



Wednesday, 8 December 1982,
at 10.55 a.m.

NEW YORK

President: Mr. Imre HOLLAI (Hungary).

In the absence of the President, Mr. Ki (Upper Volta), Vice-President, took the Chair.

AGENDA ITEM 34

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

1. Mr. VIKIS (Cyprus): Only a few days ago, on 29 November, we commemorated the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. Only a few weeks ago, in this very Assembly [85th meeting], we had an opportunity to express our views on the question of Palestine. Almost simultaneously, in a number of Committees, we expressed our views on the plight of the refugees in the Middle East and on Israeli practices in the occupied areas, among other relevant matters. And since 6 December we have been dealing with the situation in the Middle East.
2. All this is indicative of the deep concern of the international community at the state of affairs in that region of the world which is, in many respects, considered the cradle of our civilization. The numerous statements by delegations from around the world on the various aspects of the Middle East problem—statements which express the positions of the Governments concerned—the numerous votes on the relevant draft resolutions placed before this body and the results of them in terms of the international support expressed leave no doubt either as to the verdict of the international community or as to the urgency with which the problem must be faced.
3. We have time and again pointed out that the perpetuation of the situation prevailing today in the Middle East poses a serious threat to international peace. So far, the bitter conflict has been restricted to that region. There is, however, the very real possibility that another outbreak of hostilities in that region may spread and eventually engulf the whole world, leading to a major catastrophe.
4. The situation in the Middle East undoubtedly affects the entire international community, and it is disheartening that, although the international community has for over 30 years now been striving to find a just and lasting solution to the whole problem, no such solution seems to be in sight. On the contrary, the recent Israeli invasion of Lebanon, the massacre of thousands of innocent civilians, Palestinian and Lebanese, including innocent and defenceless women and children, clearly shows that we are nowhere near peace.
5. Israel's responsibility for the worsening of the situation in the Middle East is heavy. Israel's defiance of the relevant United Nations resolutions, of international law and of world public opinion only diminishes the possibilities for peace. The attempt on the part of Israel to gain international acceptance of the transfer of its capital to Jerusalem cannot in any way be seen as contributing to peace. Israel's continuing and increasingly brutal repression of the civilian population in the West Bank cannot possibly be considered a peace gesture. Establishing more and more Jewish settlements in the occupied West Bank and depriving its Arab and Palestinian inhabitants of their land and water cannot be construed as peace moves. Israel's illegal effort to annex the Syrian Golan Heights and the brutal repression of the local population do not contribute to peace. The bombing of the nuclear facility in Iraq, far from contributing to peace, provides further evidence of the aggressive policies of a State which considers military adventurism the only means of dealing with its neighbours.
6. By its actions so far, Israel has clearly shown that it does not accept a solution to the Middle East problem along the lines drawn up by the international community acting in the context of the United Nations. On the contrary, Israel has shown contempt for the resolutions of both the General Assembly and the Security Council and has made it clear in words and actions that the solution it envisages is a military one.
7. The Government of the Republic of Cyprus, in line with the position of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, of which Cyprus is a member, has repeatedly asserted that the question of Palestine and the Middle East can be settled only by a comprehensive and just settlement that ensures: first, complete, total and unconditional withdrawal by Israel from all occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories, including Jerusalem, in conformity with the fundamental principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force; secondly, the free exercise of the right of the Palestinians to return to their homes and properties from which they have been displaced and uprooted; thirdly, the attainment and free exercise of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people concerning Palestine, including the right to self-determination without external interference and to national independence and sovereignty and the right to establish its own independent, sovereign State.
8. The Government of Cyprus had also consistently supported the position that, in any negotiations on a just and lasting solution of the Palestinian problem, the Palestine Liberation Organization [PLO], the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, must participate fully and on an equal footing.

9. Our position on the above has been defined on the basis of our belief that the principles of self-determination, the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force and the exercise of the inalienable rights of all peoples are principles which must be strictly adhered to.

10. The people of Palestine, like the people of Cyprus, have been uprooted from their ancestral homes and lands; they have been deprived of their basic human rights; their occupied lands are being colonized. Israel in Palestine and Turkey in Cyprus have defied the wish of the international community, have shown contempt for the resolutions and decisions of the United Nations and of other international bodies and, with the use of military power, are endeavouring to keep the spoils of their wars.

11. We owe it to the Palestinian people, to the people of the Middle East and to the people of the whole world to ensure that the conquerors of their lands will be forced to abandon them, that those who subjugate and suppress them will be forced to free them and that those who disrespect their human rights will be forced to respect them.

12. Once again we solemnly renew our commitment to the establishment of peace and justice in the Middle East and everywhere in the world and express our sincere hope that the efforts of all of us will lead to the achievement of this goal.

13. Mr. THUNBORG (Sweden): In the opinion of my Government, the present situation, in the wake of another outbreak of armed hostilities, differs from previous phases of this tragic conflict.

14. On the one hand, a remarkable shift is under way in public and official opinion in many countries that had not previously fully recognized that the national aspirations of the Palestinian people must be met if there is ever to be a lasting solution to the Middle East conflict.

15. On the other hand, the risk now seems greater than ever before that the Palestinian people will be effectively prevented for a long time to come from exercising their right to self-determination.

16. As we see it, a choice is facing the Palestinian people, and more specifically the PLO, which unquestionably enjoys overwhelming support among the Palestinians. Unless the new possibilities for substantive negotiations that are emerging are firmly grasped, without allowing momentum to be lost, the conflict and frustration of Palestinian national aspirations may continue beyond the foreseeable future.

17. The intentions of the Israeli Government with regard to the territories they have occupied since 1967 are openly proclaimed and vigorously pursued.

18. The policy of the Israeli Government is to claim sovereignty over at least the occupied West Bank. This seems to imply that the area would be incorporated into the State of Israel, as the Government of Israel claims to have done with regard to Jerusalem and, for practical purposes, to the Syrian Golan Heights. We reject the Israeli claims to supremacy over territories occupied since 1967. These claims have no basis in international law. They also disregard the legitimate rights of the Palestinians, as well as the rights of other States in the region. Also, we cannot

accept attempts by the Government of Israel to create facts with the intent of making Israeli control of the West Bank irreversible.

19. The various plans that have been put forward in recent months to provide the framework for a renewed search for a comprehensive peace give evidence of the urgency inherent in the present situation. We welcome these efforts and support their ambition to find constructive ways to solve the core problem of the conflict. In the same spirit, a dialogue has been renewed between the PLO and Jordan.

20. We sincerely hope that the Government of Israel will be fully prepared to respond to offers of genuine negotiations based on the explicit recognition by all parties of Israel's right to exist within secure and recognized borders. As recently as 2 December, the solemn pledge to that effect contained in the Israeli Declaration of Independence was quoted here [89th meeting, para. 151].

21. Just as it remains for the PLO and most of the Governments of Arab States genuinely to acknowledge the existence of the State of Israel, so it remains for Israel to face up to the existence of a Palestinian people with legitimate national aspirations. Israel must realize that there can be no negotiations or agreements involving the Palestinian people unless the PLO is accepted as a party on an equal footing to such negotiations or agreements.

22. The past year has seen a series of developments related to the Arab-Israeli conflict. The common denominator of these developments seems to have been an increasing degree of activism in promoting, by various means, Israeli interests as they are perceived by the Israeli Government. There have been ample opportunities to address the Assembly in emergency special sessions called in response to the unfolding drama, and I shall not repeat here the comments and views of my Government with regard to the various events.

23. Let me state once more, however, that my Government continues to support the Security Council's demand that Israel withdraw its military forces from Lebanon forthwith and unconditionally. Lebanon's integrity and sovereignty must be respected by all concerned.

24. We believe that there is a growing realization in all quarters that a political problem involving millions of people cannot be met by the continued application of force. Israel's invasion of Lebanon will be seen not to have brought the fundamental problems of the conflict closer to a solution, any more than terrorist tactics can further the Palestinian cause in any real sense.

25. It is no longer reasonable, taking into account the range and accuracy of modern weapons, to define "secure borders" in military terms. Security can come only with mutual recognition, respect and confidence.

26. In conclusion, I wish to reconfirm Sweden's position that the principles of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) remain relevant to any effort to bring about a just and lasting settlement of the Middle East conflict. In addition, full account must be taken of the legitimate national rights of the Pal-

estonian people, including their right, should they so wish, to establish an independent State of their own.

27. Mr. LESSIR (Tunisia) (*interpretation from French*): The debate on the situation in the Middle East is taking place this year a few months after a murderous war unleashed by Israel against the Palestinian and Lebanese peoples. Another war is put down to Israel's account, at the cost of further sufferings and privations for those peoples. The bloody events which began last June have clearly increased tension in the region and have dealt a harsh blow to the hopes which some had nourished for a solution to the Middle East problem.

28. The situation in that part of the world has deteriorated to such an extent that the Middle East could be plunged into a widespread deflagration, with unforeseeable repercussions for the whole world. This marked deterioration in the situation has this year monopolized the attention of both the Security Council and the General Assembly, which has met several times, within the framework of the seventh emergency special session, to debate the problem.

29. Since the thirty-sixth session, many resolutions have been adopted by the General Assembly, both at its ninth emergency special session and at its resumed seventh emergency special session, as well as by the Security Council. Unfortunately, the result is always the same. Like those which preceded them, these resolutions have simply swelled the archives of the Organization, because of Israel's constant refusal to comply with them under the pretext that they do not meet its own security needs.

30. This refusal was recently illustrated by an act of defiance, pure and simple, when Israel's leaders ordered the invasion of Lebanon, with complete disregard of the rules of international law. It was also illustrated by the stepping up of the establishment of settlements in the occupied territories, thereby revealing the true schemes of the architects of that policy.

31. Those two actions alone sum up the diabolical strategy that Israel is trying to carry out in the Middle East, as the passage of time confirms, in spite of what is said by those rare unbelievers who continue to try to make us believe that the little State of Israel is besieged by its Arab neighbours and that its existence is threatened.

32. For three months we have witnessed in Lebanon a barbaric aggression launched by the Israeli war machine against an independent, sovereign State Member of the United Nations. The aggressor, which no doubt hoped to deal a mortal blow to Palestinian resistance, put that country to the torch and caused blood to flow in its streets, using the most sophisticated weapons, some of which are banned. It did not flinch before the enormous loss of human life, numbering tens of thousands of innocent civilians, or from the scope of the destruction, which reduced entire towns and villages to ruins.

33. The Lebanese capital, Beirut, was subjected to a strangulating siege, accompanied by the most intense, murderous and inhuman bombardment. Its population was left without food or water, with no regard for the instruments of international law in general or for human life in particular.

34. As if this tragedy were not enough, the Israeli occupiers finished their unsavoury work by organizing one of the most horrible massacres of our century, committed in the Palestinian camps of Sabra and Shatila after the hostilities had ended.

35. It is true that Israel decided long ago on the elimination of the leaders of Palestinian resistance. That does not surprise us, because that has always been the kind of action carried out by colonial Powers against those that might try to take up the torch and light the flame of liberty. Nevertheless, a decision at the end of the twentieth century to liquidate a people in order to eliminate its cause and bury it for ever surprises and distresses us and brings back the terrible memories of the 1940s.

36. The Jews of Europe under Nazi occupation were subjected to the worst trials, were humiliated and massacred remorselessly. We would expect that a people that has undergone such suffering would have more consideration for human life than any other people and would, therefore, be more sensitive to the sufferings of others. Alas, that view has turned out to be mistaken, for today we are witnessing a terrible tragedy in which the executioner of the Palestinian people is none other than Israel, which for 35 years has been desperately trying to eliminate any trace of those it has been persecuting in the hope of burying their cause and consigning them to oblivion. Since it could not reduce them to silence, Israel has been attempting for years to discredit their champions in the eyes of world public opinion by calling them terrorists.

37. If the PLO has resorted to arms it is because the Palestinian people has been removed from its homeland by armed force. No one can prevent a dispossessed and exiled people from fighting the enemy. That is a sacred right. Furthermore, how many peoples today would have acceded to independence without a struggle and without combat?

38. We believe, furthermore, that in the region of the Middle East, State terrorism has been erected by some as a system of government. Whether it be in the West Bank, the Gaza Strip or the Golan Heights, the Israeli objective is the same: to use all means necessary to dispossess Arab landowners and to meet the needs of new Israeli colonists, and thereby gradually to obliterate the Palestinian and Arab populations in the occupied territories in order to facilitate the annexation of those territories.

39. After Al-Quds and the Golan, Israel is now preparing to annex the West Bank, where the number of settlements is over 130 and the number of colonists will very soon reach 100,000. In an article in *The New York Times* dated 1 November 1982, Anthony Lewis wrote:

“The Begin Government aims to have 100,000 settlers in the West Bank as soon as possible. That figure would be, it says, a ‘critical mass’—so large a number that no Israeli Government thereafter could agree to withdraw from the territory.”*

40. That is Begin's goal. That is an additional illustration of the policy of *fait accompli* which is so dear to the hearts of the Israeli leaders and which they believe

* Quoted in English by the speaker.

will enable them to give concrete form to their dream of a Greater Israel.

41. Apart from the alteration of the demographic character of the occupied Arab and Palestinian territories and their gradual annexation, Israel also contemplates changing the geographical nature of some territories which it occupies by building a canal linking the Dead Sea with the Mediterranean. In addition to the harmful economic and social consequences that such a project would have for the Jordanian and Palestinian populations, its execution would be a violation of international law and of the relevant resolutions of the United Nations.

42. Such unilateral practices and decisions certainly do not facilitate the task of the United Nations, which, for more than 35 years, has been dealing with the serious problem of the Middle East. They only exacerbate passions in the region to the detriment of any hope of a solution, because a policy of force and *fait accompli*, which Israel has constantly applied in the name of a curious phenomenon which it calls security, can only lead in the end to an exacerbation of the problem of insecurity in the region.

43. For, in the final analysis, who is in need of security? Is it Israel, which is said to be the fourth military power in the world, or the persecuted Palestinian people, or other neighbouring Arab countries which are still calling for the withdrawal of Israeli troops from their territories? The response is clear, and I have no need to elaborate on this point.

44. We think that it is high time to find a comprehensive, just and lasting solution to the problem of the Middle East based on the resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly relating to Palestine and the occupied Arab territories.

45. After five bloody wars, after long years of untold suffering and considerable loss in human life and economic resources, one fact becomes clear, namely, the urgent and imperative need to put an end to the tragedy in the Middle East. Any further delay may well expose peace in the region to the danger of being overwhelmed by mounting tension, especially since Israel's position has always been categorically to refuse to consider any Arab moves towards peace.

46. Today, new horizons are opening before us. They consist of various peace plans recently proposed by different parties. In chronological order they are: first, the draft resolution sponsored by Egypt and France, submitted to the Security Council in July 1982¹; secondly, the plan of President Ronald Reagan contained in his statement of 1 September 1982²; thirdly, the eight-point Fez plan, contained in the Final Declaration of the Twelfth Arab Summit Conference, adopted at Fez on 9 September 1982 [see A/37/696]; and fourthly, the plan of the late President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Leonid Brezhnev, proposed on 15 September 1982 [see A/37/457].

47. My country attaches great importance to all of those proposals, aware, as it is, of the need for the international community finally to begin a peace process capable of leading to a comprehensive, just and lasting solution to the problem.

48. The enthusiasm of the Arab countries, including Tunisia, for any constructive initiative based on international legality was clearly demonstrated during the Fez Conference. On that occasion, a historic turning-point was reached by the community of Arab countries, opening up new prospects for a lasting peace. Two basic principles were clearly defined in that Arab plan. These are the withdrawal of Israel from all occupied Arab territories, including Al-Quds, and recognition of the inalienable rights of the Palestinians to self-determination and to the establishment of their own State under the leadership of the PLO, and the right of all States of the region to peace with guarantees by the Security Council.

49. The Fez plan, which is based on international legality and, in particular, on General Assembly resolution 181 (II), of 29 November 1947, on the principle of the creation of a Palestinian State, and which stems from a realistic appraisal of the situation in the Middle East, takes into account the peace initiatives which were recently made public. Its merit also lies in the fact that it offers the means for their specific and precise implementation. The realism and devotion to peace which have characterized the Arab countries and which culminated in the Fez plan also distinguish the aspirations to peace and security of the Palestinian people, a people which, through the PLO at Fez, demonstrated its desire to see peace established in the Middle East.

50. My country is impelled to pay tribute to the PLO and to the Palestinian people that it represents for that sincere feeling so clearly shown throughout its participation in the last Arab Summit Conference and for its adherence to the constructive resolutions adopted there, which we feel are capable of restoring peace, law and justice in the region. That organization, which so heroically faced the recent Israeli aggression and took part in the negotiations on Beirut, has shown the whole world proof of its existence as an essential party to the conflict.

51. Although Israel rejected the Fez plan, as it has rejected other plans, including the Reagan plan, by resorting to its favourite tactic, defiance and denial of international legality, my country considers that the Fez decisions have given the joint Arab action a new impetus which is reflected in the contacts undertaken between the permanent members of the Security Council and the Committee of Seven established by the Arab Summit Conference.

52. We hope that these new efforts will lead this grave conflict onto the path towards a comprehensive, just and lasting solution. We shall thus have taken advantage of a historic occasion to restore at last peace and security to a sorely tried region and to the peoples who have suffered so much.

53. I should like, before concluding, to quote a part of the message addressed by President Bourguiba to the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People on the occasion of the commemoration of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People:

“The entire world, and particularly the United Nations, should use all means at its disposal to restore to the Palestinian people its rights to self-determination and the establishment of its own inde-

pendent State in its homeland, under the aegis of the Palestine Liberation Organization, its sole and legitimate representative. Restoring the rights of the Palestinian people will do justice to a people which, for four decades, has suffered exile and the trials of war. Equally, restoring the rights of the Palestinian people means respect for legality and international morality and giving further specific form to the principles supported by the Palestine Liberation Organization."

54. Mr. WASIUDDIN (Bangladesh): The present situation in the Middle East is a direct outcome of the distortion of a historical fact, when an alien people was virtually imposed on the Arab world through the creation of Israel. By this act, the fundamental right of self-determination was denied to the people of Palestine, who were driven out of their own country and rendered homeless. This new State of Israel, carefully nurtured by a super-Power, a permanent member of the Security Council, which provided it with huge economic, political and military aid, became increasingly aggressive towards its Arab neighbours. In flagrant violation of the United Nations Charter and of international law, through a series of what it calls defensive wars, Israel occupied some of the Arab territories and, in defiance of General Assembly resolutions and Security Council decisions, refuses to withdraw from them. Thus, Israel alone is responsible for creating a tense situation in the Middle East, threatening international peace and security.

55. All attempts by the General Assembly and the Security Council to find a comprehensive, durable and peaceful solution to the situation in the Middle East have been thwarted by Israel's refusal to comply with the General Assembly resolutions and Security Council decisions. Israel talks of peace but continues not only to occupy Arab territories, including Jerusalem, but even to colonize them and change their basic Arab character. It refuses to accept the right of self-determination of the Palestinians and to negotiate with the PLO, their sole representative. It bombed the Iraqi nuclear installation and annexed the Syrian Golan Heights. Then it invaded Lebanon, and now refuses to vacate its occupation of that country. Is this an example of a peace-loving country, which it professes to be?

56. The Secretary-General, in his report, has observed that:

"After so many years of debate, the issues dividing the opposing sides are now well known. There is, it seems to me, a wide measure of agreement that, in order to reconcile the basic aspirations and the vital interests of all the parties concerned, a settlement must meet the following conditions: the withdrawal of the Israeli forces from occupied territories, which now must include those in Lebanon; respect for and acknowledgement of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every State in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force; and, lastly, a just settlement of the Palestinian problem based on the recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, including self-determination. In this context, the question of Jerusalem also remains of primary importance." [A/37/525, para. 90.]

57. To this end, Bangladesh views the essentials of any meaningful peace plan as a composite whole, a comprehensive settlement, every part thereof being integrally related to the others. We firmly believe that no solution in the Middle East can be envisaged which does not fully take into account the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people and that any examination of the question of Palestine must be based on the following fundamental principles: first, that the question of Palestine is at the core of the problem of the Middle East and, consequently, it is not possible to envisage a solution to the problem of the Middle East unless one takes into account the rights of the Palestinian people; secondly, that there must be implementation of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to return to their homes and to achieve self-determination, independence and national sovereignty; thirdly, that the participation of the PLO, the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, on an equal footing with all the other parties, on the basis of relevant General Assembly resolutions, is indispensable; fourthly, that the acquisition of territories by force is inadmissible and that Israel must totally withdraw from all occupied Arab and Palestinian territories, including Al-Quds; and, fifthly, that there must be a greater understanding of the just cause of the Palestinian people.

58. Consequently, the Government of Bangladesh expressed great satisfaction about the successful outcome of the Twelfth Arab Summit Conference, held at Fez. Bangladesh warmly welcomed the Arab peace plan adopted at that Conference as an achievement for and on behalf of 900 million Muslims of the world. Bangladesh believes that this initiative could lead to permanent peace in the Middle East and achieve for the heroic people of Palestine their legitimate rights, including the right to the establishment of an independent Palestinian State, with Jerusalem as its capital.

59. This, to our mind, would be a comprehensive, just and durable solution to the situation in the Middle East.

60. Mr. SINCLAIR (Guyana): Over the past few years, in the course of our debates on the Middle East question, numerous delegations have been asserting that time was running out. Recent events in Lebanon, and in particular what those events show us could still happen in that country or in any other part of the region, have painfully demonstrated the truth behind the assertion of time running out and have placed in even sharper relief the fragility and the volatility of the situation in the Middle East. The very vision of another Beirut—or worse—gives a renewed sense of urgency to this debate and, indeed, to all considerations of the future of the Middle East.

61. This debate is therefore taking place under a Damoclean sword, so to speak. The Palestinian people are impatient, and understandably so, after more than three decades of exile and homelessness. The Arab States and people are also impatient with the unsettling influence in their midst which Israel's expansionism and aggressive behaviour represent. The aggressor threatens more aggression and expanded occupation. Meanwhile, tensions rise, and peace and security are increasingly endangered.

62. In one sense, the danger to peace and security has its roots in the clash of external perceptions of the importance of the Middle East region, perceptions of this region as an arena for the pursuit of what are seen as vital political, economic and strategic interests. In this clash of perceived external interests, those of the peoples of the region often become obscured, and the already complex Middle East equation is made even more complex and solutions become even more difficult. In our approaches, therefore, to a solution of the Middle East question, we need to keep uppermost in mind the interests of the peoples of the region concerned. Any attempted solution which is not based first and foremost on their interests will fail.

63. But the danger to peace and security in the region resides no less in forces within the region itself, and here I refer to the State of Israel, whose ambitions, whose ideology, whose practices, whose contempt for international law and justice have produced the tension and instability which give rise to such profound concern not only in the Middle East but in the international community at large. Having expelled the Palestinians from their homes and made refugees of the people of that proud nation, the Israelis have expropriated their land and property and, proceeding through a policy of *fait accompli*, are now in illegal occupation of parts of the territory of four neighbouring States. The inhabitants of those occupied territories are subjected to daily harassment and repression at the hands of the occupying Power. Meanwhile, attempts are systematically being made to alter the ethnic character and the demographic composition of the occupied territories. Throughout their long years of occupation, the Israelis have manifested a ruthless determination to hold onto and even expand their territorial acquisitions. Setting themselves above all law, above the principles of the Charter and the decisions of the United Nations, they have arrogated to themselves the right to attack any State in the region—all in the name of what they call their security interests. These policies and practices combine to make the Middle East a dangerous hotbed of tension and to render more difficult the search for peace in the region.

64. The efforts of the international community to find such a peace have been at an impasse for several years now. The recent war in Lebanon has added a new dimension of complexity to that problem, as the Israeli occupiers seek, here again, to impose their own conditions for relinquishing their occupation.

65. The indulgence traditionally shown towards Israel by its powerful friend and benefactor has contributed in large measure to this impasse. It is only through that support that Israel has been enabled to maintain its attitude of defiance of the international community, thereby frustrating all efforts at an eventual solution to the Middle East problem.

66. Comprehensive negotiations on a Middle East peace settlement are universally recognized as the only practical way of resolving this continuing conflict. The elements of this settlement are well known.

67. In the first place, the national rights of the Palestinian people must be restored to them, including their right to their own independent State. It has

been repeatedly affirmed that, before there was any recognition by the international community of a Jewish State, the existence of the Palestinian people as an independent nation had been provisionally recognized by the League of Nations. The General Assembly recommended the establishment of a Palestinian State as well as a Jewish State. It is Israel that has prevented the establishment of that Palestinian State. The right of the Palestinian people to statehood is beyond question. Recent events in Lebanon have served to reconfirm the centrality of the Palestinian question to a Middle East solution.

68. It is likewise recognized by an overwhelming majority of the international community that all parties concerned should participate on an equal footing in any negotiations concerned with the future of the Middle East, and that, accordingly, the Palestinian people should be represented in such negotiations by their own chosen representative, the PLO.

69. Secondly, Israel must withdraw from all territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem. The acquisition of territory by force has been declared inadmissible by the United Nations. It is contrary to the Charter and it creates greater tension between the States of the region, thereby adding to regional instability. With each new acquisition, Israel's vision of its security needs has also expanded, and this has led to greater friction with its neighbours.

70. Thirdly, all States in the area, including Israel, have a right to live within secure and mutually recognized international borders. Israel's security and that of its neighbours are two sides of one and the same coin. Israel will never find the security it seeks by occupying its neighbours' territory and carrying out acts of aggression against them. That security can be found only to the extent that Israel abandons those actions and policies which make its neighbours feel insecure.

71. The foregoing prescription for a Middle East settlement, one long advocated by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, enjoys overwhelming support in the international community.

72. The negative trends notwithstanding, Guyana does not believe that the picture in the Middle East is one of unrelieved gloom. Within recent months, a number of proposals have been advanced from various quarters of the international community in an attempt to break out of the Middle East stalemate. These proposals, particularly those coming out of the Twelfth Arab Summit Conference, held at Fez, manifest a heightened concern to prevent the escalation of violence in the Middle East and to introduce some momentum into the search for a secure and lasting peace in that region.

73. My delegation does believe that the chances for peace in the Middle East would be enhanced if the super-Powers saw the region less as an arena of competing influences and more as one where sovereign States are seeking their own advancement on the basis of their own interests and needs and where the Palestinian people continue to be a nation without a State.

74. We recognize that the super-Powers undoubtedly have a role to play in bringing the parties concerned to the negotiating table. But automatic support for one

side, right or wrong, is unhelpful to the peace process. Encouraging intransigence, even in the face of the overt and systematic violation by the party concerned of the Charter of the United Nations and the relevant decisions of the General Assembly and the Security Council, seriously prejudices the attainment of the goal of a secure and lasting peace. Israel, for its part, must recognize that its future and security can best be assured not through confrontation and aggression but only through the development of co-operation with its neighbours based on mutual trust, mutual respect for sovereignty and the peaceful settlement of disputes. Israel must comply with the decisions of the United Nations relating to the Middle East. My delegation sincerely hopes that the General Assembly debate on the Middle East question will, taking advantage of the prevailing concern with regard to the situation in the Middle East, help to mobilize further international efforts to give greater momentum to the peace process in that region.

75. Mr. HELSKOV (Denmark): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the 10 member States of the European Community.

76. Since we addressed ourselves to the subject of the Middle East in the debate on this item during the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly, the situation in that area has deteriorated further and tensions have mounted. There has been a continuation and intensification of conflicts and new acts of violence, in disregard of repeated decisions of the Security Council and in violation of international law and elementary humanitarian principles. Problems relating to the Middle East have repeatedly occupied the attention of the Security Council and also of the General Assembly. It is imperative for all to realize now that an end must finally be brought to the destructive chain of violence in the region.

77. Prominent among the deplorable events has been the Israeli invasion of Lebanon last June and the upheaval it brought about in that country. The 10 member States of the European Community vigorously condemned the Israeli invasion of Lebanon. They remain deeply aware of the extensive loss of human life, the terrible suffering and the massive destruction which was inflicted upon its civilian population, and once again extend their sympathy and reaffirm their solidarity with that friendly country. The Ten reacted to the ruthless massacre of Palestinian civilians in Beirut with shock and revulsion, and strongly condemned this criminal act.

78. The tragic events in Lebanon and the growing tension in the occupied territories confirm that the need for a negotiated comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli dispute which will be both just and lasting is more pressing than ever. Furthermore, these events confirm that there can be no real peace or stability in the region unless the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people are also recognized.

79. The principles which, in the view of the Ten provide the basis for a peaceful settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict have been set out in the Venice Declaration, of 13 June 1980,³ and in subsequent statements on the issue and are, we trust, well known. Most recently, in the statement on the situation in the Middle East issued by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs

of the 10 member States of the European Community at Brussels on 20 September 1982, the Ten said that such a settlement should be based on the principles of security for all States in the region, recognition of Israel's right to exist, and the right to self-determination of the Palestinians, with all that that implies, justice for all peoples and mutual recognition by all the parties involved [See A/37/473].

80. Building on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), the Ten remain convinced that these principles are essential and must be recognized and reconciled. Our commitment to the right of Israel to live in security and peace is fundamental and unwavering, as is also our commitment to the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, with all that this implies. This approach is well reflected in the Franco-Egyptian initiative now before the Security Council¹. The Ten are encouraged that these principles and the need to reconcile them are commanding increasing acceptance as the basis for a comprehensive, just and durable settlement.

81. We welcome the new American initiative contained in President Reagan's speech on 1 September 1982². It offers an important opportunity for peaceful progress on the Palestinian question and a step towards the reconciliation of the parties' conflicting aspirations. All parties should seize, without further delay, the present opportunity to initiate a process of mutual *rapprochement* leading towards a comprehensive peace settlement.

82. In this connection, we emphasize the importance of the Final Declaration adopted by the Twelfth Arab Summit Conference at Fez on 9 September 1982 [see A/37/696], which we see as an expression of the unanimous will of the participants, including the PLO, to work for the achievement of a just peace in the Middle East encompassing all States in the area, including Israel. We renew our call now for a constructive response on the part of Israel. The Ten call upon each of the parties to fulfil its international responsibilities without further hesitation. They expect each of the parties to cease ignoring the resolutions of the Security Council and explicitly to make known their approval of those resolutions.

83. The Ten recall their wish to see the Palestinian people in a position to pursue their demands by political means and by negotiation. They believe that, for the negotiations to succeed, the Palestinian people must be able to commit themselves to those negotiations and thus must be represented at them. Consequently, the position of the Ten remains that the PLO must be associated with the negotiations.

84. While clearly recognizing that it must be for the parties directly concerned to negotiate a lasting settlement themselves, the Ten, in view of the close ties and common interests which link them to the Middle East, will continue to promote a peace settlement along these lines. They will maintain and expand their contacts with all parties to improve the conditions for negotiations towards this end.

85. The Ten reaffirm their support for the independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and national unity of Lebanon, which are indispensable to peace in the region, and for the efforts of the Lebanese Government to promote security and national recon-

ciliation, and they call upon all concerned to uphold the authority of the Government and to avoid all actions which tend to undermine it. They condemn all bloodshed in Lebanon, whether through internal strife or external acts of violence.

86. In the view of the Ten, the establishment of a durable peace in Lebanon requires the complete and prompt withdrawal of Israeli forces from that country, as well as the departure of all other foreign forces, except those which may be authorized by the Government of Lebanon, whose authority must be fully re-established over all its national territory. They will support all efforts to this end. The Ten note with concern that, in spite of the various efforts made by the negotiators on the spot, no significant progress has yet been achieved towards the withdrawal of the Israeli, Syrian and other forces. The persistence of this situation could constitute a threat to the integrity and unity of Lebanon, carrying serious dangers for the whole region. The withdrawal of foreign forces could be of a progressive nature, but should take place within a fixed, short period of time and in conditions which would permit the Lebanese authorities to exercise fully their sovereign rights over all of Lebanon.

87. The Ten have already demonstrated their willingness to contribute to the solution of the problems, especially by giving their support to the United Nations forces and United Nations observers established by the Security Council, as well as the multinational force in Beirut, to which two of their number contribute.

88. The Ten have repeatedly expressed their grave concern at the humanitarian aspect of the situation in Lebanon and stressed the need to adhere strictly to generally recognized humanitarian principles.

89. The European Community and its member States have contributed to the humanitarian assistance operations in Lebanon. They reiterate their readiness to assist in the relief and reconstruction of the country.

90. The Ten are deeply appreciative of the relief work which has been carried out in Lebanon by different international agencies in the most difficult conditions. They call on all parties to co-operate with the responsible agencies, as well as with UNIFIL, which, on an interim basis, has been entrusted by the Security Council with important additional tasks in the humanitarian and administrative fields.

91. The Ten had occasion, on 29 November, in the Special Political Committee,⁴ to express their concern at the continued aggravation of the situation in the occupied territories. The Ten attach the greatest importance to all matters affecting the rights of the population of the Arab territories which Israel has occupied since 1967, and they view with profound and increasing concern Israeli policies in the area during the past year, which have led to mounting tension and continued unrest. In particular, the Ten are deeply concerned by the Israeli policy on settlements. This concern has been heightened by the recent announcement by the Israeli Government of its intention to expand further the settlement programme. The Ten reiterate that they consider the Israeli settlements, as well as changes in demographic structure and property ownership in the occupied territories, to be contrary to international law and to the principle of the

inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, which is embodied, *inter alia*, in Security Council resolution 242 (1967). They call on Israel to put an end now to this illegal and damaging policy, which is a grave obstacle to progress towards peace, and, in particular, to rescind its recent decision concerning the expansion of the settlement programme.

92. The Ten reaffirm that they consider the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,⁵ to apply to all the occupied territories. They reiterate that the Israeli decisions concerning East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights are contrary to international law and therefore invalid in their eyes.

93. The Ten consider that the Israeli withdrawal from Sinai on 25 April last represented an important stage in both the development of peaceful relations between Israel and Egypt and the initiation of the peace process in the Middle East pursuant to Security Council resolution 242 (1967).

94. The Ten are greatly concerned at the continuation of the armed conflict between Iraq and Iran. This conflict, which has led to great bloodshed and human suffering, is deeply destructive of both countries and contains obvious potential dangers to the security and stability of the region. The Ten recall that they have consistently taken a position in support of an end to the fighting and of a negotiated settlement and that they have given their full support to the various efforts made to bring about a peaceful settlement of the dispute. They call urgently for a peaceful solution in accordance with the principles recognized by the international community, such as those outlined by the Security Council. They reaffirm their readiness to support every effort directed towards peace. They are ready to contribute at any time and in any way that seems to the two combatants likely to be helpful in restoring peace between the two countries, as well as to consider, when hostilities have ceased, the possibility of co-operating in the reconstruction of the two countries.

95. In conclusion, the Ten are convinced that every effort must be made to grasp the present opportunities for making real progress towards peace in the Middle East. While fully realizing the complexity of the issues involved, the Ten reaffirm that problems can and must be solved without recourse to the use of force. They will continue to the best of their abilities to work for the promotion of that goal.

96. Mr. AL-SABBAGH (Bahrain) (*interpretation from Arabic*): The Arab-Israeli conflict is a long-standing problem which has constantly recurred and has more often than any other been the subject of concern and long discussions in the General Assembly, and has also occupied the attention of world public opinion. This is quite logical, given the importance and gravity of this question, which involves the stability and security of the Middle East.

97. For 34 years now, Israel has ceaselessly and without pity been practising barbaric aggression against its neighbours, the Arab countries. The Palestinian people has lost its land and its homeland and has suffered persecution unprecedented in history.

98. Israel justifies its terrorism and its aggression against the Palestinian and Arab peoples by invoking

the need to defend itself and guarantee its regional security. According to Israel, the fedayeen are terrorists. Israel describes their defensive resistance to the Israeli army and the settlers as terrorism which has to be uprooted. Israel claims to be taking legitimate security measures against saboteurs, criminals, outlaws and those that act contrary to international law. The very nature of the Israeli community is military, which is shown clearly by the nature of the Israeli settlements, where every individual is constantly armed. Hence, those armed settlers often attack or kill the unarmed inhabitants of the West Bank.

99. There is a self-evident truth here that Israel cannot deny—that the Palestinian people and the entire Arab nation have struggled for three decades and waged a real war against Zionist settler colonialism, against the Zionists who have taken over their property, threaten their future and prevent them from recovering their usurped rights.

100. The international community now realizes that Israel was the first to introduce violence, massacre and terrorism into the region. The massacres of Deir Yassin, Kafr Kassem and Qibya all attest to this. Israel crowned its terrorist acts with the massacres in the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps in Lebanon. The international community and even the Israeli community witnessed all those barbaric acts, of which I shall cite a few examples. Count Bernadotte, a cousin of the King of Sweden, was an eminent statesman and the special envoy of the United Nations to the region in 1948. He used his good offices to bring the Arabs and Jews together and to try to establish a just and lasting peace in Palestine. Unfortunately, the victim of Zionist terrorism, he was shot down in a Jerusalem street.

101. Israel must stop describing Palestinians who aspire to right and justice as terrorists. It must stop describing the popular resistance movement in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip as a destructive movement. The Palestinians are trying to win their freedom. The arduous resistance they are carrying out from time to time is aimed only at guaranteeing their existence and their independence.

102. The question of Palestine is essentially a humanitarian and a political question. The overwhelming majority of the countries of the world have recognized Palestine as an independent political entity. In its resolution 3237 (XXIX), the General Assembly provides for the presence of a Palestinian Observer to the United Nations, with the right to participate in the debates.

103. The Palestinian people is the cornerstone of any lasting peace in the Middle East. It is fully entitled to create its own State on its national soil, within the framework of its sovereignty and independence. The achievement of that objective would undoubtedly facilitate the establishment of a society in which there would be understanding and coexistence between the different races, religions and cultures, as there was before the creation of Israel. The Jewish religion developed in the Middle East—a region rich in values and principles—as did the two other monotheistic religions, Christianity and Islam, in an atmosphere of tolerance and coexistence among different ethnic, religious and cultural groups. The creation of

the State of Israel was the root cause of the regional divisions, the conflicts and the instability in the region.

104. Because of its enormous military arsenals and forces, Israel, according to the reports of institutes of military strategy whose information is considered reliable, is one of the most heavily armed States in the world. Israel produces extremely sophisticated weapons to serve its expansionist and aggressive policy, which is based on covetousness for its neighbours' property. Israel has occupied and effectively appropriated 50 to 60 per cent of the territory of the West Bank. It has imposed its law on the Syrian Golan Heights. Prior to that, it annexed Jerusalem, thus defying the international community and United Nations resolutions. Israel bombed the Iraqi nuclear installations in June 1981 and warned that it would carry out similar raids on any new nuclear installation.

105. Today, Israel occupies Lebanon, imposes its military presence on that country and refuses to withdraw its armed forces. Its aircraft continue their reconnaissance missions over Lebanon and other Arab countries. Israel is sowing discord between Christians, Muslims and Druses in Lebanon. It has changed the course of the Jordan River and is now trying to appropriate the territorial waters of Lebanon in order to build a canal between the Dead Sea and the Mediterranean to serve its expansionist colonization plans. Israel has closed Bir Zeit University, threatening to expel professors who continue to support the PLO in the West Bank.

106. Israel is an occupying Power and has no right to adopt these illegal measures in the occupied Arab territories, measures which constitute flagrant violation of the provisions of the Geneva Convention of 12 August 1949,⁵ which lay down the rights and obligations of an occupying military Power.

107. The perpetuation of the Israeli occupation can in no way modify historical facts. Israel must realize, especially after its occupation of Lebanon, that violence and terrorism cannot resolve the question of the Middle East. This has been shown by the facts.

108. It is not necessary to point out that Israel is an aggressor State which resorts to war to achieve its expansionist aims. Israel thirsts for violence, sows terror and threatens the peace and security of the region. Its objective is to blackmail the international community, to heighten tension and to widen the areas of conflict in the Middle East to strengthen its own existence and extend its influence. It unjustly accuses the Arab countries of having huge military budgets and of accumulating stockpiles of weapons. Israel forgets to say that it is its own impressive military arsenals that threaten the peace and security of the region. Israel has appointed itself the policeman of the region, using its technical and strategic superiority. It practises nuclear blackmail to exert pressure, to intimidate and to subject the region entirely to its influence.

109. Israel has formed a strategic alliance with the odious racist South African régime, which practises a policy of repression and persecution against the African peoples, preventing them from acceding to freedom, progress and dignity.

110. The continuance of the war between Iraq and Iran creates tension in this sensitive region of the world and threatens international peace and security. Like

certain great Powers, Israel is exploiting the conflict in order to weaken the region and increase its influence and interference. The restoration of stability in the Middle East is vital not only to the countries of the region but also to the security and prosperity of the whole world.

111. It has become very clear that condemnation of the acts of aggression committed by Israel does not suffice and that effective preventive measures must be taken against Israel to compel it to respect international lawfulness, the Charter and resolutions of the United Nations and the principles of international law.

112. In January of this year, when the question came before the Security Council, my Government opposed Israel's imposition of its jurisdiction over the Golan Heights. The Council, in conformity with Chapter VII of the Charter, actually considered a draft resolution to impose binding sanctions on Israel, but the United States veto made it impossible to impose sanctions on the aggressor.

113. Nevertheless, we hope that real peace will soon come to the Middle East, and we are determined to intensify our efforts to solve the question of Palestine by the establishment of a Palestinian State and not by local autonomy. Trust must be built up. The Arab-Israeli conflict is a focal point of international tension, and it must therefore be treated with full importance, indeed, urgency, if a just solution is to be found.

114. We wish to pay tribute to the participants of the Fez Conference and to President Reagan for their initiatives, which contain positive elements for a peaceful and just solution to the question.

115. Establishing a lasting peace is a complex and delicate matter, but we continue to hope that the United Nations will be able to compel Israel to respect international lawfulness and the resolutions and Charter of the United Nations and that the Palestinian people will be able to exercise its right to create an independent State on its national land.

116. Mr. BLUM (Israel): For the better part of last week, this Assembly was engaged in the first segment of what has become a perennial double-bill debate, entitled "The question of Palestine" and "The situation in the Middle East". Little, if anything, was said in the first segment to encourage the hope that the course of peace might be advanced. Nor, regrettably, have the possibilities for discussion offered by the agenda item ostensibly under review here been seized. As we approach the conclusion of this debate, it is obvious that it will yield as little as its twin in terms of constructive analysis and propositions.

117. The situation in the Middle East, contrary to the misconceptions fostered by the traditions of this debate, is not confined to an area constituting 0.4 per cent of the total land area properly referred to as the Middle East. The Middle East is a vast region; it straddles an unbroken land mass considerably larger in size than the United States or China. As I had occasion to point out from this rostrum on 2 December [89th meeting], the 21 Arab States—and they are by no means all the States of the Middle East—have a combined area of 5.5 million square miles, that is to say, over 10 per cent of the world's land mass. The Middle East is also rich in mineral resources, not the least of

them oil, on which much of modern civilization finds itself dependent.

118. This previously unknown wealth is at the root of one of the central and inherent contradictions in the area. New-found riches have not brought harmony or social accord to the peoples of the region. The contradictions of extreme wealth alongside abject poverty are accompanied by the tensions between social progress and political extremism. Repression and the flagrant abuse of whole social groups—the denial of human rights and the exploitation of civilian populations by undemocratically established régimes—all combine to destabilize the area on a scale which has undeniable implications for the situation in the world at large.

119. Within this context, the problem of the Palestinian Arabs is clearly not the central issue of the area or, indeed, of our times. Bitter and complex as it is, the Arab-Israel conflict is but one focus of Middle East tensions and violence among many and, as such, is far from being the most crucial. In fact, the Arab-Israel conflict is the product of those broader tensions rather than its cause, and virtually all of those tensions would have to be addressed even if Israel did not serve as the ever-useful scapegoat for Arab failings and inadequacies. One of those failings was highlighted in the 1980 Yearbook on world armaments and disarmament, of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, in the following words:

"... the explosive rise in crude oil prices has brought new and quick 'wealth' to some Middle Eastern countries, which has been used for extensive purchases of modern arms and military equipment as well as for investments in respective infrastructure projects."⁶

The link between Middle East oil and arms is indisputable. The four main oil exporters are also the leading importers of arms in the Middle East and North Africa. That they are also the four most self-righteous debaters in this Assembly is not incidental either. The major Power of the Arabian Peninsula, for example, spent \$14.5 billion on military equipment in 1979, more than seven North Atlantic Treaty Organization [NATO] countries combined, namely, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway and Portugal.

120. The military fistcuffs of Iran and Iraq have likewise required recent massive expenditures. In 1979, Iraq received more arms than any other third-world country, and that was before Saddam Hussein al Takriti marched his legions across the Shatt al Arab. In her book *The Game of Disarmament*, Nobel Peace Prize winner Alva Myrdal noted in 1979 that soon: "Kuwait, ... with only around a million inhabitants, will have one of the world's most [sophisticated] modern air defence systems"⁷. One can only presume that this defence system will be needed against its land-hungry neighbours to the north.

121. While the Assembly apparently has abundant time to seize every conceivable pretext to assail my country, it obviously has no time to address itself to the trivialities that I have referred to, despite the fact that we are ostensibly discussing the situation in the Middle East. I shall therefore try to analyse briefly only some of the current conflicts in the area. Let me,

however, note, by way of introduction to a short representative cross-section, that since 1948 there have been 30 successful *coups d'état* in the Arab countries and at least 44 unsuccessful ones. Twenty Arab Heads of State and Prime Ministers have been assassinated, and altogether there have been more than 82 recorded political murders. Most of these unhappy events have involved subversion on the part of other "fraternal" Arab States.

122. In taking a closer look at some of the principals involved in the 12 armed conflicts currently raging in the Middle East, let us halt first on the eastern flank of the area. There, on the northern shores of the Persian Gulf, two unstable régimes continue to batter one another and to dispatch to mass slaughter the flower of their youth. Iraq's war with Iran has now continued unabated for 27 months. According to the respected publication *World Military Expenditures*, some 35,000 people have died to date on both sides in that war, an apparently cautious estimate in view of the large masses of troops involved.

123. As a *Christian Science Monitor* correspondent noted on 19 November 1982: "Arab and Persian soldiers continue to perish, immense sums of money are being fed into the war machines and the potential for a genuine crisis in the oil-rich Gulf remains unlimited".

124. Interestingly, though not surprisingly, the Assembly has not seen fit to discuss that war, nor are we aware of any exhibition on United Nations premises devoted to the unfortunate victims of this totalitarian frenzy, as well as to the more than 2 million dislocated of the Iraqi-Iranian war—a vast refugee problem created by Iraqi aggression, which dwarfs by far even UNRWA's inflated figures for the Palestinian Arab refugees. One wonders whether the time has not come to consider the establishment of a special agency on the lines of UNRWA to deal with this acute refugee problem.

125. During the past two decades, the rulers of Iraq have reached the pinnacle of power in the bloodiest of fashions. As Lawrence Minard wrote in *Forbes Magazine* on 18 August 1980: "President Saddam Hussein has emerged as one of the most brutally repressive rulers in recent history". Representatives will recall that, not long before the publication of that article, Saddam Hussein al Takriti was involved in the firing-squad murder of 15 top Ba'ath Party leaders, some of them his closest advisers. What begins at the top, of course, permeates down through the ranks of the régime . . .

126. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): I apologize to the representative of Israel for interrupting his statement. The representative of Iraq wishes to speak on a point of order and I call on her.

127. Miss AL-TURAIHI (Iraq): I request the President to ask the representative of the Zionist entity to abide by the rules of procedure and not to go into his manipulations, which are quite well known and which have been used many times in the Assembly to divert attention from Israel's atrocities.

128. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): I call on the representative of Israel to continue his statement.

129. Mr. BLUM (Israel): We are, of course, accustomed to this kind of behaviour which, under the guise of points of order, attempts to create disorder. This particular representative of Iraq has a long record of creating disorder under the guise of points of order. It is apparently very painful for her to hear for once the truth about the régime which she represents here.

130. With your permission, Mr. President, I intend to proceed with my statement exactly at the point where I was interrupted. Representatives will recall that, not long before the publication of the article in *Forbes Magazine*, Saddam Hussein al Takriti was involved in the firing-squad murder of 15 top Ba'ath Party leaders, some of them his closest advisers. What begins at the top, of course, permeates down through the ranks of the régime, and the vicious repression of human rights and political freedoms in Iraq is now well documented. In its annual report for 1981, Amnesty International expressed concern over the large number of executions carried out in Iraq and noted that since 1974 that organization has received information regarding an average of 100 executions a year.

131. Since obtaining its independence in the 1930s, Iraq has systematically suppressed its ethnic minorities. Hundreds of Assyrian Christians, men, women and children, were slaughtered by the Iraqi army in 1933. During the Second World War, there was a *coup d'état* in Iraq which brought to power Rashid Ali al-Keilani, who was notable for two things: his collaboration with the Nazis and the bloody pogroms which were carried out against the Jewish community in Baghdad. For almost a quarter of a century after the Second World War, the Iraqi authorities methodically engaged in the ruthless oppression of their Kurdish minority, resulting in the massacre of thousands upon thousands of Kurds in the mid-1970s. The time has certainly come to consider the establishment by the Assembly of a committee on the exercise of the inalienable rights of the Kurdish people in Iraq, as well as the establishment within the United Nations Secretariat of a special unit on Kurdish rights in Iraq which could be upgraded, in due course, to the rank of a division. Since Iraq was until last year a respected member of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, it would no doubt wish to sponsor the resolutions to this effect and might even meet, from its oil revenues, the financial expenses involved.

132. Repression in Iraq, is, of course, not limited to the Kurds. Many prisoners, from all groups within Iraqi society, are subject to vicious torture.

133. Human rights monitors found it necessary to publish a special report in April 1981 detailing medical and other evidence of the frequent use of torture. Despite all this, *The Christian Science Monitor* reported in the previously mentioned article that: "It seems likely that Hussein will endure—if for no other reason than the ruthlessness with which he has dispatched his foes at home . . ." That conclusion of *The Christian Science Monitor* found a suitable illustration in the town of Ad Dujayl last July, in an incident which came to light only this week and which clearly the Iraqi authorities have tried to hide from international view. According to the London *Economist* of 4 December 1982, Ad Dujayl, 40 miles north-east of Baghdad, has been erased from the map. Following

an attempt on his life, Saddam Hussein al Takriti—and I quote *The Economist*—

“decided to make an example of this centre of dissatisfaction.

“There were about 150 casualties in the two hours of fighting that followed the attempted assassination. After that 150 families simply disappeared. The remaining men were sent off to northern Iraq; the women and children were sent south. Bulldozers then demolished the town.”

134. Can we expect this body to show further concern at this horrendous event, or is it to become yet another example of the double-standard syndrome which pervades this Assembly?

135. To the west of Iraq lies Syria—a country whose régime brings together the various causes of conflict in the Middle East and which has itself been a cause of chronic regional instability. It would, of course, be superfluous to dwell upon the well-known mutual non-relations of the two fraternal Ba'ath régimes, in Damascus and Baghdad. The severe international problems created by Syria derive to a great extent from its internal situation.

136. From the end of the Second World War until the present régime came into power in 1970, there were a dozen *coups d'état* in Syria, most of them bloody. The present régime is a minority one, made up mostly of members of the Alawite sect. It rests on the bayonets of the brothers Hafiz and Rifat al-Assad. The state of emergency declared as long ago as 1963 is still used by the régime to justify widespread violations of basic human rights, including those formally guaranteed by the Syrian constitution.

137. A most recent example of Syrian inhumanity to Syrians occurred, of course, in the city of Hama, where in February of this year, according to the ingenious explanation of the representative of Syria in the Second Committee at the present General Assembly session, some “deviants” were liquidated. In fact, as *The Washington Post* reported on 3 May 1982, the city was subjected to three weeks of relentless artillery and tank fire by forces loyal to the Assad brothers. Entire neighbourhoods were reduced to rubble, thousands of persons were killed and an estimated 20,000 children were orphaned. Other reports, among them one by the British Broadcasting Corporation, note that the number of those murdered exceeded 15,000. In the light of Syrian comments on the matter, we may therefore be forgiven for presuming that Syria probably regarded the liquidation of 15,000 “deviants” and the orphaning of 20,000 children as a not-un-toward event in that country, and devised this fashion of celebrating suitably the termination of Syria's term as a member in good standing of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

138. Like its neighbour Iraq, Syria also stands indicted by international monitoring bodies for the plethora of torture and summary executions, and is the subject of one of the longest individual country reports published during the past year. As this material is available to all members of the General Assembly, I shall refrain from quoting from it at length. It is, however, worth noting that these bodies were also concerned about allegations that Syrian security forces

were responsible for the assassination abroad of prominent exiles opposed to the bloody rule of the Assad brothers. In carrying out these acts, the leaders of Syria were, of course, only following the example set by the fraternal Libyan régime of Muammar Qaddafi, which, starting from next month, will grace the Commission on Human Rights with its membership. It is only fitting, now that Syria's term is expiring, that it should be succeeded by a régime equally committed to respect for human rights.

139. Since the first call for the physical liquidation of enemies of the revolution in February 1980, more than a dozen Libyan civilians have been killed or wounded in assassination attempts, in Europe, the United States and the Middle East. The long arm of Colonel Qaddafi has not only extended to his enemies abroad but has also orchestrated a world-wide terrorist network, stretching from the Middle East to Africa, Europe and Asia.

140. Arms supplied to Libya by the Soviet Union—presumably arms for peace—have turned up in Ireland, the Philippines and Ethiopia. In Africa, Colonel Qaddafi's involvement in Chad, is, of course, well known, whilst his irresponsible adventurism has involved his soldiers in other countries, such as Uganda, in abortive attempts to salvage such enlightened régimes as that of Idi Amin. Qaddafi's involvement in the Middle East is at least as great as his involvement in Africa. His neighbours on Radio Tunis described him on 5 February 1980 in the following words: “a man struck with paranoia who misappropriates the riches of his country and uses them for accumulating arms, financing terrorists from all sides and spreading chaos in the Arab countries”.

141. His fellow African and Arab, President Nimeiri of Sudan, stated it more succinctly. Qaddafi, he said, has “a split personality—both evil”. This was quoted in *The New Republic* of 7 March 1981. From the safety of Tripoli, Colonel Qaddafi had much to say on the events in Lebanon this summer. On the anniversary of the Libyan revolution on 1 September 1982, he referred once again to his immortal advice to the Palestinians to commit suicide: “I would have liked the Palestinians to enter into a suicidal battle to the end, since it would have been better for them that way.” Once again, Qaddafi said aloud what other Arab rulers, for tactical reasons, really thought but had deemed it preferable to conceal. In suggesting suicide to the PLO, Colonel Qaddafi remained faithful to the real precepts of the Arab rulers' perceptions of the PLO. Colonel Qaddafi's pronouncements were, superficially at least, in sharp contradistinction to those of the PLO's patrons in this body, who have sought to camouflage their genuine motives behind a flurry of continued activity and the reckless rhetoric of hastily resumed emergency special sessions, sessions which characterize the Arab leaders' predilection for hypocrisy and deceitfulness, even towards their own Arab “brethren”.

142. Therein lies the real reason for the inordinate amount of time devoted to this subject. The rhetorical barrage here is intended to deaden the sounds of reality and truth, so clearly perceived by the entire world, with regard to the Arab world's true position towards the PLO and its role in Lebanon.

143. The sublimation of the real problems of Lebanon beneath the flow of hollow anti-Israel rhetoric is unfortunately very much in character in respect of the behavioural patterns of Arab leaders. First they set up and organized the terrorist PLO for the purpose of harassing and eventually destroying my country. Then they dumped the terrorists on Jordan. When that scheme backfired, they unloaded the PLO on to the back of Lebanon, which was the weakest link in the Arab chain. The Arab leaders saw in Lebanon an appropriate host for the PLO. Since the PLO larva had metamorphosed into a voracious monster, keeping it in Lebanon was the sensible thing to do. Not only was it kept from under the feet of the Arab leaders but it also afforded excellent opportunities: Syria used the PLO presence as a pretext for its military intrusion into Lebanon, an exercise that was willingly bankrolled by the Saudis and other assorted Arab oil millionaires. The Iraqis, the Libyans, the Iranians indulged their appetite for subversion, counter-subversion, mutual bombings and assassinations, as well as their hyperactive political schemes—all with the help and operational assistance of the various factions of the PLO.

144. Lebanon, the country that was long touted as the only democracy in the Arab world, became a living symbol of what the Arab leaders' intrigues could really do to a democratic country with no muscle to resist them. And the world slowly but surely grew accustomed to it and high-handedly ignored it. Lebanon was expendable, and not only in the eyes of the Arab leaders. In the higher echelons of the Governments of the world, it was not considered good form to talk of the goings-on in that hapless country.

145. The 11 years of PLO presence, the nibbling away of Lebanese sovereignty, the civil war, the Syrian invasion and the subsequent bombardments, the killings and the rampage were all relegated to the inner pages of the frostily sanctimonious newspapers in the West; the frightful casualty figures, in the hundreds of thousands, were hardly ever mentioned by the media. After all, as the Jordanian representative told the Security Council last summer, it was all an "internal Arab affair". Yet, who would deny that the sordid details of that "family affair" were an open secret, well known in a passive sort of way abroad. The world knew, in fact, that the Arab leaders, for their own often diametrically opposed reasons, were guiding and orchestrating the pernicious activity of the PLO in Lebanon—inside and outside the vast enclaves given over to the domination of the multifarious PLO factions and splinter groups.

146. Yes, Lebanon was expendable in the eyes of the Arab—and some other non-Arab—leaders because it was weak. Jordan, too, would have been expendable. If King Hussein had not acted, not bombed the refugee camps and laid siege to the PLO strongholds, not shelled the areas where the PLO was resisting, then Jordan too would have been victimized much like Lebanon. But, in the final count, it is the PLO itself which is being used by the rapacious, self-seeking and feuding rulers of the Arab world. That truth is so self-evident today that denial can hardly be credible.

147. The Arab leaders did everything in their power to perpetuate the Lebanese role of the prostrate host to the PLO for the simple reason that no one in the Arab world wants any part of the PLO—and for good

reason. After all, it is they who created this Frankenstein monster and they know its true character. Who would surrender his sovereignty to the grand masters of international terrorism? Maintaining them in Lebanon was cheaper, safer; it kept them and their shady connections at arm's length. That is why the Arab Governments refused for many weeks to accept the PLO stragglers from Beirut. The terrorists were finally given asylum only after it was proved beyond any shadow of doubt that they were beaten and grossly deflated, and then separated into relatively harmless groups.

148. Syria, Lebanon's neighbour, long refused to accept them in spite of the interesting fact that the so-called Palestine National Council has its headquarters in Damascus. The Syrians wanted the PLO with its fangs pulled. President al-Assad knows how to handle this type of PLO. The same is true of the others, all the irrelevant, sham demurrals notwithstanding. But in a fashion characteristic of the Syrian régime, President al-Assad is now billing himself in the Arab arena as the saviour of the PLO, and generous financial honorariums are very much in order.

149. Although we have repeatedly stated, both in the Security Council and in the Assembly, Israel's position with regard to the situation in Lebanon, it is only proper that I do so again briefly today.

150. Israel stands for the full restoration of Lebanese sovereignty, of Lebanese independence, of Lebanese territorial integrity, of the unity of Lebanon within its internationally recognized boundaries and for the restoration of the lawful authority of the Government of Lebanon throughout the length and breadth of that country.

151. When we speak of the restoration of Lebanese sovereignty, we have in mind the restoration of genuine sovereignty over Lebanon to its own people, and not a mere ritualistic lip-service to such sovereignty used as a façade behind which alien interests seek to perpetuate their stranglehold over Lebanon and its people. The experience of recent years has clearly demonstrated that the sovereignty of Lebanon has become a sham and has ceased to exist in anything but name, having been abused by those who have converted Lebanon into a base for aggression and international terrorism. This must not be repeated. It is therefore essential that all non-Lebanese elements without exception remove themselves from Lebanese soil and that the Lebanese people be enabled to take their destiny into their own hands. Lebanon rightly and properly belongs to its own people and to them alone.

152. Israel has no territorial ambitions whatsoever in Lebanon. We do not covet even one single square inch of Lebanese territory. We do not want to stay in Lebanon or in any part thereof. But we are entitled to demand that proper arrangements be made so that Lebanon should not serve again, as it did for so many years, as a staging ground for terrorist attacks against Israel's civilian population. We are entitled to demand that concrete arrangements be made that would permanently and reliably preclude hostile action from Lebanese soil against Israel and its citizens.

153. No one in the Middle East is more eager than Israel to see Lebanese sovereignty restored, its internal

strife resolved, the Syrian occupiers removed, the PLO subdued, and freedom and tranquillity return to that war-torn land. Israel will do everything in its power to maintain good-neighbourly relations with Lebanon. Israel wants peace in and with Lebanon. Israel has no quarrel with Lebanon, only with those who want to subjugate it.

154. Sadly, this Assembly has missed yet another opportunity to address itself to the real problems underlying the situation in the Middle East; what was said in the debate on the Arab-Israel conflict last week has been repeated *ad nauseam* in this week's discussion.

155. The Middle East is a vast area; its problems are numerous and complicated; they have implications for the world as a whole. The repetitious and distorted presentation here of the Arab-Israel conflict, a conflict confined to one small corner of the region, cannot but lead to the conclusion that this Assembly has indeed no intention whatsoever either of discussing, or of making an attempt to come to grips with, these real problems.

156. Mr. VRAALSEN (Norway): In the year that has elapsed since the last General Assembly debate on the Middle East, the world has witnessed a rapid sequence of violent and tragic events in the region, resulting in human suffering and material devastation of enormous proportions. The loss of life and the destruction in the wake of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon caused shock and distress all over the world.

157. Although there is now a cessation of major hostilities, the situation in Lebanon is still far from normal. The civilian population is still suffering hardship and deprivation, and there are still 100,000 foreign troops in that country. The Lebanese Government has repeatedly stated its wish that all foreign troops be withdrawn from all of Lebanon, but unfortunately so far to little avail. The Norwegian Government would appeal to those States that maintain a military presence within the borders of Lebanon to pay heed to the appeal of the lawful Government of that country and withdraw their forces. Security Council resolutions 508 (1982) and 509 (1982) should be implemented. We also commend and support the efforts of American mediators Philip Habib and Morris Draper to facilitate a speedy withdrawal of all foreign troops from Lebanon. A complete withdrawal would make it possible for the Lebanese Government to re-establish its authority, thereby enabling it to concentrate on much-needed efforts to rebuild the war-ravaged country. A withdrawal of all foreign troops could also give a significant positive impetus to the quest for a comprehensive and lasting peace settlement in the Middle East.

158. Such an impetus would be all the more welcome since, in the aftermath of the war in Lebanon, there have been some positive developments that have rekindled hopes for a new start in the peace process.

159. One such encouraging event is the peace plan outlined by the President of the United States in early September 1982². This plan is to be commended for its realism and constructiveness. In the view of the Norwegian Government, it forms a useful basis in the endeavour to reach a comprehensive peace settlement. Similarly, the set of principles agreed upon at the

Twelfth Arab Summit Conference, held at Fez in September 1982 [see A/37/696], contains a number of new, constructive and positive elements that can contribute to the success of the peace process.

160. Partly as a result of the American and Arab proposals just mentioned, the current situation in the Middle East offers some possibilities for fruitful and constructive negotiations. It must also be stressed, however, that the situation is precarious and could very easily deteriorate once again. It is therefore essential that all parties concerned show moderation and restraint, lest the opportunity to make progress towards a peaceful solution be lost.

161. With this background, there must be concern about the decision of the Israeli Government to proceed with plans for further settlements in occupied Arab territories. The Norwegian Government deplores this decision, which can only entail negative consequences for the general political climate in the Middle East, and urges the Israeli Government to reconsider its action.

162. The situation for the remaining Palestinian civilians in Lebanon is precarious. A large-scale humanitarian relief action is necessary to alleviate the sufferings of this sorely tried population. In that respect, we appeal to all the parties involved to give every possible assistance to the activities of UNRWA for the benefit of the Palestinian civilians in Lebanon.

163. In the opinion of the Norwegian Government, the basic elements of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace settlement are contained in the Charter of the United Nations and in Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). In our view, the following principles remain the most important of these elements: first, that the acquisition of territory by force is unacceptable; and secondly, that all States in the area must have the right to live in peace within secure and internationally recognized borders. The third basic prerequisite for a lasting peace in the Middle East is the recognition and implementation of the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to self-determination. Taken together, these basic principles strike a balance between the most vital interests of the parties concerned. Only if the parties mutually recognize these fundamental interests will it be possible to break out of the vicious circle of violence, hatred and distrust that has prevailed for so many years.

164. Obviously, it is not enough to state these principles in abstract terms. They must be translated into political action. On the part of Israel, that means withdrawal from territories that have been occupied since the 1967 war, and on the part of the Palestinians and the Arab countries, it means recognition of Israel and its right to exist within internationally recognized borders.

165. In our view, the Palestinian problem remains at the core of the Middle East conflict. A solution can only be found in the context of direct negotiations between the parties concerned, including the representatives of the Palestinian people. The Palestinians cannot be expected to accept the responsibilities inherent in any peace solution unless they themselves have had a voice in the negotiations leading to the solution.

166. Over the years, the United Nations seems to have been devoting ever more time and effort to the Middle East conflict. We are not convinced that the impact and influence of the debates and resolutions increase in proportion to their number. A good case could in fact be made for the opposite conclusion. In spite of this, however, it is the conviction of my Government that the United Nations could play an important role in any future negotiations for a comprehensive peace solution in the Middle East. As the Secretary-General points out in his report on the work of the Organization [A/37/1], the United Nations or, more specifically, the Security Council, is the only place in the world where all the parties concerned can sit at the same table.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.

NOTES

¹ See *Official Records of the Security Council, Thirty-seventh Year, Supplement for July, August and September 1982*, document S/15317.

² *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* (Washington, Government Printing Office, 1982), vol. 18, No. 35, p. 1081.

³ See *Official Records of the Security Council, Thirty-fifth Year, Supplement for April, May and June 1980*, document S/14009.

⁴ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty seventh Session, Special Political Committee, 38th meeting, and ibid., Special Political Committee, Sessional Fascicle, corrigendum.*

⁵ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, No. 973, p. 287.

⁶ *World Armaments and Disarmament: SIPRI Yearbook 1980* (London, Taylor & Francis, Ltd., 1980), p. 95.

⁷ Alva Myrdal, *The Game of Disarmament: How the United States and Russia Run the Arms Race* (New York, Pantheon Books), p. 143.