



Security Council

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PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TWO THOUSAND
SEVEN HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-NINTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Monday, 1 February 1988, at 12.30 p.m.

President: Mr. OKUN

(United States of America)

Members:

Algeria
Argentina
Brazil
China
France
Germany, Federal Republic of
Italy
Japan
Nepal
Senegal
Union of Soviet Socialist
Republics
United Kingdom of Great
Britain and Northern Ireland
Yugoslavia
Zambia

Mr. DJOUDI
Mr. DELPECH
Mr. NOGUEIRA-BATISTA
Mr. LI LUYE
Mr. BLANC
Mr. VERGAU
Mr. BUCCI
Mr. TANIGUCHI
Mr. JOSSE
Mr. SARE

Mr. BELOMOGOV

Sir Crispin TICKELL
Mr. DJOKIC
Mr. ZUZE

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The meeting was called to order at 12.50 p.m.

EXPRESSION OF THANKS TO THE RETIRING PRESIDENT

The PRESIDENT: As this is the first meeting of the Security Council for the month of February, I should like, on behalf of the Council, to pay tribute to His Excellency Sir Crispin Tickell, Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations, for his service as President of the Council for the month of January. I am sure I speak for all members of the Council in expressing to Ambassador Tickell our admiration and deep appreciation for the great diplomatic skill with which he conducted the Council's business last month.

As we all know, our agenda was charged with important and complex issues. Throughout our deliberations you, Sir Crispin, used energy, skill and wisdom to help us all. We know your commitment to be fair and open to all points of view - indeed, it was expressed visibly throughout the month - and together we have all benefited from your resolute leadership.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted.

THE SITUATION IN THE OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES

REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL IN ACCORDANCE WITH RESOLUTION 605 (1987) (S/19443)

THE PRESIDENT: In accordance with the decisions taken at the previous meetings on this item, I invite the representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization to take a place at the Council table; I invite the representatives of Czechoslovakia, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Morocco, Qatar, the Sudan and the Syrian Arab Republic to take the places reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Terzi (Palestine Liberation Organisation) took a place at the Council table; Mr. Zapotocky (Czechoslovakia), Mr. Badawi (Egypt), Mr. Netanyahu (Israel), Mr. Salah (Jordan), Mr. Abulhasan (Kuwait), Mr. Treiki (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), Mr. Yusof (Malaysia), Mr. Slaoui (Morocco), Mr. Al-Kawari (Qatar), Mr. Adam (Sudan) and Mr. Al-Masri (Syrian Arab Republic) took the places reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The PRESIDENT: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of India, Indonesia and Zimbabwe in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Gharekhan (India), Mr. Alatas (Indonesia) and Mr. Mudenge (Zimbabwe) took the places reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The PRESIDENT: The Security Council will now resume its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I should like to draw the attention of members of the Council to the following documents: S/19462, letter dated 29 January 1988 from the Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General; and S/19464, letter dated 29 January 1988 from the Permanent Representative of Morocco to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General.

Members of the Council have received photocopies of a letter dated 1 February 1988 from the Permanent Representative of Algeria to the United Nations

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addressed to the President of the Security Council. This letter will be issued tomorrow as Security Council document S/19467.

The first speaker is the representative of Zimbabwe. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. MUDENGE (Zimbabwe): We congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for the month of February. Your presidency comes at a time when the Council is seized of a major international issue, a subject on which your country can exert tremendous influence in either direction. We therefore hope that with your wide experience you will be able to use the power and clout of your country and office to promote peace and justice in the Middle East.

To your predecessor, Sir Crispin Tickell of the United Kingdom, the Council owes a special debt of gratitude for the diligent and able manner in which he presided over the Council's affairs during the month of January. Member countries of the Non-Aligned Movement are most grateful to Sir Crispin for the constructive and positive position taken by his country in the search for a solution to the Middle East problem.

To the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Perez de Cuellar, we express sincere appreciation for the comprehensive report which is before the Council in document S/19443 and for his tireless efforts aimed at finding a just and durable solution to the Middle East crisis.

For the sixth time in seven weeks the Security Council is meeting to consider the deteriorating situation in the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied by Israel. In its previous meetings the Council expressed outrage at Israel's policies and practices in the occupied territories which violate the most fundamental human rights of the Palestinian people, in utter disregard of Israel's obligations under the Fourth Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of

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Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949. In this regard, the Council in its resolution 605 (1987) of 22 December 1987 and in subsequent resolutions called on Israel to desist from its policies and practices and emphasized the urgent need to reach a just, durable and peaceful settlement of the Middle East problem.

It is now over five weeks since the adoption of Security Council resolution 605 (1987) of 22 December 1987. In spite of the fervent calls on Israel by the international community to halt the killing, wounding and detention of defenceless Palestinians in the West Bank, Gaza and other Israeli-occupied Arab territories, the situation has not improved.

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If anything, it continues to worsen by the day. The Secretary-General's report before the Council today clearly testifies to an escalation of violence in the occupied territories. Since special emergency powers were granted to the occupying forces last December, many innocent Palestinians have fallen victim to Israel's reign of terror in the occupied territories. Several thousand others, including women and children under 14 years of age, are either being held in Israeli detention camps or are under house arrest without trial. Under randomly declared curfews aimed at curbing press reports of Israeli atrocities, the occupying forces daily conduct house-to-house searches, pulling Palestinian people out of their homes and beating them with fists, clubs, sticks and guns in a desperate effort to force them into submission. It is reported that since the Israeli Defence Minister Yitshak Rabin declared the so-called smash-rather-than-shoot policy Israeli soldiers swinging thick two-foot long clubs have sent over 300 Palestinians to hospital - 200 of them women, children and old men who are now being treated for broken bones or other serious injuries resulting from the beatings during what has been commonly known in Israel as the "week of the stick".

It is no coincidence that there are striking similarities between the Israeli acts of brutality in the West Bank and Gaza and those perpetrated by the apartheid régime of South Africa on innocent men, women and children in Soweto and other townships in South Africa. Both régimes practise policies of domination, occupation and oppression that in themselves breed violence. In the Israeli occupied Palestinian territories, as in Namibia and South Africa, the right to self-determination of a people is denied. In the occupied territories as in Namibia brute military force is used to perpetuate occupation against the will of the peoples of those territories.

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In Israel the so-called weak of the stick is said to have recently had a less obvious victim, that is, the occupying force itself. The level of atrocities the Israeli soldiers have been ordered to perpetrate in the West Bank, Gaza and other occupied Arab territories is said to have left many Israeli soldiers in need of psychological attention. Indeed, The New York Times of 24 January 1988 reported that the Israeli Government the previous week had to send psychologists to its troops in Gaza to help them cope mentally with the orders to beat innocent people and to incapacitate them by breaking their bones. The question arises: If the occupying force, the perpetrator of these acts, is in need of psychological attention, what more of the victims of the acts of brutality who for years have borne the brunt of the occupying forces' oppression. What of the several thousand Palestinians who today find themselves incarcerated without recourse and whose only crime was to stand up for their legitimate right to self-determination? What of the several hundred Palestinians who today find themselves with broken limbs and incapacitated for life for refusing to submit to the Israeli occupation forces?

The need for the international community at large and for the Security Council in particular to take urgent action to ameliorate the situation in the occupied Palestinian and other territories cannot be over-emphasized. Israel must be made to stop breaking the bones of innocent Palestinian children, women and old men. The prevailing state of affairs in the occupied territories demands that the Security Council take urgent action to protect the victims of Israeli aggression in the area. In this regard we of the Non-Aligned Movement welcome the Secretary-General's report (S/19443). We are particularly appreciative of the constructive short-term and long-term suggestions for addressing the Palestinian issue which are outlined in it.

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The Non-Aligned Movement welcomes the Secretary-General's unequivocal assertion that the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967 are "occupied territories" within the meaning of the Fourth Geneva Convention and hence Israel is duty-bound to respect in full the provisions of that Convention in the occupied territories. Both the Security Council and the General Assembly have in previous resolutions asserted the same position. Therefore, the point of departure towards ensuring the safety and protection of the civilian population in the occupied territories should be to demand that Israel abide by its international obligations under the Fourth Geneva Convention.

In this regard we endorse the Secretary-General's recommendation that the Council must appeal to all the High Contracting Parties to the Geneva Convention to use all means at their disposal to compel Israel to accept the applicability of the Fourth Geneva Convention in the occupied territories. We appeal in particular to Israel's powerful friends to use their influence to dissuade Israel from escalating the violence in the occupied Palestinian and other territories and to join the international community in the search for a comprehensive and durable solution to the Middle East problem.

Meanwhile, in view of the acute suffering being experienced by the Palestinian population at the hands of the occupying forces, it is imperative that the Security Council adopt concrete measures to alleviate this suffering. Last week, on Friday, the Co-ordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Countries issued a communiqué which, inter alia, urged the Security Council:

"To approve the dispatching of United Nations observers to the occupied Palestinian territories with a view to monitoring compliance by the occupying Power with the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War."

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The non-aligned countries also support the call made by the Secretary-General for increased assistance to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) in order to enable them to cope with the situation in the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories. We join the Secretary-General in commending the valiant efforts of UNRWA and the ICRC in providing humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian population in the area.

Recent actions by the Israeli authorities aimed at curbing press freedom and freedom of movement by independent observers in the occupied territories testify to Israel's sensitivity to negative publicity in the international press. In addition to providing financial, material and other assistance to the Palestinians, it is imperative that the international community in general and the United Nations in particular expose the Israeli atrocities in the occupied territories. The United Nations through its appropriate organs, including the Department of Public Information, should widely disseminate UNRWA reports on developments in the occupied areas in order to achieve what the Secretary-General in his report has termed "protection by publicity".

The immediate measures I have cited from the Secretary-General's report can at best be considered as first aid to a patient with broken arms and legs. They are only splinters and bandages to stop the situation from deteriorating. They do not provide a solution to the problem. What we need to do is to take the patient to a hospital for a more permanent arrangement.

The problem in the Middle East lies in the illegal Israeli occupation of Palestinian and other Arab territories. It would be a mistake for the Israeli authorities to think that they can maintain order and stability in the occupied territories by resorting to guns, fists, clubs and sticks. No amount of bone breaking can resolve their dilemma. A comprehensive and durable political

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settlement is necessary if peace is to return to the area. We in the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries strongly believe that the key to such a political settlement lies in the early convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East under the auspices of the United Nations. Such a conference should be attended by all concerned parties, including the PLO, on an independent and equal footing in accordance with General Assembly resolution 38/58 C. We believe that partial and piecemeal agreements cannot be helpful. The Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, through its Committee of Nine on Palestine, has worked ceaselessly to promote the early convening of the Conference.

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The worsening situation in the West Bank, Gaza and other occupied Palestinian and Arab territories underscores the urgent need for the international community to accelerate its efforts aimed at setting in motion the preparatory process for the convening of such a conference.

Every day that passes without a political settlement to the crisis means more lives lost, more bones broken and more suffering for the Palestinian people in the Israeli-occupied territories. The Security Council is duty bound to act, and act swiftly, to ameliorate this situation. We hope that at the end of these deliberations the Council will come up with concrete actions to ensure the safety and protection of the Palestinian population in the occupied territories, in accordance with international law, and to hasten the process of consultations aimed at the early convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East. That is the least we can do in response to the cries for help from the oppressed Palestinian people.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Zimbabwe for his kind words addressed to me.

In view of the lateness of the hour, I propose to adjourn the meeting now.

I invite members of the Council to join me for consultations in the Security Council consultation room at 4 p.m. The consultations will be followed by a meeting of the Council at 4.30 p.m. to continue consideration of the item on the agenda.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.