



President: Mr. Paul J. F. LUSAKA
(Zambia).

AGENDA ITEM 33

Question of Palestine:

- (a) Report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People;
- (b) Report of the Secretary-General

1. The PRESIDENT: I should like to propose that the list of speakers in the debate on this item be closed tomorrow, Friday, at 12 noon. May I take it that the General Assembly agrees to that proposal?

It was so decided.

2. The PRESIDENT: I call on Mr. Massamba Sarré, of Senegal, in his capacity as Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.

3. Mr. SARRÉ (Senegal), Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (*interpretation from French*): A year ago, the General Assembly reiterated the appeal of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, held at Geneva from 29 August to 7 September 1983, for the convening of an international peace conference on the Middle East. In endorsing the idea of such a conference, the Assembly expressed its will and commitment to the view that peace in the Middle East can be achieved through promoting sincere dialogue among all the parties concerned. This position itself was the result of a dual awareness: awareness of the fact that the path to peace, however long it may be, must give precedence to dialogue over the force of arms; but also awareness particularly of the fact that the time factor is of paramount importance in the search for peace and that, if no action is taken, the international community could be exposed to disastrous consequences in the Middle East region.

4. Guided by these considerations and by the mandate entrusted to it by the General Assembly in resolutions 38/58 A and B, the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People has in the course of the past year focused most of its attention on efforts to promote the convening of the aforementioned conference, thus supplementing the actions taken by the Secretary-General, to whom we wish to pay a tribute for his untiring efforts in the cause of the Palestinian people.

5. It will be recalled that in section III of the Programme of Action for the Achievement of Palestinian Rights,¹ which was adopted by the International Conference on the Question of Palestine and endorsed by the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session and whose implementation was entrusted to the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, the following is specifically stated:

"The International Conference on the Question of Palestine, convinced of the important role of world-wide public opinion in resolving the question of Palestine, and in the implementation of the Declaration and Programme of Action, urges and encourages:

"
"(2) Non-governmental organizations and professional and popular associations to intensify their efforts to support the rights of the Palestinian people in every possible way;

"
"(9) Parliamentarians, political parties, trade unions, organizations for solidarity and intellectuals, particularly in Western Europe and North America, to join their counterparts in other parts of the world in giving their support, where it has not been done, to an initiative which would express the desire of the international community to see the Palestinian people at last living in their own independent homeland in peace, freedom and dignity."

It is therefore basically within the context of increasing the awareness of the international community in the promotion of the objectives put forward by the Conference that I wish to place the work of the Committee in presenting its report [A/39/35].

6. In accordance with resolution 38/58 B, the Committee organized a North American non-governmental organization symposium on the question of Palestine from 25 to 27 June 1984 in New York. That symposium, which was the first of its kind, had the participation of more than 60 organizations based in the United States and Canada and, after three days of productive debate, it adopted the North American Declaration, which is annexed to the Committee's report [*ibid.*, annex IV].

7. In that declaration, whose obvious interest makes it worthy of our attention, North American non-governmental organizations not only expressed support for the convening of an international conference on peace in the Middle East but also committed themselves to co-ordinating and stepping up efforts to mobilize public opinion and Governments in favour of the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to build a State within the historic borders of Palestine.

8. The particularly encouraging results of this symposium led the Committee to organize at Geneva two months later, from 20 to 22 August, an international non-governmental organization meeting on the question of Palestine. Some 100 organizations from all over the world participated in that meeting and adopted a resolution which is important for more than one reason. They not only committed themselves to campaigning in their respective countries in favour of an international peace conference on the Middle East, but also decided to establish an interim co-ordinating committee on Palestine. This is particularly encouraging, as the interim committee is composed of organizations from the United States, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and France, and also, and above all, from the occupied territories—specifically the West Bank—and Israel.

9. Another outstanding aspect of the meeting was that the non-governmental organizations decided to launch a campaign to collect signatures from among the peoples of the entire world in favour of convening an international conference on peace in the Middle East. That campaign was launched on 29 November 1984—the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People—and will end in one year, on 29 November 1985.

10. At the request of the participants in the Geneva meeting, we decided to include their important resolution in the Committee's report [*ibid.*, annex V].

11. In addition to these activities involving non-governmental organizations, the Committee organized at Tunis, from 14 to 17 August 1984, the ninth United Nations Seminar on the Question of Palestine. That seminar brought together parliamentarians and scholars from 17 European and African countries and resulted in an appeal to all parliamentarians throughout the world to step up their national action to enable people better to understand the realities of the question of Palestine. It is appropriate to stress here that, at this critical stage in the efforts of the United Nations to improve the chance of a negotiated solution, the support of scholars, parliamentarians and other influential groups is an important element in mobilizing public opinion in favour of the solution sought by the United Nations.

12. This is only an outline of a few of the most noteworthy activities of the Committee during the past year. There were many other activities, by the Department of Public Information and by Committee representatives at various international conferences. I shall not dwell on these, for they are set out clearly in the report.

13. The international community has come to recognize that the question of Palestine is at the core of the Middle East conflict and that enjoyment by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights is indispensable for the solution of that problem. Those rights have repeatedly been reaffirmed by the General Assembly and include the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination without outside interference, its right to national independence and sovereignty, including the right to establish its own State in Palestine, and the right of Palestinians to return to their homes from which they have been displaced and uprooted and to regain possession of their property or to receive compensation if they do not wish to return. Moreover, acting objectively and on the basis of the realities, the Committee recognized the right to exist of all States of the region.

14. It will be recalled also that, at the request of the General Assembly, the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People drew up a programme for the attainment of these rights, which has been endorsed many times by the General Assembly by an overwhelming majority. However, as everyone knows, the Security Council has been unable to take action on these recommendations owing to the opposition of one of its permanent members. As I have already said, any proposal aimed at solving the Palestinian problem without taking into consideration the essential factors of these recommendations is doomed to failure and would, indeed, perpetuate a situation which imperils international peace and security.

15. We have reached a critical, decisive stage in the process of restoring Palestinian rights. Each day that passes without progress on the path charted by the Committee merely complicates a situation which, unfortunately, is already difficult. The gradual annexation of the illegally occupied territories, the increasingly repressive measures taken against the Palestinian population, and the cycle of violence clearly demonstrate that it is high time to reach a just and lasting settlement of the Palestinian question.

16. In its report, the Committee again reaffirms the validity of its recommendations [*ibid.*, annex I] and requests the Assembly to insist once more that the Security Council adopt positive measures to implement these recommendations, on which action should have been taken long ago. Moreover, the Committee reaffirms the validity of the recommendations of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, held at Geneva in 1983, emphasizing especially that the international community must begin immediately to focus its activities on the necessary preparations for convening the proposed international peace conference on the Middle East, as endorsed by the General Assembly in resolution 38/58 C, with the participation of all the parties concerned.

17. In this connection, I wish to reiterate the Committee's deep appreciation of the contacts initiated by the Secretary-General. While the Committee regrets the negative position of certain countries, it is none the less determined to pursue its efforts to ensure that the conference is convened soon, for it is convinced that the holding of this conference will be an important step towards the settlement of the question of Palestine. We call now on all the parties concerned to rise above emotion and passion and to co-operate in the achievement of a positive result in the interests of peace and justice.

18. With that goal in mind, the Committee is particularly encouraged by the massive support given by the international community to the proposal on the convening of the conference and by the mounting evidence that these recommendations are now better known and understood throughout the world. Other positive factors are the notable increase in interest in the question of Palestine and the militant support of non-governmental organizations for the Palestinian cause.

19. It cannot be repeated too often that the present situation in the Middle East is a constant reminder to the international community of the urgent need to increase efforts to find a solution to the Palestinian problem.

20. There is no better proof of this urgency than the situation which persists in the occupied territories. Today, 17 years after the 1967 occupation, more than a third of the land in the West Bank has been confiscated by the Israeli authorities for the establishment of settlements. At the same time, Israel is tightening its grip on the water resources of the occupied territories, the use of which by the Palestinian population is limited by harsh restrictions.

21. Thus, as time passes, Israel is transforming the West Bank and Gaza into a pool of cheap labour and an outlet for its products through the restrictions imposed by the Israeli authorities on the establishment of new industries.

22. This process of stifling the economy of the occupied territories contributes to emptying them of their most educated inhabitants, increases their dependence on Israel and is a denial of everything that might serve as the beginning of a future Palestinian State.

23. The salvaging of the occupied territories is more than ever inseparable from a political solution of the Palestinian question. Dialogue among all the parties concerned, including, first and foremost, the Palestinian people, is a necessary part of that process.

24. On 29 November I had an opportunity to say something that I will repeat today: "Peace is one and indivisible."

25. We consider that at this critical stage it is imperative that efforts be redoubled in order to find a just solution to the question of Palestine and to put an end to the unnecessary suffering of the Palestinian people and others in the region. We appeal to the international community to shoulder its responsibility within the context of dialogue in order to ensure a felicitous solution to this tragedy that has lasted for nearly 40 years. The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People urges you to work to assure that such a dialogue will begin.

26. The PRESIDENT: I now call on Mr. Victor Gauci, of Malta, Rapporteur of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, to present the report of the Committee.

27. Mr. GAUCI (Malta), Rapporteur of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People: My presentation of the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People [A/39/35] in reality symbolizes another year of festering conflict and wrongs unrighted. On the question of Palestine, the time has now come not so much to speak of many things, but rather to concentrate on a few of the main elements of this tragic issue.

28. If we really wish, again, to speak of many things, there are enough details in paragraphs 18 to 89 of the report to demonstrate clearly the present disheartening state of affairs. Those paragraphs, as well as other more specific reports referred to therein or presented before the Assembly's Special Political Committee, contain more than enough evidence to prove conclusively—if any proof were really needed—that all is not well in the State of Palestine.

29. Those same paragraphs also contain enough evidence to convince any objective observer beyond a reasonable doubt that a continuation of the policies currently applied on the spot cannot bring about reconciliation, let alone the peace which the protagonists claim to seek and for which the Committee, by consensus, has striven strenuously for the past eight

years. In so doing, the Committee was only shedding light and concentrating attention on the key issue by furthering almost 40 years of effort by the United Nations to bring about a solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict in the Middle East.

30. It must in all candor also be admitted that the evidence contained in these paragraphs provides ample ammunition to fuel a heated debate. Regrettable as this may be, it is not, however, what the Committee seeks. An acrimonious round of bitter recrimination, of accusation and counter-accusation, repeated year in and year out, is neither a formula nor a substitute for peace. What is even worse, it provides convenient ammunition for those who contend that seeking a solution through the proposed international peace conference on the Middle East is not likely to succeed, judging by the outcome of the past debates.

31. The Committee nevertheless has to stress with regret that the contents of the report cannot but reflect the untenable situation on the spot. Truth cannot be suppressed. There is no question that the cycle of violence goes on. In addition, it cannot be denied that many years after the flurry and expectation raised by partial approaches and shuttle diplomacy, the situation remains grim. It can be summed up in a few brief but poignant sentences.

Mr. Wastuddin (Bangladesh), Vice-President, took the Chair.

32. Small, friendly Lebanon is in turmoil, with much of its territory occupied. Resentment runs riot in the occupied territories, with popular protest being subdued by massive military repression. Violence erupts sporadically. Unperturbed, disdainful of public opinion and legality, and against opposition from within and from without, Israel continues its illegal settlements and annexation policies in the occupied territories, policies which are universally held to be an obstacle to peace.

33. Peaceful initiatives on the spot are conspicuous by their absence. Instead, the policies of fear, hate and force predominate, lavishly fueled by sophisticated weapons, to the detriment of economic development. To say that this is a bleak background is to put it mildly. To repeat the details is merely to deaden their impact.

34. Let us therefore stick to the essentials. Is there no ray of hope to pierce this persistent gloom? The Committee believes that there is. The Committee itself has shown the right path, and it must continue its labours until its recommendations are followed through and the goal achieved. Here, very briefly, are the main reasons for our undiminished hope.

35. First, the recommendations of the Committee, repeatedly endorsed by the General Assembly and subsequently further refined by the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, held at Geneva in 1983, are the only—I repeat—the only formula adopted by international consensus which advocates a procedure permitting all the protagonists in the conflict to be involved in the search for a comprehensive solution based on justice and international law.

36. Secondly, the real nature of the Palestine question is now widely known in all four quarters of the globe, again thanks to the efforts of the Committee. Time and time again, without exception, in all the regions where seminars and symposiums have been organized in the past few years, our audiences—even

the most sceptical among them—have been convinced that the recommendations of the Committee stand the most rigid tests of fairness, legality and peaceful scope, overlooking the vital interests of none of the protagonists and hence likely to last if implemented. The Chairman of the Committee has just provided the highlights of our activities in this field and I need not therefore repeat them.

37. Thirdly, we have gathered support from hundreds of non-governmental organizations, trade union representatives, journalists and members of the academic community in advocating action and redress for the practical attainment of the rights of the Palestinian people. A spontaneous campaign to obtain signatures favouring peace is already under way.

38. Fourthly, and perhaps most important, we are advocating an approach through the Security Council, first bringing about contacts and *rapprochement*, then promoting a comprehensive solution and subsequently even providing guarantees to ensure its observance if necessary. This laborious procedure is proof enough that the interests of no single party will be overlooked. Those who claim the contrary clearly misunderstand the Committee's approach.

39. This background provides the positive thinking behind the recommendations of the Committee this year, contained in paragraphs 155 to 160 of its report. Those sound and peaceful recommendations stand in marked contrast to the sense of despondency and despair in that volatile and violent region. But in order to succeed, we need the positive contribution of all concerned. As stated in paragraph 160 of the report: "The Committee . . . strongly recommends that international action should henceforth concentrate on the preparations necessary for the convening of this Conference and contribute to its successful and peaceful outcome." We therefore earnestly trust that all nations in this Assembly will no longer delay in responding to this call, and we urge the Secretary-General to pursue the valiant efforts he has already initiated.

40. In essence, what we would be doing in 1984 is start on the unfinished part of the solution envisaged in 1947. In 1947, the partition plan did not enjoy unanimous backing, but one side of the plan was fully implemented. Many events have taken place in the area since then which have caused changes on the map of the region but have not brought about peace or security. The one event that has not taken place is the most fundamental and enlightened of all: it is the free and unfettered act of self-determination by the Palestinian people. In 1984, therefore, the international backing for this overdue act of self-determination by the Palestinian people is almost unanimous; it obviously provides the essential ingredient of a lasting solution.

41. So many opportunities in the past have been missed; history provides the record and the events and on-the-spot evidence. But the window of opportunity is not yet closed. The Assembly this year should ensure that the window remains open and should encourage the Security Council next year to strive energetically to finalize the necessary preparations for the international peace conference on the Middle East. All the spadework has been done; all the ingredients of a solution are before the Council awaiting its final touches and backed by its supreme authority. Further delay would be prejudicial to the

prospects. It is time to replace reckless rhetoric by sober statesmanship and a specific sense of purpose. As with all problems, if we just put one foot firmly on the ground before the other, keep our heads cool and co-operate spontaneously, we can succeed.

42. As my delegation stated when it replied to the letter from the Secretary-General, dated 9 March 1984, concerning the convening of the international peace conference on the Middle East:

"The potential benefits of such an approach cannot be over-emphasized. In particular, the present sense of drift and despair in the Middle East could be transformed into an energetic momentum for a concerted search for peace. That in itself, and by itself, would be a significant development on the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations." [A/39/231.]

43. It is, I submit, no longer proper for individual countries to invoke procedural difficulties against a comprehensive approach, which in any case is now not only the conclusion of the Committee but also the unanimous recommendation of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine. The protagonists themselves need encouragement to overcome inertia. The final solution will need universal backing and effective support—guarantees if need be, not based on the force of arms but on the common benefit of peace. Hard work and long negotiations will be required, but a start and an essential change of direction are necessary now.

44. The mutual concessions that will be required from Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization [PLO] to clinch a peace settlement would be more likely to be achieved in a package deal in a comprehensive solution enjoying unanimous and universal support.

45. Permit me to end by once more acclaiming the leadership and dedicated service of Mr. Sarré, who has guided us through another year of hard work. I also wish to express my appreciation to all members for their own contribution and for the assistance they have extended to me in my eight years of rapporteurship of the Committee.

46. The PRESIDENT: The next speaker is Mr. Farouk Kaddoumi, the Head of the Political Department of the PLO. I call on him in accordance with General Assembly resolution 3237 (XXIX).

47. Mr. KADDOUMI (Palestine Liberation Organization) (*interpretation from Arabic*): I am pleased to congratulate Mr. Lusaka on his election to the presidency of the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly and, through him, to greet his friendly country, Zambia, and its great President, Kenneth Kaunda, who has always supported the just struggle of our Palestinian people and of the peoples of the African continent and the non-aligned States. I am confident that Mr. Lusaka's wisdom, extensive experience and firm belief in the principles of justice and peace will guarantee the success of the work of this session.

48. I am also pleased to take this opportunity to express thanks and appreciation to his predecessor, Mr. Jorge Illueca, whose valuable efforts in conducting the work of the Assembly's thirty-eighth session greatly contributed to the results achieved.

49. I wish to congratulate most warmly the State of Brunei Darussalam on its accession to independence and its admission to membership of the United Nations.

50. I cannot fail to note with appreciation the great efforts of the Secretary-General in the interest of world peace and in affirming the role of the United Nations, notwithstanding the attempt to destroy its efforts. I should also like to emphasize our full confidence in him and our continued readiness to cooperate with the United Nations in achieving security and a just peace in the Middle East.

51. We meet today as we approach the fortieth anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations, which came into existence in the wake of the most atrocious experience in the history of mankind—the Second World War. The United Nations came into being to establish a system to govern relations among States and nations based on respect for the right of peoples to freedom and independence, as well as on co-operation and equality instead of exploitation, oppression, domination and aggression.

52. The world community continues to be faced with numerous dangers to world security and peace; many peoples, including the Palestinian people, continue to be denied their basic rights as set forth in the Charter of the United Nations.

53. As I said in an earlier statement before the Assembly, I can find hardly any other issue which, like the question of Palestine, the United Nations has had to face since its establishment and which has remained a constant item on its agenda since 1947.

54. From 1947 to the present time, the General Assembly and the Security Council, as well as numerous United Nations committees and specialized agencies, have adopted many resolutions, all of which affirm that the Palestinian people, like the other peoples of the world, have a natural right to freedom, independence and sovereignty in their own land.

55. In spite of all these resolutions, the results and realities have been quite different: Palestine was usurped in its entirety, the majority of its people were displaced and became refugees, their property was expropriated and they were subjected to a series of systematic pogroms and massacres, from Deir Yassin in 1948 to the massacres of Sabra and Shatila in 1982.

56. In nearly 40 years, Israel has deliberately and flagrantly violated every decision, every resolution of the United Nations. Is it not truly regrettable that Israel continues to occupy a seat in the Assembly? That is a sad anomaly and an affront to all the ideals and values for which the world Organization was established.

57. What is the significance of the constant presence of the question of Palestine in the agenda of the General Assembly ever since the establishment of the United Nations? We have no doubt that this fact indicates deep understanding and full recognition by the international community of the gross injustice that befell the Palestinian people, as well as the necessity to find a just and lasting solution to this problem in spite of all the difficulties and challenges. It further very clearly indicates that the international community rejects Israel's continued policy of force, oppression and occupation against our Arab Palestinian people.

58. In spite of the inability of the United Nations to find practical means to bring about respect for, and actual implementation of its resolutions, because of the United States policy of hegemony and obstruc-

tion and its absolute bias in favour of Israel, the political and moral power represented by the will and resolutions of the United Nations is the expression of the adherence by the international community to the principles of the Charter, principles which we all seek to respect in the face of the policy of force and aggression.

59. In this sense, we consider that the struggle of the Palestinian people for freedom and independence is the cause of all of you as much as it is our cause; it is the cause of the United Nations itself. It is a cause that concerns humanity as a whole, for it is a cause of right and justice which represents the aspirations of the international community to establish a better world in which peoples enjoy their freedom and sovereignty, a world not governed by the law of the jungle, a world free of the policy of force, a world in the image of the Charter which Members of the Organization signed 40 years ago.

60. During the general debate and the debate on the situation in the Middle East, we listened carefully to the statements of Presidents and of representatives of Member States. I do not think I exaggerate when I say that the overwhelming majority of the speakers seemed to share a common point of view regarding the question of Palestine. They stressed that Israel, which occupies Palestinian and Arab territories, should withdraw from all of them, including Jerusalem. The overwhelming majority of the international community condemned the policy of occupation, expansion and settlement pursued by Israel in the occupied territories and called for the cessation of those practices, as the continuation of that situation in the Middle East constitutes a tinder-box which threatens the security of the entire world.

61. We have noticed almost total agreement that any just and lasting solution to the situation in this region should include, first and foremost, a solution to the question of Palestine, the core of the conflict in the Middle East region. Such a solution should be based on enabling the Palestinian people to recover their legitimate inalienable rights, including the right to self-determination, to the creation of an independent state on its national soil and to return to that land. An acceptable framework for the search for such a solution is the United Nations and its resolutions pertaining to the question of Palestine. Such a solution should be reached through convening an international peace conference on the Middle East with the participation, on an equal footing, of all the parties, including the PLO, the two super-Powers and all the other States concerned. It is clear from these debates that the overwhelming majority of the States of the world consider the PLO to be the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and that, therefore, it is impossible to ignore its role and its right to participate in all international efforts aimed at finding an acceptable solution to the Middle East crisis and the question of Palestine.

62. This is the will of the Organization, which is reflected in the overwhelming majority of the statements of Member States and in the numerous resolutions adopted by the Assembly over the past years.

63. On the other hand, we heard some statements which represented a total departure from the general opinion of the international community and an absolute disregard of United Nations resolutions.

Those statements were delivered by the representatives of the United States and Israel.

64. The United States President, Mr. Reagan, declared before this Assembly at this session [4th meeting] his adherence to his Middle East initiative, which he announced on 1 September 1982.² It had been expected that the United States President would adopt a new position that would take into account the will of the international community, the realities of the situation in the region and the new developments which proved the failure of United States policy there, particularly on the Lebanese scene, because that policy, as we had always said, ignored the crux of the conflict in the Middle East region—namely, the question of Palestine—and denied the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination.

65. Following President Reagan's proposal, Israel stepped up its oppression of the peoples of Palestine and Lebanon and increased the pace of land expropriation and the establishment of settlements. In addition, the strategic alliance between the United States and Israel was strengthened, and the latter has received more arms and more financial aid. This has encouraged Israel to continue its policy of aggression and occupation, posing a serious threat to the security of the Arab States and to peace in the region and in the world. It is well known that all this aid is given at the expense of the American taxpayer and the United States budget deficit and, above all, of course, at the expense of the peoples of Palestine and Lebanon, whose suffering is increased.

66. In addition, the United States, not satisfied with absolving itself of its international responsibilities, has worked to hinder and obstruct all the peaceful international efforts by exercising its veto power in the Security Council in an arbitrary manner against the interests of the Palestinian and Lebanese peoples; this has brought us to the current stalemate and tension. With regard to the question of Palestine in particular, the United States Administration has persisted in denying the rights of the Palestinian people and disregarding the resolutions and Charter of the United Nations by continuing to reject the establishment of an independent Palestinian State.

67. The membership of the United Nations is now made up of 159 States—some big, with millions of people; others small, with populations not even reaching tens of thousands or hundreds of thousands. Why does the United States deny the Palestinian people its right to establish a State of its own, to be the 160th Member State, for example, in accordance with all international principles, charters and conventions?

68. The Palestinian people do exist; they are vigorous, active, creative, militant and able. They are proud of their national identity, land and homeland. They are a people with a long history, one of the oldest peoples of the earth. Palestine existed before Israel, as the Bible itself states. All the revealed religions were nurtured in the land of Palestine; it is holy to us all. Why should the people who bear its name be deprived of their most basic human rights? The Palestinian people today number about 5 million, of which a high percentage are highly trained. They include specialists in all fields. They participate alongside their fellow Arabs in the brother Arab States in developing the region, and they play a distinct, positive role that is respected and appreciated by all.

69. I want to ask the Assembly in all honesty and sincerity: Why does the United States take a hostile attitude towards the Palestinian people and their inalienable right to self-determination? Moreover, by what right does the United States draw up two separate categories of people: those that can have an independent State, and those that cannot or should not have an independent State? If the United States does not wish to recognize the PLO—a position which is condemned—that is its business; but to refuse to recognize the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination constitutes a question of law, morality and principle and is equivalent to refusing to recognize the Charter and principles of the United Nations itself.

70. The PLO has proved that it represents a positive and effective element in the international community, despite all the attempts and conspiracies of Israel, over a period of 20 years, to destroy it and to break the massive support it enjoys. To this end, Israel has used all methods of terror and armed aggression. But, in spite of the difficulties we have confronted from time to time, all these Israeli attempts have failed; they have led, instead, to the greater rallying of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories and in the diaspora around the PLO and its legitimate role of leadership.

71. Perhaps the greatest proof of this cohesion was the convening of the Palestine National Council only a few days ago in the Jordanian capital, Amman, in the midst of a great popular Palestinian demonstration of welcome and support. The convening of the seventeenth session of the Palestine National Council was a new plebiscite, held before the eyes of the entire world. It affirmed the desire of the Palestinian people to keep the PLO, its legitimate institutions and its democratic processes. Our people have renewed, through this council, their full confidence in its elected, legitimate leadership, under the chairmanship of Brother Yasser Arafat.

72. The session of the Palestine National Council, convened at Amman, was an important occasion, emphasizing the distinctive relations that bind together the Palestinian and Jordanian peoples, who share a common goal and destiny. The Council renewed its adherence to the resolution adopted at the previous session, in Algeria in 1983, which provided for the establishment of future relations between Palestine and Jordan on a confederal basis, after the withdrawal of Israel and the establishment of an independent Palestinian State. Our people have thus reaffirmed, through the Palestine National Council, their absolute rejection of Zionist and imperialist schemes aimed at creating an alternative homeland for the Palestinian people in Jordan. These schemes are in fact designed to perpetuate Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories, displace their population and ultimately annex them. The Palestinian people will not accept an alternative to its original homeland.

73. In addition, the Palestine National Council underscored the need to co-operate with the fraternal people of Jordan to ensure joint Arab action to liberate the land and enable the Palestinian people to exercise its inalienable rights.

74. In line with the consistent position of the PLO in the search for an acceptable peace in the Middle East based on recognition of the right of the Palestinian people to return, to self-determination, and to the

creation of an independent Palestinian State with Jerusalem as its capital, our National Council has endorsed the call to convene an international peace conference on the Middle East with the participation on an equal footing of all the parties concerned, including the PLO, the two super-Powers and other interested States, within the framework of the United Nations and on the basis of its resolutions. Our National Council welcomed the Soviet initiative of 29 July 1984 [see A/39/368] and reaffirmed its rejection of all schemes that deny the right of our people to self-determination, such as the self-rule scheme and President Reagan's initiative. It called on the United Nations, and, in particular, the Security Council, to shoulder its responsibilities and implement its resolutions.

75. Finally, the convening of the latest session of the Palestine National Council at Amman and the resolutions it adopted provided a new opportunity to stress the national identity of an independent Palestine and the desire to maintain the independence of our national decision-making body. It also demonstrated the cohesiveness of the people and their leadership, represented by the PLO, and the determination and will of the Palestinian people, despite all the difficulties and obstacles, to continue their struggle by all available means to achieve the goals for which they have long struggled, at the cost of great sacrifices.

76. Since the last session of the General Assembly, many things have happened which should be examined, in view of the consequences they have had on the situation in the region. All peace efforts have come to a halt or have been aborted. We lost a year of international effort in this direction because of United States and Israeli intransigence, in spite of the existence of numerous international projects and initiatives which the PLO had welcomed, such as the Arab peace plan, adopted at Fez on 9 September 1982 by the Twelfth Arab Summit Conference,³ the Soviet initiative of 15 September 1982,⁴ and the French-Egyptian plan submitted to the Security Council on 28 July 1982.⁵

77. Furthermore, the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, held at Geneva from 29 August to 7 September 1983, was attended by the representatives of 138 States and 104 non-governmental organizations, as well as many international personalities. As the Assembly knows, the Geneva Declaration on Palestine and the Programme of Action for the Achievement of Palestinian Rights adopted by the Conference¹ reaffirmed the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and underlined the fact that Israel must withdraw from all the occupied territories, including Jerusalem. The Conference also called for the convening of an international peace conference on the Middle East. In spite of that appeal, in spite of the adoption by the General Assembly of resolutions on that question and in spite of the efforts and consultations of the Secretary-General concerning the convening of the conference, the United States and Israel took a negative stand and rejected the proposal.

78. The United States continues to obstruct efforts towards peace in the region carried out within the framework of the United Nations and in keeping with its resolutions. It is trying to impose partial and separate solutions that the Palestinian people and the Arab nation have already rejected. Such United States attempts will not contribute to peace in the

Middle East; rather, they have caused conflicts and massacres, from whose destructive effects and consequences both the Palestinian people and the brother Lebanese people continue to suffer.

Mr. Lusaka (Zambia) resumed the Chair.

79. The period in question was characterized by the efforts of the Israeli authorities to prepare as far as possible the material conditions for the annexation of the occupied territories. The former Israeli Minister of Defence, Moshe Arens, expressed that policy by stating: "We quickly reach the point where irreversible facts become the basis of our control over Judea and Samaria"—that is, the West Bank. For that purpose, the Israeli authorities have intensified their terrorist practices against the Palestinian people in that region so as to force them to leave their lands. Even more serious during this period was a series of bomb explosions aimed at Palestinian population centres, as well as Christian and Muslim places of worship, in numerous occupied Palestinian towns and villages.

80. Examples of those incidents include the cowardly attack on the University of Hebron and on a Palestinian civilian bus in Jerusalem. Before that, there were expulsions, deportations, arrests, the imposition of exorbitant fines, house arrests, curfews, and the demolition of houses in Nablus, Hebron, Jerusalem and Ramallah. Also, Al-Najah University and schools and colleges in the city of Nablus were closed down for a long period. These measures were accompanied by attacks on holy and cultural landmarks in the occupied territories, prominent among which were the attempts to blow up the Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Omar Mosque, the attempt to set fire to the Saaddin Mosque in Nablus and the attack on the Ibrahim Mosque in Hebron.

81. To complement this aggressive policy, a plan was officially announced in Israel aimed at removing the Palestinian refugee camps in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and resettling the refugees. That is what is happening, for example, in the Dheisheh camp, which is run by UNRWA.

82. In the field of education, the cultural war launched by the Israeli occupation authorities has acquired serious dimensions which should not go unnoticed. Educational institutions were among the main targets of Israel's aggressive policy aimed at paralysing them and obstructing them in their job of educating the young generation and preparing it to play its role in the service of its country and society. That is why the Israeli military authorities have placed these institutions under their direct control, have prohibited the circulation and publication of thousands of scientific, cultural and literary works, and have subjected students, teachers and university professors to oppression and terror, such as individual and collective arrests, limitation of residence areas and arbitrary expulsions.

83. Because of these internal crises and the deteriorating internal economic situation, both of which are tightening their grip on Israel, the economic and social conditions of the Palestinians under occupation have worsened and their daily lives have become unbearable. As a result of the Israeli policy of aggression against both the Palestinian and the Lebanese peoples, of the numerous wars launched by Israel against the Arab States, of the allocation of the larger part of its budget to military affairs and to expenditures on occupation and the establishment of

settlements, the Israeli economy is in a state of collapse. The inflation rate, which grows daily, has reached approximately 800 per cent. This situation has produced harmful effects and Fascist phenomena that are extremely dangerous for our people.

84. The greatest expression of this entrenched crisis in the Israeli military society is perhaps the success of a terrorist, the so-called Kahane, in the recent elections to the Israeli Knesset. This has aroused the fears of the democratic, honest and peace-loving forces in the world and even within Israel itself. We see nothing new in the emergence of the racist Kahane phenomenon. It is, in our opinion, the naked expression of all the official Israeli policies against the Palestinian people over so many years. It would be a mistake to believe that it is an isolated, accidental or temporary phenomenon. There are numerous similar Israeli organizations which enjoy official protection, such as the diverse groups rallied around the "Integrated Land of Israel" movement, the Tehiya and Gush Emunim, and the like of Kahane in the Mifdal and Herut parties. In view of what we have stated, the daily lives of our people under Israeli occupation have become difficult and bitter. The Palestinians are besieged, pursued and oppressed. They are subjected daily to attacks by armed Zionist gangs. This has made their lives and living conditions very complicated. We declare that the Government of Israel bears full responsibility for what is happening in the occupied territories, for it continues to violate the rules of international law and the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,⁶ and refuses to provide protection and security for the Palestinian population. This makes it necessary for the international community and the United Nations to find ways and means to guarantee adequate protection for the population of the occupied territories.

85. This policy, as we have indicated, has harmed not only the Palestinian people but the Jews themselves. Israeli society has become, as a result of the policy of war and aggression, a disrupted society, suffering from ideological and economic bankruptcy, from social, class and racial contradictions; from international isolation and lack of internal peace. In such an atmosphere, as history teaches us, more extreme Fascist and racist currents find fertile ground. Militaristic elements emerge which attempt to export the internal crisis and contain it through launching new wars. Here we cannot but recall the proverb to the effect that a people which oppresses another people cannot itself be free.

86. I have reviewed the current situation with regard to the question of Palestine and the situation in the Middle East, as well as the new developments which have occurred since the previous session. We do not see any hope concerning the possibility of attaining a comprehensive and just peace as long as the United States and Israel persist in their positions and policies.

87. In spite of the official change in the Government of Israel, on which some have placed their bets, we have not perceived any change in Israeli policy. From the outset we did not pin any hopes on the coming to power of the Labour Party in Israel, for our experience with that party is long and bloody. Its programmes are well known, differing from those of the Likud only in cosmetic details. Both parties want land and reject peace; both refuse to recognize the

legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. Both parties insist on building new settlements, expropriating land and persecuting our people. The Labour Party wants a "pure" Jewish State with a clear Jewish majority, even if it has to give up some lands densely populated with Arab inhabitants, while keeping military control, the settlements and Jerusalem. The Likud coalition and its more extreme and racist offshoots want land and the expulsion of the Palestinian people, even if it means resorting to terrorism, massacres and armed violence.

88. Thus, the true option they are putting forward is not "land for peace"; they want only the land, for the peace they are talking about is a peace imposed by force of arms, which is in fact mere capitulation. The recent Israeli elections proved that the entrenched Israeli crisis is more dangerous than many thought it to be and that the true policy of the Israeli leaders is to continue their occupation, war and aggression and their imposition of *faits accomplis* by force of arms.

89. As we have already stated, it is unfortunate that Israel gets from the United States all the material, military and political support it needs. This provides it with billions of dollars and hundreds of aeroplanes, encouraging it to persist in its expansionist policies and to defy the international community and the resolutions of the United Nations. It is unfortunate also that some Western European States have retreated from their support of a peace process in the region based on recognition of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination. We call on all those States to play a more positive role in promoting the peace process on that basis.

90. A few days ago, on 29 November, we participated in the commemoration of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. I should like again to thank all the States which participated in that commemoration, which is rich in meaning for us and for our steadfast people under occupation and in the diaspora. The commemoration reflected the extent of the concern and interest within the international community in putting an end to the injustice and aggression to which our people continues to be subjected. It also reflected the international community's interest in the situation in the Middle East region, a conflict with the question of Palestine at its core. This dangerous situation threatens the peace and security of the entire world.

91. The collective efforts and persistence of the States Members of the United Nations deserve our appreciation and respect. In this regard, we cannot fail to convey our deep thanks to the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and to its Chairman, Mr. Sarre, for their work and their great efforts in performing the tasks entrusted to them by the General Assembly. We hope that the Secretary-General will continue his valuable efforts to convene an international peace conference on the Middle East in accordance with United Nations resolutions, resolutions which we trust will be reaffirmed at this session of the General Assembly.

92. The Palestinian people look towards the United Nations with full confidence and hope that the General Assembly and the Security Council will adopt deterrent measures against the aggressors, not merely resolutions of condemnation and denunciation.

93. I am pleased, on behalf of the Palestinian people, to express our thanks and appreciation to all the friendly States of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the Organization of the Islamic Conference, to the socialist countries, and to those States of Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe that have supported our struggle for freedom, sovereignty and independence.

94. We have followed the activities of the non-governmental organizations and have taken note of their positions as expressed in the statements and programmes of action they have adopted after the meetings organized for them by the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. There is no doubt that the role played by these organizations in awakening world public opinion will have an effective impact, especially as they have launched a global campaign to collect hundreds of thousands of signatures from lovers of peace, justice and humanity in solidarity with the struggle of the Palestinian people and in favour of convening a peace conference on the basis of United Nations resolutions—the conference for which this Assembly has called.

95. I should like also to express our absolute solidarity with the struggle of the people of Namibia, under the leadership of its legitimate representative, the South West Africa People's Organization, as well as with the struggle of the people of South Africa against the racist régime in that country, and with all those throughout the world who are struggling for freedom and independence.

96. In view of all these facts and events, the Palestinian people are determined to continue their struggle for their national rights by all means. We count on the assistance and support of the States Members of the United Nations for our just cause. The situation in the Middle East region will continue to be tense and explosive as long as the Palestinian people continue to live in refugee camps and to be dispersed and deprived of their inalienable rights.

97. Everyone, in the United Nations and everywhere else, must continue the struggle to save peace by restoring the rights of the Palestinian people to return to its land, to exercise self-determination and to establish an independent State on its own national soil.

98. Mr. ABULHASSAN (Kuwait) (*interpretation from Arabic*): In his message to the meeting held on 29 November 1984 in commemoration of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmed Al-Sabah, Emir of the State of Kuwait, said the following:

"One might well wonder why it is that, 36 years after the catastrophe struck that people, no one has remedied the injustice done to them or taken any resolute action for the implementation of United Nations resolutions, at the very least. If that demonstrates anything it is the lack of seriousness of the big Powers and the indifference of the international community in general, while the aggressor persists in its arbitrary measures and violations, treating international law and the Charter of the United Nations with contempt. Could this aggressor have dared so to transgress had it not been for the unrestricted material support it receives from those in certain quarters that do not understand that by giving such support they are

undermining the foundations upon which international legitimacy is itself based?"

99. In the light of the foregoing, it is clear to us that from the outset the Palestinian problem and its ramifications have been dominated by three major elements: first, the unilateral imposition by the Zionist entity of one *fait accompli* after another, employing absolutely despotic force; secondly, the inability of the United Nations to stop this stream of inhumane attacks and practices and to restore the rights of its victims; and, thirdly, the unrestrained support and buttressing, from certain quarters, of Israel's policies and practices.

100. With regard to the first of these elements, United Nations documents from 1948 up to our own day reflect precisely what Israel has done in uprooting and dispersing a peaceful people from its homeland, pursuing it wherever it may be in order to annihilate it, thus violating its most elementary human rights as set forth in the relevant Geneva conventions. Israel has also deliberately attempted to change the social, cultural, demographic and environmental character of the Arab lands in order to eradicate the racial, historical, economic and cultural identity of the Palestinian people.

101. The Palestinian answer to this has been constantly to increase the quality and scope of its resistance and its steadfastness in the occupied territories, despite the most violent acts of repression and torture committed by Israel to suppress those uprisings. While it salutes and absolutely supports the honourable struggle and the steadfastness of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories in preserving their natural rights, Kuwait reiterates that people who fight in order to regain their freedom, their right to self-determination and their independence cannot remain alone. History has made that clear to us. Such fighters will always prove stronger than those who try to dominate them.

102. With regard to the second element that dominates the Palestinian problem—namely, the inability of the United Nations to stem this stream of inhumane attacks and practices—we do not mean to imply that the Organization has been observing the situation with indifference. We are fully aware of the important role played by the Organization in support of the inalienable, legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. But it is clear that the Security Council and the General Assembly are approaching the Palestinian question in two different ways.

103. The Security Council, which is subject to the use of the veto by some of the big Powers that have a special relationship with Israel, takes an unrealistic view of the question of Palestine. It treats it as a refugee problem, as demonstrated by its resolution 242 (1967), and its resolutions are subordinate to the acts of those big Powers which so far have made it impossible for the United Nations to restrain Israel and put an end to its continuing defiance of and contempt for international law and the resolutions of the Security Council itself.

104. We believe that the General Assembly has taken the correct view of the Palestinian problem. In 1969 and 1970, the General Assembly recognized for the first time the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including its right to self-determination, and also recognized that respect for those rights was an indispensable element for the establishment of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle

East. When the Arab Summit Conference held at Rabat in 1974 recognized the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, the General Assembly, in that same year, established a new principle when it decided to invite the PLO to participate in its deliberations as an observer [resolution 3237 (XXIX)].

105. This new concept of the dimensions of the Palestinian problem on the part of the General Assembly made it necessary for us to seek effective means to enable the Palestinian people to exercise its inalienable rights. This led to the proposal to establish a special committee to undertake comprehensive studies on this problem and recommend the best way of solving it. Thus, the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People was established, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 3376 (XXX), and began its work during the thirty-first session.

106. The Committee has made enormous efforts to clarify the various aspects, dimensions and ambiguities of the Palestinian problem, crowning these efforts with the holding at Geneva, from 29 August to 7 September 1983, of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine. The Conference adopted the Geneva Declaration on Palestine,¹ which clarified the broad outlines of the Palestinian problem on the basis of the relevant United Nations resolutions, and the Programme of Action for the Achievement of Palestinian Rights.¹

107. In addition, the Committee has continued to follow the Israeli policy of establishing Jewish settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories. Particularly noteworthy in this respect was the valuable report on the danger of the continuing establishment of Israeli settlements in the Palestinian and Arab territories occupied since 1967, submitted on 25 November 1980 by the Commission established under Security Council resolution 446 (1979).² In spite of that and the insistence of the Committee, the Security Council has not yet examined this matter. However, both the General Assembly and the Security Council have declared these Israeli practices to be illegal.

108. The most important recommendation in the Geneva Declaration on Palestine is that which appears in paragraph 5, regarding the holding of an international peace conference on the Middle East on the basis of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the relevant resolutions of the Organization, with the aim of achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict, an essential element of which would be the establishment of an independent Palestinian State in Palestine. The General Assembly endorsed this proposal in its resolution 38/58C, and the Secretary-General sent messages to the countries concerned requesting their opinion on the convening of the conference. As usual, he came up against the refusal of Israel and, unfortunately, of the United States, despite the fact that all other countries concerned welcomed the convening of the conference.

109. My delegation, which considers the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People as the true conscience with regard to the problem of Palestine, would like to thank its Chairman, Mr. Sarré, and the members of the Committee for the valuable efforts they are making. The Committee has expressed, in its report to the

current session [A/39/35], its regret at the negative position of Israel and the United States on this matter, and we join in that expression. We also support the Committee's resolution on the continuation of efforts to convene the proposed conference as soon as possible, particularly since, in its view, it represents a long-awaited important step. The situation is becoming increasingly dangerous day by day as a result of Israel's feeling of complete immunity, which makes it act as if it had the last word on every matter concerning the Middle East. For the same reason, Kuwait has supported the Soviet initiative of 15 September 1982⁴ to convene an international conference to be attended, on an equal footing, by all parties to the conflict, including the PLO.

110. As regards the third, and last element, which continues to affect the Palestinian problem and its ramifications—namely, the unreasonable support and encouragement that Israel receives from certain quarters—we ask the question: Could the aggressor have dared undertake its transgressions had it not been for the unlimited protection and support it receives from Powers that are entrusted with a special responsibility in the maintenance of international peace and security? The unmatched United States support, for example, has led to Israel's persistence in perpetrating its crimes against the Palestinian people. Those crimes are sufficient in themselves to make Israel an entity hostile to peace and humanity; they also create in the United Nations a feeling of failure and complete impotence in the face of actions by an entity that is based on the principle of aggression and usurpation. This in turn reflects on the reputation, authority and effectiveness of the United Nations.

111. We have seen how many years ago the General Assembly parted company with the Security Council to the extent that the two bodies seem unrelated to the same Organization and appear not to believe in the same Charter or to work for the same objective—peace and stability in the world.

112. The strange reluctance of the Security Council to take action against measures it considers illegal—action that is recommended in the report of the Committee—is highlighted by the fact that the General Assembly has already set out the just and reasonable path towards the solution of this problem based on a series of resolutions recognizing the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to self-determination, to return to their homeland and to establish a State on their national soil.

113. This parting of company is, in the opinion of my delegation, the basic reason for the continuation of the problem. It has been frequently confirmed by General Assembly resolutions that world peace and security depend on its solution. As long as some major Powers having special responsibilities reject any movement towards a solution under the pretext that it is not acceptable to Israel, the road ahead of us will remain dark, not because this humanitarian problem will have remained beyond solution or the Palestinian people continued to be dispersed and deprived of their rights in this age when most peoples that were oppressed have gained their independence and sovereignty, but because some of the major Powers, the repositories of world peace and security, will have confirmed by their actions that they want only one kind of peace—a peace that serves their own purposes.

114. In its tireless quest to participate in solving the Palestinian problem through a just solution guaranteeing the natural and legal rights of the Palestinian people, the PLO has accepted the Arab peace plan, adopted at Fez on 9 September 1982 by the Twelfth Arab Summit Conference,³ as the basis for a just solution of that problem. It has agreed to the idea of an international peace conference on the Middle East advocated by the United Nations. It has also accepted the Soviet initiative on the convening of an international conference to be attended by all parties to the conflict, including the PLO. However, Israel has rejected every peace proposal, whether international or regional. It has rejected the United Nations framework, with its international legitimacy, for discussing the problem with all parties concerned and has presented no alternative but more aggression, repression and genocide. The Israeli leadership has fully understood that the most dangerous prospect facing it is peace, because the essence of its doctrine is aggression and its philosophy is expansion.

115. This explosive problem which has lasted so long constitutes a challenge to the international community in general and to the major Powers in particular, as well as to international legitimacy represented by the United Nations. The time has come to solve it, to put an end to injustice and to begin to restore what is right. The solution of this problem can bring about stability and peace in the Middle East and strengthen world peace and stability.

116. Mr. ALIAS (Malaysia): In our many years of discussion on this item, for the overwhelming majority of us here in the Assembly there is no doubt in our minds that unless the question of Palestine is satisfactorily resolved there can be little hope for peace in the Middle East. By definition, a comprehensive solution must include the restoration of all Arab lands which Israel has acquired through its wars of aggression since 1967 and, equally paramount, the restoration of the inalienable rights of the Palestinians to self-determination and to their own homeland. Indeed, there can be no doubt that the question of Palestine constitutes the core of the problem in the Middle East. As long as the problem is allowed to languish, there can be no end to the climate of conflict which has hovered over the region for so long and which on several occasions has led the world to the brink of disaster.

117. None can accuse the United Nations of lack of trying, for over the last four decades a large number of resolutions have been adopted in our search for an end to the conflict. Many of the resolutions contain elements which could pave the way for peace. However, Israel has chosen to ignore all pronouncements of the international community and has refused to abandon the path of aggression and force. Israel is encouraged in its intransigence and open defiance through the protection and active sympathy of a single major Power, justified by consideration of Israel's survival and absolute strategic necessity. At all costs, right or wrong, Israel must be protected, even if it chooses to bite the hand that feeds it. The situation is comparable to a *carte blanche* which is continually extended to a chronic embezzler even if it proves the ruination of us all.

118. Hence, it is no mystery that the United Nations has thus far been unable to convince Israel that the best course for it and, indeed, for the security of the world is through a comprehensive settlement,

fair to all, including the Palestinian people. For how can Israel justify its right to exist while denying the same to others? How can Israel continue to deny the reality of the Palestinian people? Notwithstanding the partition of Palestine and the dispossession of a whole people, in spite of their dispersal and the indignities of having to live as refugees; despite the awesome ferocity of Israel's military might unleashed on them; despite all that, the people of Palestine have steadfastly refused to disavow their common heritage as Palestinians. Surely, the Palestinians have proved beyond question that they are a people entitled to their own nation. Truly, the Palestinians embody the spirit of man, which under the yoke of tyranny grows in resoluteness rather than crumbles.

119. The report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People [*ibid.*] once again reveals Israel's complete disrespect for the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. The Tel Aviv régime continues unabated in its policy of annexation of Arab lands through eviction and a variety of coercive measures, implanting Jewish settlers among the indigenous population. While new Jewish settlements are being established, existing settlements are being enlarged. Israel also plans to extend its legislation to the occupied territory. The report states:

"Longer-term trends are ominous . . . indications are that the Israeli Government will continue to establish settlements in the occupied territories aiming at a projected minimum of 100,000 Israelis in such settlements by 1987 and 190,000 by the year 2010. The numbers exclude Israelis in East Jerusalem and other Palestinian localities incorporated into the city immediately after the 1967 war." [*Ibid.*, para. 28.]

120. The Jewish settlers, who are issued firearms by the Israeli authorities, frequently intimidate and harass the local population. The most recent example of atrocities committed by Jewish terrorists is the attack on a bus carrying Arabs, resulting in one death and many injuries. Subsequently, two Arab student demonstrators were killed and many more injured by the Israeli military. Places of religious worship have been desecrated by Jewish terrorist groups.

121. The list of Israeli practices against the inalienable rights of Palestinians goes on. In the interest of brevity, I shall not attempt to state them all; the report is there for all to read. Suffice it to say that the thrust of Israel's policy is further to disperse the Palestinian people and render their situation so disagreeable that they will choose to leave, thus furthering Israel's objective of annexing the occupied territories.

122. I submit that, despite the seeming inability of the international community to dissuade Israel from continuing the present course, and despite Israel's complete disrespect for the many United Nations resolutions, it remains the sacred duty of the Assembly to continue in its efforts to seek justice for the Palestinian people. It is particularly incumbent upon us to persevere in our efforts for a comprehensive settlement, given that an indefinite continuation of the conflict situation in the Middle East may pass the point of restraint, as it has threatened to do on several occasions, with dire consequences for us all.

123. My Government's commitment to a comprehensive and just settlement, which should include the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to their

own independent homeland, was illustrated in Malaysia's willingness to host the Asian Regional Preparatory Meeting, held at Kuala Lumpur in May 1983, which was one of the steps which led to the convening of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, held at Geneva from 29 August to 7 September 1983. My Government fully supports the Geneva Declaration on Palestine and the Programme of Action for the Achievement of Palestinian Rights, adopted by that conference,¹ as well as the proposal for the convening of an international conference on peace in the Middle East, which was endorsed by the General Assembly in resolution 38/58 C. It is the fervent belief of my delegation that such a conference with the participation of the United States, the Soviet Union and all parties directly involved with the conflict, including the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, would lead to a just solution. My delegation notes with deep concern in the reports of the Secretary-General [A/39/130 and Add. I] that his efforts for the convening of such a conference has not come to fruition. We appeal to the United States to reconsider its decision not to participate, recognizing that the United States has a central role to play, without which no meaningful result can be achieved.

124. We believe that within the confines of such a conference rests the possibility of a just, comprehensive and lasting settlement, fair to all parties. To reject such an opportunity outright is to encourage further the intransigence of Israel; to refuse to recognize the legitimacy of the PLO is to deny the aspirations and the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and their own homeland.

125. We congratulate the Secretary-General on his efforts and urge him to continue his consultations despite the obstacles in his way.

126. Before concluding, my delegation would be remiss if it did not compliment the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, Mr. Sarré, who has worked tirelessly and with such distinction. His commitment to a just solution to the Palestinian question is known to us all, and his dedication is an inspiration to all in the Committee. My delegation reiterates our continued support for Mr. Sarré and the Committee.

127. Mr. PASHKEVICH (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) (*interpretation from Russian*): On behalf of the delegation of the Byelorussian SSR, I warmly welcome the delegation of the PLO that is attending this session of the General Assembly. It represents here the heroic Palestinian people, which is waging a courageous and selfless struggle for the exercise of its inalienable national rights.

128. The question of ensuring the exercise by the Arab people of Palestine of their inalienable national rights is the core of a Middle East settlement. The Palestine problem has been constantly on the agenda of the General Assembly and of other international forums. Numerous United Nations resolutions, including those adopted at previous Assembly sessions, reaffirm the need for the exercise by the Palestinian people of its legitimate, inalienable rights, including the right of return, the right to self-determination and the right to establish its own State. In those resolutions, also, the right of the PLO to participate on an equal footing in the solution of all questions relating to the Middle East is recognized. But, despite all

those decisions, including General Assembly resolution 181 (II), the Palestine problem remains unsolved. The Palestinian people is still deprived of a homeland and of its State and is forced to wander in exile or to languish under the oppressive yoke of Israeli military occupation. It is denied the exercise of its inalienable right to self-determination and to the creation of its own State.

129. The reasons for this situation are well known. They lie first and foremost in the aggressive, expansionist policy of Israel, a policy directed against Arab countries and peoples; in its illegal occupation of Arab lands, including Palestinian lands which it seized in 1967; and in its stubborn refusal to restore the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

130. As is attested to by the reports of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People [A/39/35] and the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practice Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories [A/39/591], as well as by other documents submitted for consideration at the present session of the General Assembly, Israel—in violation of many Security Council and General Assembly resolutions—continues to follow a policy of annexation of the Arab territories it has occupied, including the Palestinian territories, and has been expanding the network of militarized settlements, thereby stifling the economic activity of the Arab population, depriving it of its political, social, civil and educational rights and destroying its cultural heritage.

131. As is noted in the letter dated 26 November 1984 from the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People addressed to the Secretary-General: "Israel is increasingly resorting to drastic repressive measures in order to stifle any expression of opposition to its illegal occupation of the Palestinian territories" *see* A/39/692). Racism reigns in the occupied Arab territories.

132. The outrageous acts perpetrated by Israeli terrorists against Palestinians have now acquired such dimensions that Tel Aviv is forced, in order to mislead public opinion, to officially take some measures to try to save face. But what kind of measures are they? I shall quote from a statement by Felicia Langer, the Vice-President of the Israeli League for Human and Civil Rights, in connection with the trial of members of the recently discovered anti-Arab terrorist group:

"The sentences are simply ridiculous. One of the terrorists was given one and one half years—and he had transported 40 mines to be set to explode in a crowded mosque. Their hands are already blood-stained. They have killed Arab students and Palestinian mayors—and they get one and one half years. And, on the West Bank, a new law decrees that small Arab boys who throw stones at the occupiers be given sentences of 10 to 20 years."

133. Who are these terrorists? Why does the police treat them like heroes? Why are they given privileged conditions even in prison? The answer is simple—both simple and frightening: they belong to the Gush Emunim movement, zealous advocates of the colonization of the occupied lands. That means that they are the Likud's flesh and blood.

134. It is perfectly obvious that the aggressive policy of Israel, especially as it affects the Arab people of Palestine, would be impossible without the

comprehensive support of its strategic ally, the United States. This is in fact the major obstacle to a solution to the entire problem of the Middle East and of its core, the question of Palestine.

135. For example, the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, speaking last July at Tunis, stated:

"The Israeli leadership perpetrates all of its crimes thanks to the full support of Washington. Taking advantage of the favourable attitude of the United States, Israel violates international principles, continues its occupation of Arab lands and escalates active aggression carried out against neighbouring countries. It expels the Arab population from their own lands and by force and terrorism imposes the policy of expansion of Israeli settlements; and carries out 'Judaization' of Arab cities and historic sites."

136. In June of this year, *The Washington Post* wrote:

"Can one imagine another country, an ally of the United States, which, having decided to embark on a policy of irresponsible adventurism, would not have been subject to severe retaliation from Washington? But after all of its actions, Israel began to receive ever-increased aid from the United States. For that country we have a 'double standard'."

137. The reason for such generosity and for such a policy is simple. Tel Aviv assists Washington in achieving the establishment of its domination in the Middle East.

138. The policy and practical actions of the United States and Israel in the Middle East once again clearly demonstrate the aggressive nature of the so-called strategic alliance of the forces of imperialism and Zionism, which aspire not only to block the implementation of the inalienable rights of the Arab people of Palestine, but also to remove the question of Palestine, once and for all, from the agenda by isolating the Arabs and forcing them thus to capitulate to the aggressor.

139. In this connection, what is of the greatest significance is the strengthening of co-operation between the Palestinian resistance movement and the national patriotic forces with Arab countries and, first and foremost, with those that are in the front lines of resistance to the aggressive intentions of the United States and Israel in the Middle East.

140. The most recent events in the Middle East emphasize yet once again the fruitlessness of the so-called separatist approach to a decision on the problem of the Middle East. This is a policy followed by Washington which consists in forcing each Arab country to come to an agreement separately and, moreover, in so doing ignoring the vital interests of the Palestinians. Historic experience convinces us that by following such a policy, it is impossible to defuse the situation in the Middle East and to provide its peoples with lasting peace.

141. The delegation of the Byelorussian SSR, in accordance with the programme for peace for the 1980s, adopted by the XXVI Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, consistently and firmly stands by the victims of imperialist aggression and favours the elimination of conflict situations and a settlement of thorny problems and crises, *inter alia*, in the Middle East.

142. The proposals of the Soviet Union for a Middle East settlement of 29 July 1984 [A/39/368] give both an overview and a summary of those initiatives which have been taken by our country at various stages of the development of the Arab-Israeli conflict. It states the principles and means for achieving a settlement in the Middle East.

143. The Soviet proposal for the convening of an international conference on the Middle East, with the participation of all parties involved, has won broad approval and support throughout the world. And only two States, the United States and Israel, actively oppose the holding of such a conference.

144. It is perfectly obvious that the sooner Washington and Tel Aviv show an attitude of responsibility and common sense which can prevail over the considerations of the moment, the better, for the gloomy experience of decades has demonstrated that neither a policy of military conflicts nor a policy of separate deals can possibly bring peace to the Middle East or ensure the inalienable rights of the Arab people of Palestine. That can be done only as the result of peaceful negotiations on a collective basis, with the participation of all the parties involved. It is precisely such an approach to a solution of the problem of the Middle East which is actively favoured by the Soviet Union, the socialist States and many other countries.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.

NOTES

¹See *Report of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, Geneva, 29 August-7 September 1983* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.83.1.21), chap. I.

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

³See *Official Records of the Security Council, Thirty-seventh Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1982*, document S/15310, annex.

⁴*Ibid.*, Supplement for July, August and September 1982, document S/15403, annex.

⁵*Ibid.*, document S/15317.

⁶United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, No. 973.

⁷See *Official Records of the Security Council, Thirty-fifth Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1980*, document S/14268.