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THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

SECURITY COUNCIL  
Thirty-second year

Letter dated 31 August 1977 from the Permanent Representative of  
Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The Central Council of PLO met in Damascus on 25 and 26 August 1977 and once again gave expression to its record of intransigence, inherent negativism, and its declared aim of destroying the State of Israel.

This is the burden of the statement issued at the end of the Central Council meeting, an unofficial translation of which is attached. It begins by reaffirming all the resolutions previously adopted by PLO's highest body, the National Council. It scorns any attempts to encourage PLO to modify its uncompromising attitude towards Israel, as set out in the "Palestinian National Charter", 1/ article 19 of which claims that the establishment of the State of Israel is fundamentally null and void and article 15 of which asserts that it is a "national duty" to purge Palestine of the "Zionist presence" (or, in plain language, to purge Palestine of the State of Israel).

The second point in the statement reiterates the PLO's complete rejection of Security Council resolution 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967, as authoritatively determined in the 15-point programme adopted by the National Council at its thirteenth session, held in Cairo from 12 to 20 March of this year. The third point calls for an increase in the armed struggle against Israel, and threatens those Arabs in the territories administered by Israel since 1967 who, now wholly disillusioned with PLO and its murderous activities, are actively contemplating the possibility of negotiating their own future with Israel. Moreover, it refers to areas within Israel, such as the Galilee, as "occupied territories", thereby confirming PLO's repeated designs on Israel as a whole.

\* A/32/150.

1/ See Official Records of the Security Council, Thirty-first Year, Supplement for January, February and March 1977, document S/11932, annex.

The Central Council is the intermediate body in PLO's political hierarchy - ranking above the Executive, but subordinate to the National Council - and the absolute opposition of both those bodies to the existence of Israel is well documented. It comes as no surprise, therefore, that the Central Council has not moderated its position in any way whatsoever, despite the unfounded and optimistic assessments of certain observers who predicted some unspecified form of PLO acceptance of Security Council resolution 242 (1967), the only basis for the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East agreed to by Israel and the neighbouring Arab States.

Lest there be any doubts about the National Council's position, as reaffirmed in the Central Council's statement, a translation of the 15-point programme of March 1977 is also attached. Significantly, it opened by recalling the "Palestinian National Covenant". It rejected Security Council resolution 242 (1967) out of hand; and pledged PLO to pursue the armed struggle and also all forms of political and mass struggle. It forswore any peace with, or recognition of, Israel; and presumed to claim a right to invalidate any settlement affecting the Palestinians reached without PLO.

I wish to emphasize that the statement issued by the Central Council, taken together with the recent indiscriminate outrages against civilians by PLO, demonstrate yet again that that grouping of Arab terrorists cannot be a partner to any steps leading to a settlement of the Arab-Israel conflict, because of its essentially vicious nature and its remorseless commitment, explicitly declared, to the destruction of the State of Israel.

I have the honour to request that this letter and its attachments be circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under item 31 of the provisional agenda, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Chaim HERZOG  
Permanent Representative of Israel  
to the United Nations

Annex I

Statement issued after a meeting of the Palestinian Central  
Council, held at Damascus on 25 and 26 August 1977  
(According to AP, from Damascus, 26 August)

Point 1. Condemnation of all the United States and Zionist manoeuvres ignoring the right of our people to return, to self-determination, to establish an independent state on its national soil a/ and to gather under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

On this basis the Council reiterates its rejection of any attempt aimed at liquidating the resolutions of the Palestinian National Council and to change the Arab attitude as decided during the Arab summit conferences of Rabat and Cairo, as far as the rights of our people and their representation are concerned and also as far as the Arab world national commitment to the Palestinian cause is concerned.

Point 2. The Council stresses the resolution of the Palestine National Council adopted during its last session and the 15-point political programme adopted at the time, especially the National Council resolution regarding United Nations Security Council resolution 242 (1967) which ignores the national rights of our people and which deals with our cause as a refugee case.

It also stresses the need for the implementation of General Assembly resolutions relevant to the Palestinian cause, in particular resolution 3236 (XXIX) as the corner-stone for the Palestinian policy. The Central Council appeals to the Arab nations on both official and popular levels to live up to the national responsibility and confront the plot forged by those Powers that are the enemy of our people, such as zionism and American imperialism, and to extricate themselves from the confines of hesitation into confrontation. These are plots aimed at striking against the Arab liberation movement and at liquidating the Palestinian cause.

Our Council reiterates its insistence that the Palestinian cause is the crux of the Middle East conflict and warns against giving credence to imperialist and Zionist promises and that it is impossible to achieve a just and lasting peace but on the basis of securing the rights of our people.

Point 3. The Central Council has discussed the situation in occupied Palestine a/ and warns those cowards and those suspected of co-operating with the plans of

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a/ In PLO jargon, this includes the area of the State of Israel.

the Zionist enemy. The Council also highly praises the heroic and struggling role of the masses of our people in the occupied territories and its national leaderships in Galilee, the West Bank and Gaza and the loyalty of these masses to PLO. The Council also insisted on the importance of increasing our continuous armed struggle against Zionist occupation.

Point 4. The Council also discussed the prevailing situation in south Lebanon and the dangers resulting from the continuation of aggressive acts and the repercussions on the situation in Lebanon and the Middle East as well as on the Palestinian revolution. The Council also insists on the implementation of the Cairo and Chtoura agreements through co-operation with the legitimate authorities of Lebanon and the Arab deterrent force. In order to restore peace in the south the Council appeals strongly to all Arab States to shoulder their responsibilities vis-à-vis the plans of Israel and its allies, which constitute a threat to the whole Arab world.

Annex II

Fifteen-point Programme adopted at the thirteenth session  
of the Palestinian National Council, held at Cairo from  
12 to 20 March 1977

Pursuant to the Palestine National Charter and to resolutions adopted at previous sessions,

Determined to preserve the victories and gains achieved by the Palestine Liberation Organization on both Arab and international levels during the period following the twelfth session,

Having considered and discussed the latest developments in the problem of Palestine, and various aspects of Palestinian activities under the leadership of PLO, internally, on the Arab level and internationally,

Having also considered the Arab and international situations,

Asserting its support to the Palestinian national struggle and the realization of its objectives in all international and Arab forums,

Asserts the following:

1. The problem of Palestine is the essence and origin of the Arab-Zionist conflict. Resolution 242 of the Security Council ignores the national rights of the Palestinian people and its inalienable rights to its homeland. a/ The Council therefore reiterates both its rejection of this resolution, and its refusal to deal with it on the Arab level as well as internationally.
2. Reaffirms the determination of PLO to pursue the armed struggle and all forms of political and mass struggle for the attainment of the national inalienable rights of the Palestinian Arab people.
3. The struggle in the occupied territories b/ in all its aspects - military, political and popular - constitutes the central link in its struggle programmes. On this basis, PLO strives to escalate the armed conflict in the occupied territories b/ and all other forms of struggle, and to provide all forms of material and moral support to the masses of our people in the occupied land, b/ for the purpose of escalating

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a/ In PLO jargon, this includes the area of the State of Israel.

b/ That is to say, including the area of the State of Israel.

the struggle and strengthening their steadfast stand in order to defeat and eliminate occupation.

4. The Palestinian National Council endorses the position of PLO in rejecting all forms of American capitulationist settlements and all liquidationist plans. c/ It endorses the determination of the PLO to oppose and defeat any settlements which would be at the expense of our people's national inalienable rights. It calls on the Arab nation to carry out its national responsibilities and to mobilize all its potentials to confront these Zionist imperialist schemes.
5. It reaffirms the importance and necessity of preserving national unity, militarily and politically, among all groups in the Palestinian Revolution, within the framework of PLO, as a basic condition for victory. It is essential, therefore, to consolidate national unity on all levels, on the basis of abiding by these resolutions and drawing up programmes for their implementation.
6. It reaffirms the right of the Palestinian Revolution to be present in the territory of fraternal Lebanon, in accordance with the Cairo Agreement and its annexes concluded between PLO and the Lebanese authorities. It is determined to abide by and implement this Agreement both in letter and spirit, including the right to preserve the weapon of the Revolution within the camps. It rejects any unilateral interpretation of this Agreement and its annexes, while expressing its respect for the sovereignty and security of Lebanon.
7. It salutes the heroic fraternal Lebanese people and reiterates the concern of PLO to preserve the territorial integrity of Lebanon, the unity of its people, its security, independence, sovereignty and Arab character; it expresses its pride in the support given by that heroic people to PLO, which is struggling for the recovery of the national rights of the Palestinian people in their homeland b/ and their right to return to it. It emphasizes the necessity of deepening and consolidating the cohesion of all nationalist Lebanese forces and the Palestinian Revolution.
8. It reaffirms the necessity of reinforcing the Arab Front participating in the Palestinian Revolution, and of deepening its cohesion with all forces which have joined it in all countries of the Arab homeland. It also reiterates the need to escalate the joint Arab struggle, and to promote the modalities of the Palestinian Revolution towards confronting Zionist and imperialist plans.

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c/ That is to say, no peace with Israel.

9. It decides to promote Arab solidarity and struggle against imperialism and zionism, to strive towards the liberation of all Arab occupied territories, b/ and to commit itself to supporting the Palestinian Revolution in its determination to regain the national inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, without reconciliation or recognition [of Israel].
10. It reaffirms the right of PLO to exercise its responsibilities of struggle on the Arab and national levels, and through any Arab territory for the liberation of the occupied land. b/
11. It decides to pursue the struggle to regain the national rights of our people, first and foremost of which are the rights to return, to exercise self-determination and to establish its own national independent state over its national soil. b/
12. It stresses the importance of promoting co-operation and solidarity with the socialist, non-aligned, Islamic and African States, and with all national liberation movements in the world.
13. It salutes the attitudes and the struggle of all democratic States and forces against zionism, as a form of racism, and against its aggressive practices.
14. It reaffirms the importance of relations and co-ordination with progressive, democratic Jewish forces within and outside the occupied homeland, b/ which are struggling against the Zionist ideology and its practices. It calls on all freedom-loving States and forces struggling for peace and justice in the world to stop all forms of assistance and co-operation with the racist Zionist régime and to reject any contacts with it, or with its tools and symbols.
15. Bearing in mind the important achievements accomplished on the Arab and international levels since the twelfth session, as reviewed in the political report submitted by the Executive Committee, the Palestinian National Council decides the following:
  - (a) to affirm the right of PLO to participate in all international conferences, forums, and efforts dealing with the problem of Palestine and the Arab-Zionist conflict, on an independent and equal footing, on the basis of the General Assembly resolution 3236 (XXIX), for the fulfilment of our national inalienable rights, which have been recognized by the General Assembly of the United Nations since 1974, particularly in resolution 3236 (XXIX);
  - (b) to declare that any settlement or agreement affecting the rights of the Palestinian people and reached in its absence, is null and void.