certain situation arising in the Middle East, not to solve the Palestinian issue itself. The demand for the recognition of those resolutions in isolation from all the other innumerable ones that have been adopted on the question of Palestine itself is therefore at best suspicious.

46. Secondly, we doubt the value of insisting on the recognition of a certain resolution or principle before the holding of a dialogue, because the value of such a resolution or principle lies in the commitment to it and not in the recognition of it. We have seen how Israel, which recognized Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), has totally nullified such recognition by unilaterally taking the decision to annex Jerusalem and the Syrian Golan Heights without waiting for a settlement of the Middle East crisis on the basis of those two resolutions. Moreover, the signing by Israel of the Camp David agreements did not prevent it from disregarding the one relating to the occupied territories in the West Bank and Gaza.

47. Thirdly, the insistence by those countries, particularly the United States, on attempts to exclude the basic solution, which recognizes the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and to establish its own State on the soil of its fatherland, or to exclude negotiations with the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, as recognized by the absolute majority of the countries of the world, demonstrates that the United States is still under the illusion that it can freeze the basic question of Palestine by seeking solutions through what could be termed, to say the least, a futile policy of patchwork.

48. On 29 November, we celebrated the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. Last week, we discussed the question of Palestine. At that time, my delegation requested the United States to take a step in the right direction by recognizing the PLO [87th meeting] and starting a dialogue with it. We renew that appeal now on the basis that refusal to face the basic issues and to deal with the principal parties has, throughout the past 35 years, been the main cause of the continuance of the bloody events and the explosive situation, and consequently of the instability in that vital region of the world. We there-

fore again call on the United States to adopt the course which we and the international community in general believe to be the right one and to be conducive to the settlement of this thorny question of the Middle East.

49. Mr. TSVETKOV (Bulgaria) (*interpretation from French*): The attention of the General Assembly has once again been drawn to the situation in the Middle East, a region which has been among the most dangerous areas of tension in the world for the last three decades. As everyone knows, Israel's aggressive expansionist policy, its hostility to the Arab national liberation movement and its persistent intransigence *vis-à-vis* the aspiration of the Arab people of Palestine to exercise its legitimate right to self-determination constitute the direct cause of the Middle East conflict, a conflict that is unprecedented in length and intensity and in its destructive nature. But its deepest roots are to be found in the global strategy of imperialism, in particular American imperialism, which is trying to establish its supremacy in that region situated at the crossroads of three continents, rich in natural resources and of such strategic importance.

50. The way in which Israel has attempted to achieve its objectives in that region is a matter of common knowledge. The invasion of Lebanon, the mass extermination of its civilian population, the barbaric bombing of Beirut and of other communities have truly shocked the international community. Tel Aviv's actions have been described as genocide and rightly compared to the Hitlerite massacres in the Second World War. The names of the Palestinian camps of Sabra and Shatila, where monstrous carnage was carried out, have now joined the names of Oradour-sur-Glane, Lidice and other symbols of the suffering of innocent martyrs caused by the brutality and cruelty of the conquering aggressor.

51. Together with the massive offensive against the Palestinian movement, those in Israeli ruling circles have launched by force a programme of territorial expansion. New Israeli settlements are being set up in the West Bank of the Jordan and in the Gaza Strip at an increased rate, while existing ones are being strengthened and expanded. The events that occurred in the Middle East in the spring and summer of this year confronted the world with a new dangerous situation stemming from the colonizing action of Tel Aviv. Israeli troops have occupied a considerable portion of Lebanon, and the Israeli leaders make no attempt to conceal their intention to establish a springboard there, a bulwark of its future anti-Arab policy, which poses a new military threat in that part of the world.

52. In recent years, the world has witnessed many manifestations of Israel's policy of conquest directed against neighbouring Arab States. Jerusalem and the Golan Heights have been annexed. That flagrant violation of the Charter of the United Nations and of decisions of the Organization aroused the profound indignation of the international community and has been condemned by the Security Council and the General Assembly as a criminal and arbitrary act. The unprovoked air attack on the Iraqi nuclear installations near Baghdad was an act of aggression by which international law was once again violated by

Tel Aviv. It dealt a severe blow to the nuclear non-proliferation régime and to the prestige of the United Nations. That raid—which by pure chance did not cause great loss of human life—was, because of its possible consequences, virtually tantamount to the use of the atomic weapon, which has been denounced by the world Organization as the most serious crime against humanity.

53. In this regard, it is logical to ask how it is possible for Israel to act in such an irresponsible manner in spite of the deep indignation of peoples the world over and the unanimous condemnation by the international community, which has been expressed in several resolutions of the General Assembly. The answer to that question is to be found, above all, in the total, unreserved support by the United States for the warlike policy of Tel Aviv. The United States is acting virtually together with the aggressor in its constant attempts to justify its political line in international forums, in blocking United Nations efforts to take steps against the aggressor's crimes and in pursuing a policy of dividing the Arab States. The separate Camp David agreements concluded in 1978 and advertised as a "triumph for peace" were in fact nothing more than a typical manoeuvre of the imperialist policy of neo-colonialism. Those agreements pitted Arab countries against each other; they excluded a solution to the question of Palestine and foreshadowed the impasse in all other spheres. Far from bringing peace closer, that operation opened the way for the establishment of a direct United States political and military presence in the Middle East region. Practically speaking, the Camp David deal only gave a green light to new acts by Israel against Arab countries and peoples, whose common front was undermined and weakened.

54. Israel's aggressive political line is materially guaranteed by the financial and military support of its protector across the Atlantic. More than \$2 billion annually, the most sophisticated weaponry and military technology constantly feed the bloodthirsty adventures of Tel Aviv. The Middle East has literally become a testing-ground for the tactics and the military arsenal of imperialism within the framework of its global strategy.

55. The similarity of the major economic, political and military objectives of Tel Aviv and Washington in that region is at the heart of their strategic alliance. Within the framework of that alliance, one of the parties intends to push all events in that region into the orbit of its strategy of world hegemony. The other party hopes for the lasting achievement of its chauvinistic and expansionist ambitions and, together with its more powerful ally, hopes to be able to dictate the fate of peoples in that part of the world. Israel is openly banking on the constant support of the United States when it throws down the gauntlet to the United Nations, in the hope that its crimes will remain unpunished.

56. In this context, my delegation cannot consider the latest plan for a settlement in the Middle East put forward by the United States Government as anything other than an element in its political and military strategy in that region. That plan excludes the creation of an independent Palestinian State. It does not allow for the participation of the PLO in a peaceful

settlement. It repeats the old versions of "administrative autonomy" in conditions of total Israeli control, including military control, over territories inhabited by Palestinians. That plan has rightly been criticized by the international community and has in fact met with the opposition of all those concerned, because of its partiality, eclecticism and lack of realism.

57. The People's Republic of Bulgaria is pursuing a consistent policy of principle on issues relating to the Middle East crisis. It condemns the aggressive policy of Israel and its plans to annex Palestine. Recent events confirm our conviction that in order to reach a just and lasting solution to the Middle East crisis it is necessary to work together, with goodwill and the participation of all the parties concerned, including the PLO. It is obvious that peace in the region cannot be achieved through separate deals that violate the legitimate rights of peoples, nor through mediation efforts and questionable schemes. Peace can be achieved only through an international conference which is broadly representative, in which the participants are on a footing of equality, with a view to finding a comprehensive solution to the problems of the region.

58. The People's Republic of Bulgaria insists on the total and immediate withdrawal of all Israeli troops from the Arab territories occupied since 1967, on the exercise by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights to self-determination and the creation of its own State, and on guaranteeing to all States in the region the right to an independent and secure existence. As part of that position, my country supports the realistic and constructive programme of the Government of the Soviet Union for a comprehensive settlement of the Middle East crisis, in particular a solution to the Palestinian problem. That initiative enjoys broad international support. Its major provisions are in complete agreement with the principles adopted by the Arab countries at the Twelfth Arab Summit Conference, held at Fez.

59. In accordance with that position, the People's Republic of Bulgaria has made and will continue to make every effort it can to ensure a peaceful and just solution to this conflict and the establishment of lasting peace and security in that sorely tried region.

60. Mr. AL-QASIMI (United Arab Emirates) (*interpretation from Arabic*): I should like, at the beginning of my statement, to express my delegation's gratitude to the Secretary-General for the very useful report that he has submitted on the situation in the Middle East and related questions.

61. A rapid perusal of the report [A/37/525] shows how far Israel has gone in its violation and defiance of United Nations resolutions, in particular those of the Security Council. The report also shows that, unfortunately, many negative positions have been taken by one of the permanent members of the Security Council, positions that have prevented the Council from adopting more effective measures to compel Israel to respect and implement its resolutions.

62. The situation in the Middle East is deteriorating daily, not because the peoples of the Middle East are experiencing only violence and chaos but, rather, because they have found themselves obliged to defend themselves and resist aggression continuously ever

since the plot hatched by colonialism and world Zionism to occupy and divide their territories and plunder them, as has been and still is the case today in Palestine:

63. The Middle East region was the cradle of civilization and human knowledge; it was the beacon which lit the way for many peoples and nations; it saw the dawn of three divine missions preaching understanding, harmony and justice. If that region had not been the victim of conspiracy, occupation and all that followed in the way of revolution and instability, it would never have deviated from that path.

64. It is not surprising that the Balkanization of the Middle East, its division into tiny, weakened States, was among the priorities in the plans of the super-Powers, to make it easy to occupy them and to reduce to nothing the aspirations of those peoples to unity, resurgence and freedom from occupation and colonialism. Although the aspirations of the Arab States to freedom and independence became a reality, for 35 years the Palestinians have been longing for freedom and to return to their homeland and the homes from which they were driven to become refugees living in scattered camps which, to say the least, are unfit for human beings. For many years, the Palestinian people have lived in exile, suffering both within and outside the Arab territories, while Israel continues to annex their lands and appropriate their property, creating settlements in those occupied territories, throwing Palestinians into prison, torturing them, exiling them and depriving them of their right to return.

65. The sufferings of the Palestinian people as a result of the systematic Israeli terrorism have no precedent in the history of the world. In the discussion of human rights throughout the world, we must not forget the rights of the Palestinians who are killed because they dare to cast a stone against the occupying Power, who see their homes destroyed because they have a brother or a son who is suspected of being involved in the resistance to the occupation. The Palestinian people see their elected representatives eliminated or attacked because they reject occupation; they see their books confiscated and their schools and universities closed for months because they have shown their opposition or expressed their opinions. This inhuman behaviour reveals the racist character of Zionism, which seeks to destroy the Palestinian people, to compel them to leave their land and to turn them into stateless people—in short, if the opportunity arises, to eliminate them, as demonstrated by the massacres at the Sabra and Shatila camps.

66. Today, the General Assembly is asked to ensure justice and equity for those people. It is invited to support them in their struggle to defend their existence, their land and their dignity until such time as they recover all their rights. We wish to thank the Assembly for the moral support which it gives the Palestinian people, but that support in itself is not enough. Suffice it to note how far Israel has gone in its persecution of the Palestinian people, trampling under foot the countless resolutions on the question of Palestine.

67. The Israeli aggression against Lebanon has shown once again the hegemonic and expansionist intentions of Israel, despite its desperate attempts to deceive the world about its security needs. The

Israeli leaders have declared that the purpose of the invasion was to guarantee the protection of Israel against any attack from a region within a 25-mile radius of its national boundaries. After that, Israel was to withdraw unconditionally. What has happened since, however, shows quite clearly that Israel has indulged in lies and trickery, because its invasion and occupation of the territory went as far as Beirut. Its forces still refuse to withdraw, and it is now associating the concept of withdrawal with conditions that are humiliating to the dignity and sovereignty of Lebanon.

68. Israeli demands for security are acceptable only to the Israeli leaders. The civilized world has confirmed its total rejection of those demands, which in fact only conceal a desire for expansion and aggression. The world, which has seen the inherent falseness of Israel's security needs after its attack on the Iraqi nuclear installations and its desperate attempts to justify that action, cannot afford to ignore the true intentions of Israel in attacking Lebanon and other Arab countries. By its occupation of the Syrian Golan Heights, Israel has shown quite clearly that its fundamental purpose in the context of its aggression against Syria was in fact the annexation of Syrian territories. In December 1981, Israel enacted the laws which led to that annexation and imposed Israeli nationality on Syrian citizens. The annexation of the Golan Heights by Israel shows how unfounded are its allegations in relation to its rights within the framework of the annexation of the West Bank and the Holy City of Jerusalem, because the Golan has never been a shelter for the Jews.

69. No solution of the Middle East question could succeed if it did not tackle the core of the problem, namely, the question of Palestine. No separate solution which failed to take into account the national rights of the Palestinian people could ever succeed. The Twelfth Arab Summit Conference, held at Fez, in which we participated, put forward a comprehensive, objective proposal for solving these two questions. We hope that the United Nations, and in particular the Security Council, will bear in mind the importance of this development and the historic nature of this stage, and will play an important and effective role in the efforts to achieve the objective all of us pursue, that is, a comprehensive, lasting and just settlement of the question of Palestine and of the situation in the Middle East.

70. Mr. BA-ISSA (Democratic Yemen) (*interpretation from Arabic*): Only a few days ago, the General Assembly discussed the question of Palestine. The entire world affirmed that this issue is at the very heart of the Middle East problem which we are discussing today. Without the dispersal of the Palestinian people and the creation of an Israeli State in Palestine to become a homeland for all Jews the world over, there would hardly be any problem in the Middle East.

71. The Zionist dream for the realization of a Greater Israel and the usurpation of Arab territories and Arab resources is no longer a secret now. In accordance with Zionist ideology, Israel has begun one war after another to occupy Palestinian lands and other Arab lands as well. Today, in the occupied Arab territories, Israel is exercising every single horrible form of violence and intimidation. Israel is confiscating territories, creating settlements and pursuing economic,

educational, health and social policies of integration with a view to the political annexation of these territories, following the annexation of the Golan Heights and Jerusalem. It has imposed conditions of subjugation and dependence—undoubtedly in support of its policy of *fait accompli*. This without doubt constitutes a policy of colonization.

72. The Zionist policy was given its most obvious form in the Israeli invasion of Lebanon and the occupation of Lebanon after the savage bombardment of Beirut, the atrocity of which exceeded all the Nazi practices and shocked the conscience of the entire world. Israel has remained deaf to every international appeal. It has violated all international usage and the Charter of the United Nations. It has defied every United Nations resolution. It has consecrated its policy of aggression and racism, taking no account of the humanitarian ideologies, principles and purposes which gave rise to the creation of the world Organization.

73. The Zionist entity would not have been able to pursue such a policy at all and display such arrogance without the unlimited support given it by imperialist circles. Without the economic, military and political support of the United States, Israel would never have been able to defy the international community and violate the resolutions of the United Nations. United States complicity with the Zionist entity is one of the major challenges hurled at the Arab nation, with the sole aim of protecting imperialist interests and thwarting any Arab liberation movement. Israel has taken on the role defined for it. Israel is always assured of American support, and the United States is now opening its military arsenals even more to Israel, giving it all kinds of sophisticated weaponry to sow death and destruction in occupied Arab territories.

74. The United States is making the Security Council into an instrument incapable of dissuading Israel and of enacting sanctions against it and its expansionist policy which is a threat to the sovereignty of States, to the security of the region and to world peace. The United States has tried to hoodwink international opinion by claiming to play the role of mediator in the search for a peaceful and equitable solution. Attempts to count on the American role and the Reagan plan and to cling to the decisions of the Fez Arab Summit Conference do not at all serve the Arab cause, interests or rights.

75. The true character of Israel and its aggressive designs have long been clear and are becoming even clearer. Hence, it is not at all surprising that the Zionist entity is strengthening its relations with the Pretoria minority régime because both those régimes are representative of colonialism and racism. The time has long passed when Zionist methods could be practised with impunity. Following the massacres at Deir Yassin and Kafr Kasseem and, recently, at Sabra and Shatila, no one can doubt that all this is done in accordance with the barbaric nature of Zionist expansionism. Do we need further proof in order to punish Israel and apply sanctions? Must we wait until Israel gives us another Beirut? There must be no further occupation, no more destruction, no more daily suffering by innocent people, including civilians, in the occupied territories who are resisting because of their determination and because they love their homeland. All of this

compromises the credibility of the United Nations and weakens its prestige among the peoples the world over, especially peoples still suffering from colonialism, oppression and exploitation and aspiring to freedom, justice and progress.

76. The Secretary-General, in his report on the work of the Organization, emphasized the basic problem in this connection when he said: "Debate without effective action erodes the credibility of the Organization." [A/37/1, p. 4.] He also stated:

"The Security Council, the primary organ of the United Nations for the maintenance of international peace and security, all too often finds itself unable to take decisive action to resolve international conflicts and its resolutions are increasingly defied and ignored by those that feel themselves strong enough to do so." [*Ibid.*, p. 1.]

The Secretary-General also stated in his report that "an important first step would be a conscious recommitment by Governments to the Charter" [*ibid.*].

77. We must take this path because decolonization is of great importance and is given pride of place in the Organization. The question of Palestine and the situation in the Middle East have been the subject of many United Nations resolutions—indeed, more than on any other problem. Nevertheless, the Zionist entity has totally disregarded and defied those resolutions and has used force to try to exterminate the Palestinian people and its leadership, as represented by the PLO, and has continued to occupy Arab territories and use up their resources. It is high time that the international Organization discharged its responsibilities and implemented its resolutions. Partial and piecemeal solutions have shown themselves to be useless. A genuinely comprehensive peace can be achieved in the Middle East only through total and unconditional withdrawal by Israel from the occupied Arab territories and the restoration of the Arab Palestinian people's inalienable national rights to return to their homeland, to exercise self-determination and to establish their own independent State on Palestinian soil. Without this, the Middle East will continue to be a hotbed of tension, threatening the stability of the region and international peace and security.

78. Mr. BALETA (Albania) (*interpretation from French*): For a very long time now, a highly complex and explosive situation has been reigning in the Middle East. Imperialist-Zionist aggression against the Arab peoples and countries has gone on without respite for decades. Bloody wars unleashed by the Israeli Zionists have brought enormous damage and suffering to the Arab peoples and have often endangered peace and security in the world. In recent years, apart from the Arab-Israeli confrontation, we have witnessed outbreaks of other conflicts and tensions among the countries in the region. The imperialist super-Powers provoked the fratricidal conflict between Iraq and Iran. Extremely dangerous situations are also being created all around the Middle East. The most serious case in point is the Soviet aggression against and occupation of Afghanistan. Just a few days ago, in the debate on the question of Palestine, many delegations rightly pointed out that this year the situation in the region has become even more tense and disquieting.

79. At the root of all these dangerous situations and burning problems besetting the Middle East are the unbridled aggressive actions of Israel, the aggressive, hegemonistic and expansionist policy of imperialism and social imperialism and the deeds of reactionary forces in the region.

80. The Arab peoples, and first and foremost the Palestinian people, have been constantly exposed to barbarous aggression by the Israeli Zionists and to the interference, treachery and intrigues of the two imperialist super-Powers, the United States and the Soviet Union, which have transformed the whole Middle East into a hotbed of continuous wars, a zone of permanent danger for the Arab peoples and for world peace and security. With the passing of time, imperialist-Zionist aggression has become more fierce. American-Soviet rivalry and deals have become more unremitting and more intense. Plots and intrigues have increased everywhere unceasingly. Because of all this, the settlement of the problem of the Middle East has become increasingly difficult and now seems more unattainable than before.

81. Israel has profited greatly from the difficult and confused situations created in the Middle East. Enjoying the generous economic, political, military and financial assistance of American imperialism, the Israeli Zionists have engaged in a continuous, unlimited escalation of their aggressive actions, of their expansionist and annexationist policy regarding Arab lands, have extended and intensified the genocidal practices against the Palestinian people and have endeavoured to bring to their knees or to destroy one Arab country after another.

82. The bloody events that occurred this year in Lebanon after the unleashing of the barbarous war by the Israeli Zionists against that already sorely tried and war-torn country marked the beginning of a new and extremely dangerous phase in the escalation of Zionist aggression and revealed even more clearly all the risks entailed in the lack of a just and final settlement of the question of Palestine and of the problem of the Middle East. The criminal nature of that war and its objectives were clearly shown even before it broke out. That war was no surprise to anyone. It was prepared before the eyes of the whole world day after day over a period of time by the Israeli Zionists and their masters, the American imperialists. It was obvious from the outset that what was involved was a large-scale war designed to drown in blood and to put an end to the Palestinian resistance, to compel the Arab peoples to renounce their rights and their struggle to recover their territories occupied by Israel and to enable the Israeli Zionists to achieve new expansionist and annexationist objectives within the framework of efforts to create a Greater Israel.

83. The recent ordeal of the Lebanese people and of the Palestinians in Lebanon has provided yet one more unquestionable piece of evidence that the Arab peoples, and the Palestinian people in particular, are more than ever before threatened by their enemies, and that their freedom, sovereignty and national rights are in serious jeopardy. In his statement on 10 November last on the occasion of the election of deputies to the People's Assembly of Albania, the leader of the Albanian people, Comrade Enver Hoxha, said:

“After Camp David, Israel attacked Lebanon. Now it is seeking to subjugate Jordan and threatens Syria with war. Whose turn will it be tomorrow? Iraq, Saudi Arabia, or Iran? The American and Israeli chiefs of staff are thinking about it and working on it. But will the valiant Arab peoples permit Israel and its American patron to do as they please at their expense? Will those peoples remain divided so that the latter can defeat them and oppress them one after the other as they are doing now?”

“We believe that this will never happen. The Arab peoples cherish freedom and have ancient traditions as warriors and they have contributed an entire civilization to mankind. They will certainly find the necessary strength to unite and to prevent the Zionist aggressors from occupying their lands and exterminating their people. However long the struggle, however great the difficulties and the sacrifices demanded, those peoples will triumph.”

84. Everyone knows full well that the two imperialist super-Powers are the bitter enemies of the Arab peoples and of the whole of mankind. They are scarcely interested in the settlement of the problem of the Middle East. All they do is to exacerbate the situation, create trouble and provoke conflict, in order more readily to assert their domination over that region rich in oil and so important strategically. That is why they have established military bases in the Middle East, have massed aggressive fleets in all the seas around the region and are trying to increase their military presence in order to sustain their political and economic positions. The Middle East has become a huge market where the Americans and the Soviets sell large quantities of weapons and make enormous profits, to say nothing of the other advantages they draw from their hegemonist policy. The friendship that one or the other super-Power offers to various countries in the Middle East does not benefit the cause of the Arab peoples.

85. American imperialism, which spares no effort to create the impression—a false impression—that in its Middle East policy it increasingly takes into account the interests of the Arab countries, is always working to the detriment of those countries and giving even more help to Israel, its gendarme and its depository of aggressive weapons in the Middle East. American imperialism envisages making of Israel the solid core around which it will unite all the reactionary forces capable of serving the interests of the United States. The strategic alliance concluded between the United States and Israel seeks, on the one hand, to support and encourage even further Israel's aggressiveness and expansionism and, on the other, better to protect the interests of American imperialism. That alliance was conceived and established for the purpose of permanently intimidating the Arab peoples, blackmailing all the Muslim peoples and extending the field of action of the Israeli war machine throughout the Middle East. The piratical Zionist attack on Iraq's nuclear installation was the first example of the effects of that alliance. But the main objective of the strategic alliance is to stifle revolutionary movements and national liberation struggles. American imperialism suffered a crushing defeat with the triumph of the anti-imperialist revolution of the Iranian people, which destroyed one of the main pillars of American influence in the Middle East, the régime of the Shah.

To offset that failure and to prevent the example of the Iranian revolution from spreading, the United States, apart from the establishment of the strategic alliance with Israel, has taken other steps, such as the creation of rapid deployment armed forces, the exercise of pressure to obtain military bases on the territory of Arab countries and the intensification of plots to impose upon the Arab peoples so-called solutions to the Lebanese problem, the question of Palestine and the question of the situation in the Middle East.

86. Thus, American imperialism has been and still is the avowed enemy of the Arab peoples. To escape the responsibility and the condemnation of the world for the crimes committed by the Israeli Zionists in Lebanon, the United States Government from time to time pretends to be angry with Israel and to disapprove of some Zionist actions. But no hypocrisy can conceal the fact that the United States is an accomplice in those crimes. Nor can the United States mislead the Arab peoples by claiming that it is powerless to influence Israel because Israel does not always heed what it says.

87. The same applies to the anti-Arab plans and activities of the Soviet social-imperialists, who have always encouraged and favoured Zionist aggression. The Soviet Union, like the United States, has caused enormous damage to the interests and rights of the Arab peoples. It seeks to make use of the antagonism between those peoples and American imperialism to pave the way for its own imperialist penetration and domination, at the expense of those peoples and their struggle against Zionist aggression.

88. The Soviet Union seeks to conceal its expansionist and hegemonistic objectives in the Middle East by banking on its name as a socialist State and friend of the Arab peoples. But who can truly believe that the Soviet Union sincerely supports the struggle of the Palestinian people and the other Arab peoples when the Soviet army of occupation is committing against the Afghan people crimes and massacres comparable to those of which the Arabs are victims? Can anyone forget how many times the Soviet Union has betrayed the Arab peoples and stabbed them in the back, and how many tens of thousands it has sent to Israel to become colonists in the occupied Arab lands or to serve as soldiers in the wars of aggression against the Arab fighters?

89. The rivalry and the wheeling and dealing of the two imperialist super-Powers in the Middle East have a long history. Many are the plots that they have hatched together or separately. At present, the United States is concentrating all its efforts on imposing the Camp David agreements as the only possible solution to the Middle East question, while holding in its hands the strings controlling the players in the web of diplomatic intrigue. In this way, it hopes to hold off for as long as possible its Soviet rival, which has been more or less evicted.

90. For their part, the Soviet social-imperialists never cease condemning the Camp David agreements and complaining of the violation by the Americans of the arrangements drawn up jointly, and demand a return to the practice of joint American-Soviet plots in the Mid-

dle East, and in particular to the anti-Arab arrangements in the declaration of October 1977.

91. It is within the context of the same rivalry between the two imperialist super-Powers that there recently appeared plans for a so-called settlement, under the names of the leader of American imperialism and the former head of Soviet social-imperialism. Like all the former plans developed in Moscow and Washington, they are directed against the basic vital interests of the Arab peoples. They are the result of the diplomatic efforts of the two super-Powers to turn to the advantage of their hegemonistic designs the difficult circumstances created for the Arab peoples by the Zionist aggression in Lebanon. The United States and the Soviet Union are trying to persuade the Arabs that the latter are not capable now of facing up to Israel and that they have no choice but to accept the protective umbrella of the super-Powers and to entrust to them the settlement of the problems of the Middle East. These are well-known tricks to break the will and undermine the struggle of the Arab peoples.

92. However, with a long experience of fighting that kind of manoeuvre, the Arab peoples know full well that the path to the achievement of their rights and to the settlement of the question of Palestine and that of the situation in the Middle East necessarily involves a resolute struggle against Zionist aggression and firm opposition to the interference and conspiracies of the imperialist super-Powers. The Socialist People's Republic of Albania and the Albanian people will energetically support, as always, the just struggle of the Arab peoples to free their territories, restore the national rights of the Palestinian people, and defend their liberty and the independence of their countries.

93. Mr. KORNEENKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) (*interpretation from Russian*): All who cherish the interests of peace and security the world over must feel deep concern and alarm over the continuing explosive situation in the Middle East. It has now become common to refer to that region as a flash-point of our planet. Over an historically short period of time, the Middle East has suffered five wars, whose flames have consumed tens of thousands of human lives.

94. We note with sadness that over the past year the Middle East has not taken one step closer to peace and calm. On the contrary, as a result of another Israeli aggression, new seeds of enmity and hatred have been sown there. The occupation of Arab lands continues, and the territory of long-suffering Lebanon has been added to the list. The inalienable rights of the Arab people of Palestine are still not enjoyed by that people, which is deprived of the possibility of exercising its right to self-determination and to establish its own independent State. The sovereignty and security of Arab countries in the Middle East are subjected to increasing threat.

95. The major responsibility for the maintenance of a hotbed of tension in the Middle East is borne by the ruling circles of Israel and their protectors across the ocean. Over many years, Tel Aviv has been pursuing an aggressive policy of expansion and genocide towards the Arab people of Palestine. In this connection, the Zionist top brass of Israel has blatantly been

flouting the generally recognized standards of international law and the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations.

96. As regards issues relating to a Middle East settlement, Tel Aviv is pursuing an openly obstructionist policy, sabotaging the implementation of basic General Assembly and Security Council resolutions on the Middle East and torpedoing any peaceful initiatives aimed at a just settlement of the Middle East problem. The Israeli leaders not only stubbornly refuse to recognize the legitimate national rights of the Arab people of Palestine but carry out direct attempts at the physical annihilation of the PLO and, in the final analysis, the entire Palestinian people. On the trumped-up excuse of the so-called ensuring of its own security, Tel Aviv is pursuing a policy of colonization and annexation of Arab lands seized in 1967.

97. Having declared the annexation of East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights, the Israeli leaders are not concealing their far-reaching plans for other Arab territories—the West Bank of the Jordan and the Gaza Strip. A daily norm of Israel's occupation policy is the systematic mass expulsion of the indigenous Arab population, the destruction of the homes of Arabs, the expropriation of their property and the construction of Israeli settlements. The feverish efforts of the Israeli authorities to settle and colonize the occupied territories are accompanied by an escalation of terror, violence and mass repression against the Arab population.

98. There can be no doubt that Israel would not have been able to act in such a brazen and provocative manner if it had not enjoyed the comprehensive assistance and support of the United States. From the very beginning of the State of Israel's existence, its economy has had a steady and substantial flow of loans, credits and subsidies from the Government of the United States, investments by American monopolies and contributions by Zionist organizations. Washington is no less actively pursuing a policy of encouraging Israel's militarist machine. The Israeli army has been provided with the latest American armaments and military technology, which underlie the material and technological basis for Tel Aviv's aggression against the Arab States. As we all know, during the aggression in Lebanon, Israel made broad use of the latest American-produced destructive weaponry, causing great losses among the population of Lebanon and the Palestinian refugees.

99. Along with generous military and economic support, the United States is lending Israel broad political and diplomatic support. The efforts of American diplomacy are inevitably directed towards one goal: concealing the crimes of its Israeli protégé and preventing the adoption by the Security Council of measures for thwarting the aggressor. We see this once again at the current session of the General Assembly. This is nothing other than outright collusion with the aggressor in its expansionist policy. In actual practice, the so-called special relations which have been established between Washington and Tel Aviv are an American-Israeli military-political alliance directed against Arab peoples and against the national liberation movements in the Middle East.

100. The current United States Administration, throwing off any type of camouflage, has taken up

the official, formal relations of an ally with Israel, concluding with it in November last year an agreement on "strategic co-operation". By signing that agreement, Washington has once again emphasized the key role which it allocates to Tel Aviv in the strategic plans of the United States for the Middle East. Israel has been, and remains, the "gendarme" of the United States in that region, called upon to help promote Washington's military and political domination, the suppression of the Arab national liberation movement and the division of the Arab world.

101. Part and parcel of American strategy in the Middle East has in recent years been the so-called Camp David peace process, in which pride of place is again given to Israel. Today, more than four years after the signing of the Camp David agreements, it is absolutely obvious that not one step has been taken to bring peace closer in the Middle East. On the contrary, this separate deal, concluded behind the backs of the Arab peoples and in violation of the interests of the Palestinians, has helped to heighten tension and the arms race in that region.

102. A direct consequence of the Camp David policy of separate deals and of the American-Israeli "strategic co-operation" was the barbaric aggression by Israel against Lebanon, in which tens of thousands of Palestinians and Lebanese were killed or crippled, in which towns and villages were wiped off the face of the earth and in which hundreds of thousands of people were left without shelter. The Israeli occupiers are still trampling Lebanese land underfoot and the Tel Aviv leaders are hatching new aggressive schemes against the Arab countries. Encouraging the expansionist aspirations of its junior partner, Washington is hatching its own military preparations in the Middle East region. Under the cover of falsehood about the so-called Soviet military threat and the protection of the false thesis of "the vital interests of the United States", the gendarme rapid deployment forces in that region are being put into action. There is a search for new military bases and bulwarks and flagrant interference in the internal affairs of countries of the region.

103. In the light of all this, those who are interested in establishing a just and lasting peace in that region cannot fail to feel serious concern over the latest attempt of the United States Administration, by means of diplomatic manoeuvres, to revive the Camp David agreements. Washington's so-called Middle East initiative is an attempt to make political gains out of the tragedy of Lebanon and to achieve in principle those goals which were outlined at Camp David. Washington's proposals are doomed by their very essence. They do not provide for a return to the Arabs of all the territories occupied by Israel. On the contrary, they give priority to ensuring the security of Israel alone. The new American scheme rejects the right of the Palestinians to establish their own State. The American proposals totally disregard the PLO, which is the sole legitimate representative of the people of Palestine.

104. It is our conviction that the United States proposals are dictated first and foremost by American hegemonistic aspirations and the expansion of American influence in the region. They violate the true interests of the peoples of that region.

105. Today it is clear as never before that a comprehensive and just settlement of the Middle East problem must take into account the interests of all those involved in the conflict. It is more than obvious that any attempts by diplomatic manoeuvring to sidestep the Palestinian problem or to "eliminate" it militarily are doomed to fail. Ever-broader circles of international public opinion are coming to understand that the solution to this problem, as well as the implementation of the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force and the withdrawal of Israeli troops from all territories occupied in 1967, constitute the core of the settlement of the Middle East question.

106. The delegation of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic believes that a good basis for a comprehensive and just settlement of the Middle East problem could be constituted by the proposals of the Soviet Union of 15 September 1982 [A/37/457]. In concentrated form, those proposals provide in particular for the total withdrawal of Israeli troops from all the Arab territories occupied since 1967; the ensuring of the inalienable right of the Arab people of Palestine to self-determination and the establishment of its own independent State on Palestinian soil; and the ensuring of conditions for the security and independent existence and development of all States in the region. International guarantees for a settlement should also be drafted and adopted. The role of guarantor could be undertaken by, for example, the permanent members of the Security Council, or by the Security Council as a whole.

107. We cannot fail to express satisfaction that the principles of the Middle East settlement approved at the Twelfth Arab Summit Conference, held at Fez [A/37/696] have much in common with the major provisions of the Soviet Union's proposals.

108. A comprehensive, just and lasting settlement in the Middle East, which is favoured by the overwhelming majority of States, can be achieved only through collective efforts with the participation of all parties concerned, which inevitably includes the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. Such efforts can be made within the framework of a specially convened international conference on the Middle East. The delegation of the Ukrainian SSR expresses the hope that the current session of the General Assembly will take effective steps towards reducing tension and the explosive situation in the Middle East and towards finding a comprehensive, just settlement of the Middle East problem.

109. Mr. LOEIS (Indonesia): Throughout the many frustrating years of the United Nations involvement in the search for a solution to the Middle East conflict, the Organization has adopted a plethora of resolutions which have unfortunately yielded little progress. The real contribution that we have been able to achieve has been in identifying and defining the basic principles for a settlement, namely, the unconditional withdrawal by Israel from all occupied territories, including Jerusalem, and the recognition of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to establish an independent and sovereign State. These fundamental elements have, over time, come to be recognized by the international community

as the indispensable building blocks and a *sine qua non* for a comprehensive solution. However, it cannot be said that this consensus had led to an implementable scheme for lasting peace.

Mr. Kuen (Austria), Vice-President, took the Chair.

110. In our statement on this item at the thirty-sixth session of the Assembly, my delegation voiced its foreboding and warned that "any further delay in taking appropriate measures [to secure Israeli compliance with United Nations decisions on this question] may well lead to consequences of an incalculable magnitude". [95th meeting, para. 250.]

111. We did not need to be clairvoyant to arrive at that view, as many delegations and, indeed, the Organization have similarly concluded that Israeli policies and their objectives exacerbate tensions, thwart all serious efforts to find a comprehensive solution and are not commensurate with a Member State's solemn obligations under the Charter of the United Nations.

112. Unfortunately, those dire predictions have been borne out, as the tragic developments in Lebanon and the occupied territories have added a new, more ominous dimension to the situation. These developments have preoccupied two of the highest organs of the United Nations throughout this year. The General Assembly—at its resumed seventh emergency special session—and the Security Council have held virtually continuous deliberations in their efforts to arrest new outbreaks of Israeli aggression and expansion and the implementation by Israel of policies which fundamentally alter the legal status of the occupied territories.

113. In this regard, the General Assembly—at its resumed seventh emergency special session—and the Security Council together adopted no less than 17 resolutions. However, these actions were defied by Israel in its contemptuous utter disregard of the will of the international community and the moral authority of the Organization.

114. Based on the foregoing, the undeniable reality is that the situation in the region has undergone a drastic deterioration which has created even more difficult circumstances, thereby separating us further from our ultimate goal of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. Thus, all the discussions that have taken place this year have been concerned with achieving a cessation of hostilities and a return to a situation which existed prior to their outbreak, rather than with progress towards an ultimate solution.

115. It is important to stress that Israel's invasion and continued occupation of large areas of Lebanon, its annexation of the Golan Heights and the declaration of Jerusalem as its capital, its imposition of civilian rule in the other occupied territories and its intensified oppression of the Arab population do not in any way alter the basic principles for a comprehensive settlement enumerated at the beginning of my statement.

116. Alas, the only obstacle to the establishment of the conditions for a just and lasting peace remains Israeli intransigence. Israel has long engaged in the practice of forcing one crisis after another upon the international community to keep it off balance, thereby forcing us also to deal constantly with imme-

diately outbreaks of violence only to face new ones tomorrow. Because of these recurring situations, we have been side-tracked and forced to put out the fires of new Israeli acts of aggression rather than begin to build the concrete foundations of lasting peace on the basis of the established principles.

117. In this way, Israel is always seeking to keep the cauldron of hatred, enmity, suspicion and tension boiling, ready to spill it over the region whenever there is even a ray of hope for peace.

118. My delegation participated in the resumed seventh emergency special session of the General Assembly, as well as in the meetings of the Security Council. Furthermore, we elaborated our position at length when the Assembly took up the question of Palestine and the question of Israeli practices affecting the human rights of the population of the occupied territories. In all cases, we have reiterated our firm commitment to the Arab cause in no unmistakable terms. The position of my Government has recently been most authoritatively stated in the message of President Soeharto on the occasion of the observance of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, in which he underscored the fact that

"the Palestinian struggle for the right to self-determination and to their homeland, including the establishment of an independent Palestinian State, has been recognized by the overwhelming majority of Member States as the central issue in the resolution of the Middle East conflict. I have, therefore, no doubt that lasting peace can only be established in the Middle East when the question of Palestine has been settled on an equitable and just basis".⁴

119. While the tragedy in Lebanon can never be justified, it has led to a heightened sense of urgency and realism. In this regard, my delegation has noted an initiative of certain States Members which, although falling short of complying with the fundamental elements, none the less reflects a new orientation and a greater willingness to view the realities in the region and to co-operate with the international community. Therefore, the increase in world solidarity, taken together with the unified Arab stance adopted recently at the Twelfth Arab Summit Conference, held at Fez, which my delegation fully supports, should serve as a warning to Israel that it can no longer act with impunity and that it must agree to negotiations on the basis of the numerous resolutions adopted by the United Nations.

120. My delegation hopes that this momentum generated in the aftermath of the invasion of Lebanon will not be allowed to dissipate but will lead to concrete action to compel Israel to conform to the will of the international community.

121. Mr. JAMAL (Qatar) (*interpretation from Arabic*): For the past 15 years, the United Nations has been considering the situation in the Arab territories occupied by Israel since the June 1967 war. During those years, the Security Council and General Assembly, up to its thirty-sixth session, have adopted many resolutions calling for the immediate withdrawal of the Israeli forces from those occupied territories. Towards the end of the present session, we are discussing not only the fact that Israel has not complied with United Nations resolutions but also, and above

all, the expansion of Israeli occupation, which has spread to Lebanon in the form of a barbarous invasion that has claimed thousands of victims among innocent Lebanese and Palestinian civilians, and which has not spared places of prayer, hospitals, schools, cultural institutions, embassies or refugee camps in southern Lebanon and Beirut. In other words, the situation in the Middle East has not noticeably improved in spite of the unceasing, intensive international efforts throughout recent years to bring about a settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. On the contrary, the situation in the Middle East has deteriorated greatly during recent years, and that deterioration culminated in the invasion of Lebanon on 6 June 1982 and its tragic consequences in political and human terms.

122. The Organization is powerless to establish peace in that sensitive region of the world, where Israeli militarism has been given free rein since the creation of Israel by General Assembly resolution 181 (II) in 1947. This question is still the subject of discussion. The United Nations considered all the political and historical aspects of this problem for more than 30 years before declaring, on behalf of the international community, its belief that the Palestinian problem was the very heart of the Arab-Israeli conflict and that peace could be established in the Middle East only if the Palestinian Arab people regained its legitimate inalienable rights, including its right to self-determination and to create its own independent State in Palestine.

123. In the face of Israel's stubborn refusal to comply with the resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council, the international community has reaffirmed this every year. This year alone, the seventh emergency special session has been resumed four times and the General Assembly has reaffirmed its earlier resolutions relating to the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force and the applicability of all the provisions of the Hague Convention of 1907⁵ and the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949³ to all the territories occupied by Israel since 1967.

124. The General Assembly has also demanded that Israel comply with the provisions of Security Council resolution 465 (1980) and with all the resolutions relating to Jerusalem. Furthermore, the Assembly has condemned all policies that prevent the Palestinians from exercising their inalienable rights. The Assembly will undoubtedly reaffirm those resolutions at the conclusion of the current debate, since they have not yet been implemented.

125. If the Israeli attitude is responsible for the failure of the efforts of the General Assembly, particularly during the resumed seventh emergency special session, the efforts of the Security Council have also had no chance of succeeding. The Council's efforts have three times been frustrated because the United States has exercised its right of veto at the most critical moment in the Middle East crisis. This enabled Israel to ignore Security Council resolutions 508 (1982) and 509 (1982) and to invade Lebanese territory, penetrating as far as Beirut. The Council, confronted with the United States veto, was powerless not only to stop the Israeli invasion but even merely to condemn the invasion by

Israel of an independent State Member of the United Nations.

126. Israel claims that it invaded Lebanon to protect its northern borders from the missiles of Palestinian commandos, but that allegation is unrealistic because we know that the PLO complied with the cease-fire agreement arranged by the American envoy, Philip Habib, in 1981. According to him, no Palestinian missiles were launched across the borders for nine months, until Israeli planes began bombing southern Lebanon.

127. The events that followed have shown that the large-scale military invasion was planned by Sharon, who wished to settle Israel's political problems by establishing its military domination over the region. He also wished to exert influence on the internal affairs of Lebanon in such a way as to change the political map of Lebanon in order to increase Israeli influence in Lebanon.

128. In order to carry out this plan, Prime Minister Menachem Begin and Defence Minister Ariel Sharon did not hesitate to perpetrate, in the guise of Phalangist reprisals, the massacre of Palestinian refugees in the Sabra and Shatila camps, which so shocked world public opinion.

129. Israel, following its long practice in lies and manoeuvres, has reached the stage of challenge and confrontation based on brutal military force, after being assured of the unlimited military, economic and political support of the United States.

130. This defiance is not apparent only in the refusal to comply with United Nations resolutions on the Middle East and the question of Palestine, for Israel has not complied with any of the resolutions which have accumulated in the past 35 years, with the exception of General Assembly resolution 181 (II), which relates to the creation of the State of Israel. Indeed, even in that case, Israel lost no time in turning against that resolution and treating it with the same disregard as other United Nations resolutions, because it provides at the same time for the creation of a Palestinian State in the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, which includes the city of Al-Quds al-Sharif and other parts of Palestine occupied by Israel since 1947.

131. Nevertheless, this flagrant defiance is most apparent in the declaration of Jerusalem of 2 September 1982 in response to the proposals of President Ronald Reagan concerning the Middle East problem. In that statement, the Government of Menachem Begin reaffirmed its devotion to what it calls the basic principles of that Government.

132. First, Jerusalem is one indivisible city, the eternal capital of Israel.

133. Secondly, Israel is determined to fulfil its responsibility for the internal and external security of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

134. Thirdly, the settlement of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip is an inalienable Jewish right and is part and parcel of the national security of Israel.

135. Fourthly, autonomy applies to inhabitants and not to lands.

136. Fifthly, it is the right of Israel to extend its sovereignty over the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

137. Sixthly, the creation of a Palestinian State on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip must be prevented.

138. The only interpretation of these principles was the statement by Israel that it was annexing the West Bank and the Gaza Strip without promulgating special laws to that effect—just as it had done when it annexed Arab Jerusalem and the Golan Heights—and its refusal to recognize the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to self-determination. It also defies all the United Nations resolutions which affirm these rights.

139. There is no doubt that the international community, now aware of all the dimensions of the Arab-Israeli conflict and convinced that the Palestinian problem is at the very heart of this conflict, knows that the settlement of that conflict depends on the solution of the Palestine problem on the basis of the recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, above all their right to self-determination and the creation of an independent State in Palestine, to include the Arab city of Jerusalem, in accordance with General Assembly and Security Council resolutions on this problem.

140. The Qatar delegation reaffirms that the decisions adopted at Fez, resulting from Arab unanimity and based on the essence of United Nations resolutions themselves, restore to the international Organization its legitimate role in solving the problem of the Middle East, together with the other principal parties to the conflict, including the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

141. The region of the Middle East will remain an area of tension, threatening international peace and security, until Israel withdraws its troops from the occupied Arab territories in the West Bank, including the city of Al-Quds al-Sharif, in the Gaza Strip, in the Golan Heights and in Lebanon. That is a basic prerequisite for the achievement of a peaceful, equitable and lasting solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict and for the establishment of peace in the Middle East.

142. Mr. OULD SIDI AHMED VALL (Mauritania) (*interpretation from French*): General Assembly resolution 3314 (XXIX), of 14 December 1974, defines acts of aggression, *inter alia*, as

“The invasion or attack by the armed forces of a State of the territory of another State, or any military occupation, however temporary, resulting from such invasion or attack, or any annexation by the use of force of the territory of another State or part thereof”.

The same resolution stipulates that no consideration of whatever nature may serve as a justification for aggression.

143. It is now clear that the Israeli authorities have decided to act against the spirit and letter of that resolution. The events that have occurred in the Middle East in recent years show that Israeli actions have taken the form of aggression: aggression against the Palestinian people, its existence, its personality, its culture, its land and its territory; aggression against all the countries in the region, against Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Jordan; aggression against the Iraqi nuclear installations—which means

above all aggression against the legitimate aspirations of the Arab people to cultural, technological and economic progress and also aggression against the international safeguards system.

144. The invasion of Lebanon and the resulting suffering and destruction imposed on Lebanon and the Palestinian refugees have revealed, if that were necessary, the true nature of Israel and have proved, to those who persist in disregarding it or pretend not to recognize it, the fact that Israel is not a peaceful State and that it has failed to fulfil its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and the resolution by which it was admitted to the Organization. In fact, the invasion of Lebanon and the genocide perpetrated against the Palestinian people in Sabra and Shatila have destroyed all the claims and lies inculcated through repetition of malicious propaganda.

145. The hour of truth has at last sounded for all those who during these past years have encouraged Israel by closing their eyes to its practices in the occupied territories, to its refusal to recognize the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, to the annexation of the occupied Arab territories, to its continued policy of colonization, to its annexation of Golan, to its proclamation of Jerusalem as its capital, to the oppression of the inhabitants of the occupied territories, to the attack on the Iraqi nuclear installations, to its repeated attacks and incursions into Lebanese territory, to its unprecedented contempt for the United Nations and to its refusal to implement Security Council resolutions—to mention but a few of its constant challenges to the conscience of the entire world, and in particular to the decisions and the credibility of the Organization and all its institutions.

146. Those who protect Israel and provide it with generous aid and comfort through misplaced comprehension or the unjustified use of the right of veto, despite the successive incidents of this escalation of aggression, are in part responsible for the situation prevailing in the Middle East today. To them my Government addresses an appeal to shoulder their special responsibilities in the light of their situation and the prerogatives conferred on them by the Charter.

147. The time has come to do justice to the Palestinian people and the whole region by finding a just and lasting solution to the Palestine problem, a *sine qua non* for any solution to the Middle East conflict. For its part, the Islamic Republic of Mauritania will endorse any solution which, in its view, is based on the following principles: first, the exercise by the Palestinian people of all its legitimate national rights, including its right to establish its own independent State on its land, Palestine; secondly, the withdrawal of Israel from all the occupied territories, including Jerusalem; and lastly, the participation on an equal footing by all the parties to the conflict, including the PLO, the legitimate and sole representative of the Palestinian people.

148. My country rejects all the partial agreements or treaties which do not fall within the context of a comprehensive solution in which all the parties to the conflict take part, including the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, the PLO.

149. Mr. LEGWAILA (Botswana): The recent invasion and continued occupation of Lebanon by Israeli troops have demonstrated in a most brutal fashion how volatile and dangerous the situation in the Middle East has become. Four bloody wars between the Israelis and their Arab neighbours have failed to earn the Middle East the peace and tranquillity the area so desperately needs for the enjoyment of all its peoples, and so will the recent invasion of Lebanon, the near destruction of its capital, Beirut, and the massacre of Palestine refugees in Sabra and Shatila. The cauldron of frustrated hopes and aspirations which the Middle East has become will continue to boil, and even more furiously. There will be no peace for Israel and its neighbours so long as the root causes of perpetual strife and conflict in the Middle East are ignored or simply explained away.

150. Reality cannot be explained away. The fact that the major root cause of perpetual strife and conflict in the Middle East is the brutalization of the Palestinian people by Israel is a reality which Israel, in particular, can ignore only at the risk of seriously endangering its own right to exist as a permanent reality rather than as a transient accident of history, as the detractors of the Jewish State are wont to suggest.

151. It is quite obvious that so long as the Palestinians are denied a home they can truly call their own—a country in which their aspirations can find free expression and fulfilment, an independent, sovereign State in which they can freely determine their own destiny in peace—the Middle East will never know peace. No country in the region will ever enjoy real security and real freedom, especially Israel. Yes, especially Israel, because history has proved that might can never make right. Israel would be dangerously deceiving itself were the beleaguered Jewish State to mortgage its entire existence by depending on preemptive attacks on its neighbours and on the facility with which, using the most sophisticated weapons in the world, it is able to wreak havoc on them. The truth is that the four bloody wars that have been fought between Israel and the Arabs since 1948 have made Israel less secure, more beleaguered and threatened and less able to face its future with any amount of confidence, because those wars have neither endeared Israel to its neighbours nor addressed the root causes of the conflict in the Middle East. The region, in other words, remains poised on the edge of a very dangerous precipice. Israel, in the eyes of its neighbours and of the world at large, remains a callous bully, an expansionist usurper of the homeland of the Palestinian people, most of whom have become permanent residents of refugee camps around the Arab world, irredeemably bitter at the very thought that Israel is not only occupying their ancestral land but also building Jewish settlements in them to create a *de facto* situation on the ground. We absolutely reject the acquisition of territory by force.

152. But we are not so naive as to suggest that if a solution were found to the Palestinian problem the Middle East would suddenly enjoy peace and stability; far from it. In his address to the Assembly on 30 September 1982, Botswana's Foreign Minister pointed out that

“As long as nations in the area deny one another the right to exist as sovereign and independent

entities within clearly defined and secure borders, peace in the Middle East will remain elusive and unattainable.” [12th meeting, para. 345.]

153. It is worth reiterating this fact, the fact that the denial of Israel's right to exist by its neighbours can only complicate the situation in the Middle East and seriously undermine the international community's search for a lasting solution to the Palestinian problem. Israel should be deprived of the excuse to persist in its expansionist course. It should not be driven to fight for its very existence or survival, for that is not how the conditions for a durable peace in the Middle East can be created. All the States in the area have every right to exist, to exist within clearly defined and secure borders. None of them is an accident of history. None of them is a transient reality. They are all there to stay.

154. My country remains of the view that half-solutions to the Palestinian problem are very dangerous in the sense that they serve only to perpetuate the problem rather than to solve it. We therefore must insist that the only solution to the Palestinian problem—that is, the only durable solution—which by extension could also greatly contribute to the search for a comprehensive solution to the problem of the Middle East as a whole, is the total decolonization by Israel of the West Bank and Gaza and the creation therein of an independent State of Palestine. Israel must be made to understand that it cannot be entitled to what it denies the Palestinian people—that is, the right to exist in freedom, peace and security in an independent country of their own. A biased revision of the history of Palestine by Israel or by anybody else can only delay the dawn of a new era of reconciliation in that war-torn area. Neither the Bible nor the Koran contains the solution to the Middle East problem.

155. The war between Iraq and Iran is also of great concern to us. The area affected by the war is one of the most important strategic places in the world. It veritably contains the spark likely to set the world aflame. Stored therein is the oil over which the super-Powers in particular occasionally threaten to exchange blows.

156. We are not interested in apportioning blame for that meaningless war to any of the belligerents. We want only to register the fact that, in our view, the war has outlived whatever usefulness or meaningfulness, if any, it might have had two years ago. Surely Iraq and Iran must realize that a war which does not end and shows no signs of ending is an exercise in futility. If there were any scores against each other which the two countries sought to settle two years ago when the war began, surely such scores must be considered more than settled, or will never be settled. Two years of a blood-letting, inconclusive and see-sawing war are more than enough for the people of the two countries to endure.

157. The Middle East has more than enough problems already and needs no more. All efforts in the area should be devoted to the dangerously festering wound which the Palestinian tragedy has become.

158. Lebanon remains occupied by Israeli troops. That poor country is not being left alone to rediscover itself, to give its people, who have suffered so long,

the opportunity to regain mastery of their own destiny. Israel has no excuse for keeping its occupation troops in that war-ravaged country, for it did not even have the right to send them there in the first place. Israel cannot by force of arms create a peaceful neighbour out of Lebanon. It cannot by force of arms transform Lebanon into a puppet friend of Israel, a docile one at that. The struggle for the right of the Palestinian people to return to their homes and to live in a country they can call their own, a country in which they can exercise their inalienable right to self-determination, is shared by the Lebanese people, as by all the Arab people. Therefore, Israel is deluding itself if it is bent on curing the Lebanese of their brotherly solidarity with the Palestinian people. If that be Israel's motive behind its rape of Lebanon, let the word go out to Israel that it is barking up the wrong tree or being dangerously simplistic about one of the most dangerous root causes of the Middle East conflict—that is, the disinheriting of the Palestinian people, and the very deep feeling of filial solidarity with them of all Arab countries, including Lebanon.

159. Mr. KIRFI (Nigeria): My delegation is grateful to the Secretary-General for his report on the situation in the Middle East [A/37/525]. In view of the great importance which we attach to peace and stability in this vital region, my delegation has read the report with great care and attention, and we are satisfied with its breadth and scope. We also agree with the Secretary-General's concluding remarks, as well as with his observations regarding the essential elements of a durable peace and stability in the Middle East.

160. With regard to recent military developments in the region and the United Nations peace-keeping operation there, I should like to take this opportunity to reiterate Nigeria's unequivocal condemnation of Israel's invasion of Lebanon in June and the subsequent killing of innocent and unarmed civilians in Beirut. Equally, we strongly condemn and deplore the massacre which took place at the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps when Israel again aided and abetted the cold-blooded murder of Palestinian refugees and other civilians. These events have undoubtedly made the attainment of a durable peace in the Middle East increasingly difficult. As the Secretary-General has rightly observed in his report, the area was generally quiet until the cease-fire, which had generally held in the area for about a year, was tragically broken by the Israeli invasion in June.

161. In this connection, it is pertinent to note that the activities of the three United Nations peace-keeping operations in Lebanon had helped in keeping the peace. But those peace-keeping efforts were undermined and gravely impaired by the Israeli invasion which, in effect, rendered meaningless the whole basis of the peace-keeping operations in Lebanon. As one of the countries that has contributed troops to UNIFIL, the Nigerian Government viewed these military developments with great concern. It was rightly concerned about the arrogant manner in which Israeli forces overran UNIFIL units in what was essentially a clear violation of the cease-fire arrangements and of UNIFIL's mandate to maintain peace in Lebanon. The subsequent injection of the so-called multinational force in Lebanon, outside the auspices of the United Nations, was also viewed by us with great concern,

as it represented a grave threat to the whole concept of the peace-keeping operations and to the collective responsibility of the United Nations for the maintenance of international peace and security.

162. As a result of these negative developments and trends, Nigeria has, after a very careful review of the military situation in Lebanon, decided to withdraw its troops from Lebanon at the end of UNIFIL's current mandate there, which expires on 19 January 1983. It was with great reluctance and with a deep sense of responsibility that Nigeria took this decision, despite the fact that it has always been ready and willing to participate in United Nations peace-keeping operations. Nigeria's withdrawal is in protest against the blatant and flagrant manner in which Israeli forces invaded Lebanon and overran United Nations forces there. Israel's action was most reprehensible, and Nigeria felt it right in the circumstances to reconsider the further utility of UNIFIL operations in Lebanon. I should like to say that Nigeria will always stand ready, if asked, to contribute its quota to any United Nations peace-keeping operations, in fulfilment of its international obligations. But this must be on the understanding that other interested parties and States will conduct themselves with the utmost restraint and will refrain from doing anything that may exacerbate the situation. In the particular case of Lebanon, Israel could not even be persuaded to lift its blockade of Beirut in order to permit the dispatch of urgently needed relief supplies. Nor did it pay any attention to several Security Council resolutions demanding an immediate cease-fire and its withdrawal from Lebanon. Israel continues to bear a heavy political and moral responsibility not only for the tragic situation in the Middle East, but also for its persistent undermining of all international efforts to bring peace to the region.

163. With regard to the situation in the occupied Arab territories, to which the Secretary-General alluded in his report, my Government fully supports General Assembly resolution 36/147, of 16 December 1981, which reaffirms the illegality of the Israeli occupation of those territories, particularly the Syrian Golan Heights, the West Bank and Jerusalem. In addition, Nigeria fully supports the demand that Israel should comply with the provisions of part B of that resolution, which requests it to desist forthwith from taking any action which would result in changing the geographical nature or demographic composition of those territories.

164. As is well known, Israel has continued to ignore all those resolutions and is pressing ahead with its plan to establish Jewish settlements in the occupied Arab territories. Need I add that it is the conviction of my Government that Israel's continued occupation of Arab territories constitutes a continuing threat to international peace and security and that this defiance of both General Assembly and Security Council resolutions is unacceptable to the international community? Like the racist régime of South Africa with which it is often rightly equated, Israel continues to undermine and weaken the whole basis of international peace and security by its arrogant and wilful defiance of all the resolutions and decisions of this Assembly. I might add that Nigeria, as a demonstration of its displeasure with Israel's policies in the Middle East and in compliance with General Assembly resolution ES-9/1, of

5 February 1982, has, since 1967, severed all political and economic links with Israel. The continued denial by Israel to the Palestinians and other Arabs in the occupied Arab territories of their basic human rights is deplorable, and Nigeria is deeply concerned about it. The reports of both the Commission on Human Rights and the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories have testified eloquently to the deplorable abuses of human rights in all the Israeli-occupied Arab territories. Similarly, Israel has consistently undermined all efforts to assist the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon.

165. Nigeria supports all diplomatic initiatives intended to bring a fair, just and durable peace to this region, and particularly to resolve the vexed issue of a homeland for the Palestinians. There are positive elements in the joint proposals of Egypt and France,² of 28 July 1982, for a peaceful settlement of the Middle East question, particularly the reaffirmation of the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to self-determination. But we are convinced that by far the best way to attain peace in the Middle East is through an international conference under the auspices of the United Nations to resolve all outstanding issues in all their ramifications. Nigeria will be happy to contribute in whatever way it can to such a conference.

166. Mr. MRANI ZENTAR (Morocco) (*interpretation from French*): Since the Israeli phenomenon first manifested itself in 1947, the Middle East has constantly suffered recurring crises, each more serious than the last, involving means of destruction ever more powerful, more devastating and more ruinous for all the countries of the region.

167. The cause of this cycle of violence, of which the Palestinian people has been the main victim, has been, on the one hand, the tragic error of judgement committed by successive Israeli leaders in estimating the capacity for resistance of the Palestinian people, and, on the other hand, the indifference, if not the complicity, of many major Powers, which, having carefully assisted at the birth of an Israeli State, simply abandoned the Palestinian people to its fate, subject to the whim of the tempestuous winds to the creation of which those Powers had thus contributed.

168. The Palestinian people, whose known roots in Palestine go back 7,000 years, was suddenly thrown into exile, forced to abandon its lands, its houses and its Holy Places to seek refuge in overcrowded camps, where the criminal hand of its oppressors was not slow in reaching it again.

169. The neighbouring Arab countries, which first had to bear the crushing burden of hundreds of thousands of refugees expelled by the Israeli aggression, had in their turn to face up to the periodic military expeditions organized by the Israeli leaders, under various pretexts but with the same objective of obtaining living space by the acquisition by force of new territories and by drawing new boundaries by means of Israel's illegal, unilateral decisions.

170. What has become of what were the frontiers of Palestine when the Territory was still under the British Mandate? What has become of the demarcation lines fixed by the United Nations itself when the Organiza-

tion decided, on 29 November 1947, to create a Jewish State and an Arab State in Palestine? The Gaza Strip, the West Bank of the Jordan and the Holy City of Al-Quds were absorbed without regard to international legality or the resolutions of the United Nations. The Golan Heights, internationally recognized as Syrian territory, are today virtually annexed to Israeli territory by a unilateral Israeli decision, which has been condemned and rejected by the United Nations.

171. The unjustified attack on the peaceful nuclear installations of Tamuz in Iraq was in its turn an illustration of the Israeli outlook, which is that Israel should obtain and develop all forms of modern technology, even if military and destructive, while denying its neighbours the right to access to progress and the scientific achievements of our age, even for peaceful purposes. Israel, which refuses to submit to the international safeguards which should govern nuclear energy research and development, attacked and tried to destroy Iraq's peaceful nuclear installations, which Iraq regularly submits to international safeguards.

172. The invasion of Lebanon and the ruthless bombing of Beirut gave cogent proof, if such proof were needed, of the aggressive and expansionist nature of the Israeli leaders, who have no legal or humanitarian scruples when the achievement of the strategic objectives of their ideology is at stake. Our brotherly country Lebanon, traditionally a land of tolerance and hospitality, almost disintegrated, the victim of its own hospitable traditions. The Israeli invader, which had long planned its bloody expedition of last summer, had its sights fixed on southern Lebanon, not only because of its remarkable hydrological potential but also because of its rugged terrain, which is very suitable for military adventures against Syria and Lebanon.

173. The intensive bombing of Beirut, followed by the siege to which the city was subjected when a stricken population, of all ages, men and women, was left for several days without water and electricity, and finally the terrible massacres of unarmed Lebanese and Palestinian civilians in the Sabra and Shatila camps, provoked universal indignation, of which the General Assembly echoed both the passion and the revulsion.

174. Lebanon deserves our full support to ensure the complete evacuation of its territory, in conformity with Security Council resolutions 508 (1982) and 509 (1982), the restoration of its sovereignty and its territorial integrity, the reconstruction of the country and the rehabilitation of its national economy.

175. In this context, the Holy City of Jerusalem is the most significant example of illegal Israeli acts in occupied Arab territories. Al-Quds has suffered various attempts to erase its authentic Arab character and to destroy or change its demographic, cultural and religious structures, with the obvious aim of making it completely Jewish. While this has been going on, the Holy Places in Al-Quds have in their turn been subjected to frequent acts of desecration, provoking the consternation and revulsion of the whole Islamic Ummah. The unilateral proclamation of Al-Quds as the unified and eternal capital of Israel was an illegal act, unanimously condemned by the Security Council, which, furthermore, declared it null and void.

176. This annexationist policy, typically colonial in character, has been further confirmed by the irrespon-

sible and continual establishment, in the occupied Arab territories, of new armed colonies which constitute more hotbeds of future disturbances.

177. In the face of such a situation, which is constantly deteriorating as Israeli aggression increases, each time more murderously, the international community is trying to react suitably. The isolation of the Israeli leaders has never been so great anywhere in the world, even including Israel itself, where certain wise and lucid voices are beginning to make themselves heard with ever-increasing strength.

178. In bringing about this growing international awareness, the roles of the Organization of the Islamic Conference and of the League of Arab States have been noteworthy, in that the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, has found in those two sister organizations the echo chamber and transmitter of the manifestations of the heroic struggle of the Palestinian people and its legitimate claims to exercise its inalienable right to self-determination and to create its own independent State on its national territory.

179. The Organization of the Islamic Conference, and in particular its Al-Quds Committee, presided by His Majesty King Hassan II, has undertaken detailed action with many international authorities, with His Holiness the Pope and with organizations such as our own to win sympathy, understanding and effective support for the Palestinian people in its struggle.

180. The Twelfth Arab Summit Conference held two sessions at Fez—one on 25 November 1981 and the other from 6 to 9 September 1982—under the presidency of His Majesty King Hassan II, to consider the difficult circumstances which the Arab nation was experiencing.

181. The Heads of State unanimously adopted, on 9 September 1982, an historic declaration containing a plan which for the first time made a specific Arab contribution, capable of being put into effect immediately, to the achievement of a just, equitable and comprehensive peace in the Middle East. The Fez plan was described by His Majesty King Hassan II from this very rostrum [44th meeting] as a plan which reflected Arab unanimity, a plan devoid of any extraneous elements which might disguise its contents, a realistic plan that could be applied by any international authority which would take it up and, finally, a plan which would make it possible for the Arab personality and the Palestinian personality to appear in their true light as responsible for and committed to helping bring about genuine peace in that part of the world.

182. The Fez plan, which has been distributed as an official document of the General Assembly and the Security Council under the symbol A/37/696-S/15510, is based on the following principles: the withdrawal of Israel from all Arab territories occupied by it in 1967, including Arab Al-Quds; the dismantling of the settlements established by Israel in the Arab territories after 1967; the guaranteeing of freedom of worship and practice of religious rites for all religions in the Holy Places; the reaffirmation of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and to the exercise of its imprescriptible and inalienable national rights, under the leadership of the PLO, its sole and legitimate representative, and the indemnification of all

those who do not wish to return; the placing of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip under the control of the United Nations for a transitory period not exceeding a few months; the establishment of an independent Palestinian State with Al-Quds as its capital; the guaranteeing by the Security Council of peace among all States of the region, including the independent Palestinian State; and the guaranteeing by the Security Council of all these principles.

183. The advent of the Fez plan on the international scene led to a remarkable relaunching of efforts of good will to resolve the crisis in the Middle East, a crisis which has been a constant grave threat to international peace and security for almost four decades now.

184. The plan of President Reagan,¹ for its part, was also a very positive initiative towards a just peace in that region, and it is to be hoped that this plan, which of course can be improved, will at the appropriate time give the Palestinian people the place due to them in the community of free and sovereign peoples in the region.

185. Never has the Arab desire for a just and equitable peace in the Middle East been so deep, so obvious and so determined. This Arab determination, which was expressed before the Assembly by His Majesty King Hassan II, the President of the Twelfth Arab Summit Conference, in lofty, frank and clear terms, full of conviction, is a well-considered determination, free of all circumstantial influences—a responsible and sober determination which requires from the United Nations and all the Powers able to alter the course of history in the region a similar attitude of realistic understanding of the facts of the problem and a similar commitment to opening up in the Middle East a new era based on peace, justice and mutual respect for the fundamental rights of States, including an independent and sovereign Palestinian State with Jerusalem as its capital, under the auspices of the United Nations and with specific Security Council guarantees.

186. Mr. GÖKÇE (Turkey): The year 1982 has been marked by momentous and tragic events in the Middle East. The invasion of Lebanon by Israel has highlighted in a compelling manner the imperative character and added to the urgency of some of the longstanding realities about the Arab-Israeli conflict. The international community is more cognizant today than it ever was before of the need to find a just and lasting solution to the question of Palestine, as a fundamental step towards a comprehensive settlement in the Middle East.

187. In the wake of every great tragedy there is a respite and a time for reflection. The Arab Palestinian and Lebanese peoples have paid a terrible price, and their suffering will for ever weigh on the conscience of mankind. Their supreme sacrifices will not be redeemed, however, until the Arab Palestinians are given their homeland and that of the Lebanese people is restored to them. The time is perhaps propitious for making peace, but it is also short. The present opportunity cannot be sustained for long unless a convincing and effective peace-making process is put in motion.

188. Owing to the absence of peace, the danger of armed confrontation is always present in the Middle

East region. The propensity to resort to force frequently becomes irresistible because there is no security or sense of mutual confidence. In the last four decades, the Middle East has had more than its share of violence and is still a place of deep-seated tension and conflict, threatening international peace and security. We believe, therefore, that every window of opportunity must be fully exploited and the search for a just, lasting and comprehensive solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict must be pursued relentlessly, resolutely and with genuine commitment.

189. The people and Government of Turkey have always provided steady support to proponents of justice, peace and stability in that turbulent region where Turkey itself is located. We have never wavered in our belief in and our support for the legitimacy of the national struggle of the Arab Palestinian people for their inalienable rights. At the same time, we have stated unequivocally that every State in the region has the right to live within secure and recognized boundaries. The Government of Turkey is of the view that for any solution in the Middle East to be fair, its core must consist of the recognition of the inalienable rights of the Arab Palestinian people, including their right to establish an independent State in their own homeland. Surely the most indispensable condition for the realization of the Arab Palestinian cause is the withdrawal of Israel from all the Arab territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem. The preservation of the unique and historical character of the Holy City of Jerusalem and respect for its special status are also an essential ingredient of a comprehensive settlement.

190. In this context, we must also renew our call for the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Lebanon whose presence there is not wanted by the Lebanese Government. Lebanon's independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and unity should be fully restored without delay, and the talented people of Lebanon must once again be allowed, without the influence of external constraints, to demonstrate their remarkable abilities at national reconciliation and in achieving progress and creativity.

191. Earlier in our statement, we referred to the existence at this time of a configuration of the relevant regional and international dynamics and modalities that we feel is potentially favourable for a genuine breakthrough for peace in the Middle East. In recent years, there has not been a more sustained effort and generalized concern for settling the Arab-Israeli conflict than there exists at present.

192. The United States plan put forward by President Reagan,¹ which we have welcomed, contains elements that could contribute significantly to the elaboration of a framework for future negotiations among the parties concerned. The United States initiative is worthy of serious consideration. We also note with deep appreciation the declaration of the Twelfth Arab Summit Conference, held at Fez. The principles delineated in that declaration represent a common position on the part of the Arab countries and reflect their genuine desire to attain a balanced and realistic solution in the interest of all States in the region. We commend this responsible and constructive attitude of the Arab leaders.

193. These efforts to bring about the restoration of peace and tranquillity in the Middle East do not, of course, stand alone. They are complemented by pleas for peace from all corners of the world, and they too must be heeded. We must all encourage the parties in the Arab-Israeli conflict to take advantage of the current window of opportunity for co-operation in the process of peace-making.

194. If the current possibility of a settlement in the region is to have any real chance at all, Israel must shoulder its prime responsibility. Israel must ponder the future and realize that force cannot for ever serve as the exclusive instrument of security and recognition; that Israel's desire for peace needs to be complemented by Israel's deeds; that the Arab Palestinian people is entitled to a homeland and a State of its own; that Israel cannot liquidate the Arab Palestinian cause through its illegal policies of occupation, annexation, repression and settlements; that it is in the best interests of Israel to come to terms with the realities of the Middle East situation rather than constantly attempt to transform them at tremendous cost and suffering to its people and to the Arabs. Israel must pay heed to the fact that members of the international community, including Turkey, consider Israel's unilateral actions to be null and void, whether they relate to Jerusalem or to the Syrian Golan Heights.

195. The restoration of peace and stability in the Middle East requires the participation of all the parties in the conflict, including the PLO, the representative of the Arab Palestinian people. For any settlement to be fair and lasting, it must be acceptable to all the parties concerned. For a peace-making process to be effective, all the principal parties must agree to sit together and negotiate.

196. Mr. SILWAL (Nepal): The situation in the Middle East has been posing a challenge to the Organization for the last 35 years. Year after year, it is debated in the General Assembly and resolutions are adopted. Regrettably, however, the situation has remained as explosive as ever, and a comprehensive settlement acceptable to all the parties concerned is still as elusive. It has caused untold sufferings to the people in the region. Also at stake are the fabric of the civilized relationship between one State and another and the credibility and effectiveness of the world Organization. The United Nations has served and saved peace in a number of crises, and Nepal is not going to doubt for a moment that it could do so on this particular question. We are still firm in our conviction that a comprehensive settlement must be found, and can be found, within the framework of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

197. First, the edifice of peace in the Middle East, if it is to be just, lasting and comprehensive, must be founded on the legitimate interests and aspirations of all States and peoples in the region. The inalienable right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and to participate in the overall peace negotiations must be recognized. The Palestinian people constitute an important element of the Middle East problem and the PLO is their sole representative. This reality and the Palestinian people's aspirations, as well as their right to a separate State, should be well recognized.

198. Secondly, Israel must withdraw from territories occupied since 1967. The acquisition of territories by force and the continued actions by the occupying Power to change the legal status and demographic character of those lands cannot be condoned.

199. Thirdly, a just and lasting peace must be based on the essential principle of the right of all States in the region, including Israel, to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries, free from threats and the use of force or acts of violence.

200. Israel's invasion of Lebanon this year was a flagrant violation of Lebanese sovereignty and independence. Nepal, it may be recalled, strongly denounced the invasion and the massacre of innocent men, women and children, and called for the unconditional and total withdrawal of Israeli forces. The chain of events which unfolded in Lebanon, along with others, underlines more clearly than anything else could the urgency of the need for a negotiated political settlement of the Middle East question.

201. Nepal has always supported all initiatives, wherever they might come from, which seek a negotiated settlement of this conflict. In this regard, we appreciate the important momentum generated by the new United States initiative and the unified Arab peace plan. Nepal welcomes as a positive step the serious efforts being made on the basis of those proposals towards the achievement of a just, lasting and comprehensive solution of the problem. My delegation renews its appeal to all parties concerned to break the cycle of mistrust and violence. The impact that peace and stability in the Middle East will have on international peace and security could hardly be over-emphasized.

202. Mr. DIACONU (Romania) (*interpretation from French*): During the period since the previous debates on the situation in the Middle East grave events have occurred which have affected the peace, security and independence of the peoples of that region and endangered the peace and security of the entire world. This situation, which arose above all from Israel's aggressive actions against Lebanon and against the Palestinian population on Lebanese territory, has further worsened the international political climate and engendered deep concern on the part of the entire international community.

203. In the absence of the long-awaited comprehensive political solution of the Palestinian problem and the security arrangements necessary to ensure the conditions for free and independent development and for mutual co-operation, the peoples of the Middle East have continued to be subjected to the baneful consequences of new confrontation and military actions.

204. Israel's aggressive actions in Lebanon and the massacres in the Palestinian refugee camps, which were strongly condemned by the Romanian Government and people, as by other States and peoples, testify once again to the fact that the situation in the Middle East cannot be solved by military means, that war solves no problems, but rather further increases tension and further complicates the search for a solution by creating the pre-conditions of new armed conflicts and confrontation. Such actions have particularly exacerbated the situation in the Middle East,

already tense as a result of Israel's occupation of Arab and Palestinian territory, the measures to annex the Syrian Golan Heights, the denial of the right of the Palestinian people to an independent existence and illegal policies and practices against the Palestinian people, including the establishment of new Israeli settlements.

205. Recent developments in the Middle East, like the whole development of the Arab-Israeli conflict, confirm that real peace and security cannot be built and guaranteed by the use of force, by the denial to other peoples of the right to free and independent existence. It has become even more obvious that the key element in the conflict is the Palestinian problem, without the settlement of which a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East cannot be established, just as it is obvious that the will and the determination of the Palestinian people to fashion its own destiny cannot be balked. It is therefore clear that any delay in resolving the Palestinian problem inevitably increases, through its implications, the danger of new armed confrontation, with unforeseeable consequences for international peace and security.

206. The successive wars in the Middle East have, given the nature of modern military technology, proved extremely destructive and menacing to peace in general, and the cease-fires which have followed those wars have not been accompanied by actions calculated to bring about a *rapprochement* between the parties or to establish general peace.

207. That is why, in the view of the Romanian delegation, the extremely grave and serious tension in the Middle East makes more necessary than ever before resolute action by the States Members of the United Nations to resolve the Palestinian problem and arrive at a comprehensive settlement of all the problems stemming from the situation in the area through negotiations, in order to bring about a just and lasting peace for all the peoples and States of the region.

208. In accordance with the responsibility of each country for the general peace and for the exercise of the right of peoples to free and independent development, Romania and its President, Nicolae Ceaușescu, have called and continue to call resolutely for the settlement through negotiations of the conflict in the Middle East and for a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the region, in order to meet fully the fundamental and legitimate interests of all the States and peoples in the area and to contribute to international peace, security and co-operation.

209. It is known that, since the beginning of the conflict, Romania and its President have worked unceasingly to bring about a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East which would lead to the withdrawal by Israel from the territories occupied following the 1967 war and the recognition of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and to create their own independent State, with a guarantee of the independence and sovereignty of all States in the region.

210. We have frequently emphasized that, on the basis of the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, the achievement of peace in the Middle East must be firmly founded on Israel's withdrawal from all Arab and Palestinian ter-

territories occupied following the 1967 war, including Arab Jerusalem. United Nations resolutions concerning the Middle East lay down the clear obligation for Israel to withdraw from all occupied Arab territories.

211. As we have recalled, Romania has condemned Israel's repeated aggressive actions in Lebanon, the annexation of the Syrian Golan Heights and the massacres in the Palestinian refugee camps. We believe that we must continue to work to ensure that Israel's troops are withdrawn from Lebanon and from all the territories occupied after the 1967 war.

212. The central factor in the settlement of the situation in the Middle East is the solution of the Palestinian problem and the creation of circumstances in which the Palestinian people can achieve their legitimate right to live in peace and tranquillity in their own independent State. In keeping with its solidarity with the Palestinian people in their just struggle, under the leadership of the PLO, Romania has on many occasions emphasized energetically its conviction that, without resolving first of all the Palestinian problem on the basis of that people's right to self-determination and to create their own independent State, it will not be possible to bring about real peace in the Middle East.

213. Faithful to its position of principle on the settlement of conflicts through negotiations among the parties concerned, our country has advocated and continues to advocate that the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, should take part in the process of the solution of the Palestinian problem and in all negotiations on the settlement of the Middle East situation.

214. We feel that a settlement meeting the interests and legitimate aspirations of all the States and peoples in the area also presupposes the right to existence, independence and sovereignty of each State in the region, which would make possible the establishment of co-operation, confidence and mutual respect between all the States and peoples of the area.

215. For our country, which has consistently acted to bring about a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the situation in the Middle East in order to overcome the crisis and to move from military confrontation to political negotiations, it is reason for satisfaction that recently a series of proposals and drafts concerning peace in the Middle East have been formulated, outlining new approaches and expressing the desire to make progress towards a political solution. We see here confirmation of the justice of Romania's well-known position on the question of the resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict, which we have maintained from the beginning, and we feel that such proposals engender the conditions for the intensification of political and diplomatic activities to bring about peace in the Middle East.

216. We are convinced that the parties to the conflict, as well as the international community, have a better understanding today of the fact that the only course to follow is to seek a political solution and a dialogue, and that negotiations—however arduous they may be—are preferable to a military conflict, even a limited conflict. Furthermore, Romania, persuaded

that the settlement of the Palestinian problem is the key to a peaceful solution in the Middle East, considers that, within the framework of these peace efforts, it is vital to bring about the establishment of a Palestinian State, side by side with the independent State of Israel, and to do everything possible to ensure the peaceful coexistence of those two States and of all the countries in the region, with adequate guarantees to each of its security and independence. It is high time for an intensification of political and diplomatic efforts to bring about a settlement of the problem of the Palestinian people which, like any other people, is entitled to fashion its own destiny and to live in its own independent State.

217. As the Head of the Romanian State recently stated, there is room in the Middle East for both an independent Palestinian State and the State of Israel, and the two should eventually establish good-neighbour relations. A comprehensive settlement of the Palestinian problem, through recognition of and respect for the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people and the guaranteeing of conditions enabling that people to realize its natural aspirations to live in peace and calm in its own independent State, would be in the best interests of the peoples of the area and in the interest of the peace and security of the world as a whole.

218. In the present international circumstances, President Nicolae Ceaușescu emphasized, in his message of 29 November to the President of the General Assembly and the Secretary-General on the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People that:

“It is more necessary than ever to demonstrate reason and political wisdom, to look facts squarely in the face and to begin a real and sustained dialogue between all the parties to the conflict, so that we can truly commence an effective process for an effective comprehensive solution to the conflict. It is necessary, first of all, that all the Israeli troops be withdrawn from Lebanon to ensure Lebanon's independence and unity and the Lebanese people's peace and tranquillity.”⁴

219. Expressing Romania's constant concern to see a just peace in the Middle East, the message points out that political and diplomatic activities, including those in the United Nations, must be redoubled at the same time, with a view to convening, under United Nations auspices, an international conference with the participation of all States and of all the parties concerned, including the PLO—the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people—as well as the Soviet Union and the United States, and other States which can make a positive contribution to the settlement of the Middle East conflict.

220. We are firmly convinced that the United Nations can and must play a more active role in efforts to settle the Arab-Israeli conflict and to solve by political means all the other situations of tension and conflict in international life, in accordance with the hopes and aspirations of the peoples to live in a climate of calm, peace, security and international co-operation.

221. As in the past, Romania and the Romanian people will make their contribution to a just and lasting

settlement of the problem of the Middle East, to the establishment of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the area, and to the achievement of the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people in the interests of peace, co-operation and security in that region and in the entire world.

The meeting rose at 7.05 p.m.

NOTES

¹ See *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* (Washington, Government Printing Office, 1982), vol. 18, No. 35, p. 1081.

² See *Official Records of the Security Council, Thirty-seventh Year, Supplement for July, August and September 1982*, document S/15317.

³ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, No. 973, p. 287.

⁴ See A/AC.183/PV.85.

⁵ Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, *The Hague Conventions and Declarations of 1899 and 1907* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1915), p. 100.