



President: Mr. Jorge E. ILLUECA (Panama).

### 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 International Conference on the Question of Palestine;
- (c) Reports of the Secretary-General

1. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Spanish*): This afternoon the Assembly will consider, under agenda item 33, the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People [A/38/35], the report of the Preparatory Committee for the International Conference on the Question of Palestine [A/38/46], the report of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine<sup>1</sup> and the report of the Secretary-General [A/38/458].

2. I call upon Mr. Massamba Sarré, of Senegal, in his capacity as Chairman of both the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and the Preparatory Committee for the International Conference on the Question of Palestine.

3. Mr. SARRÉ (Senegal), Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (*interpretation from French*): The events of the last few weeks provide once again eloquent testimony to the tragedy which the martyred people of Palestine continues to face without having chosen to do so.

4. The particularly explosive situation which prevails today in the Middle Eastern region reminds us once again of the urgent need to redouble our efforts in the search for a solution to this distressing conflict.

5. Today, at a particularly crucial juncture in the struggle which our brother people of Palestine is waging, I have the honour to submit to the Assembly the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People [A/38/35].

6. As always, the Committee has engaged throughout the whole of the past year in a series of activities aimed, on the one hand, at promoting the application of the recommendations of the General Assembly on the implementation of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and, on the other hand, to draw the attention of the world to the situation in which the Palestinian people finds itself.

7. However, more than during preceding years, the activities of the Committee in 1983 were centred on a specific question, namely, the preparation and organization of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine.

8. It was, indeed, at its thirty-sixth session that the General Assembly decided, pursuant to its resolution 36/120 C of 10 December 1981, to convene, under the auspices of

the United Nations and at the latest in 1984, an International Conference on the Question of Palestine; this was to be done on the basis of resolution ES-7/2, adopted by the General Assembly at its seventh emergency special session. Also pursuant to resolution 36/120 C, the Assembly authorized the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People to act as the Preparatory Committee for the Conference and to take all measures necessary for its organization. The report of the Preparatory Committee for the International Conference on the Question of Palestine [A/38/46] contains an account of all the Committee's activities in the context of the preparations for that Conference.

9. The International Conference on the Question of Palestine, which was held at Geneva from 29 August to 7 September last, was, therefore, the most recent initiative taken at the international level to find a solution to the conflict in the Middle East. It was also the first time that so broad a forum met to consider the Palestinian problem.

10. Indeed, no fewer than 117 States participated fully in this Conference, whereas 20 others took part as observers, in addition to which there were approximately 100 non-governmental organizations, and several eminent personalities invited especially for the occasion, as well as nine specialized agencies of the United Nations.

11. It should be noted, by the way, that, among these non-governmental organizations and eminent personalities, several came from Israel, thus demonstrating by their presence that there exists in Israel a group of peace- and justice-loving persons who share our views and hopes for a just and lasting peace in this disturbed region of the Middle East.

12. The presence of some 50 ministers leading the delegations of their countries is evidence of the general high level of representation of the participating States.

13. This Conference, which, as I have said, was the first of its kind, made possible a wide exchange of views outside the traditional rostrum of the General Assembly with a view to arriving at a consensus on the most appropriate ways and means leading to a solution to the Palestinian problem, taking into account all of the pertinent factors which characterize the situation in the present circumstances. Such a consensus existed, as a matter of fact, concerning the broad principles which were to govern any search for a solution to the problem. On the one hand, it was a question of broadening the consensus and coming to agreement, and on the other of finding an approach which would lead to a resumption of dialogue between the parties concerned. Finally, the Conference had to define specific temporary measures which would ease the economic and social burden which the Israeli occupation is imposing on the Palestinian people.

14. At the end of 10 days of frank, in-depth discussion, the Conference finally adopted by consensus the Geneva Declaration on Palestine<sup>2</sup> and the Programme of Action for the Achievement of Palestinian Rights.<sup>2</sup> It is appropriate here to pay special tribute to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and to Mrs. Lucille Mair, Secretary-

General of the Conference, who spared no effort to make it a success through the long and difficult months which preceded the Conference, as well as during the actual work of that Conference.

15. The Geneva Declaration on Palestine, first of all, lists the major guidelines which should govern any concerted international action for the purpose of resolving the Palestinian question. Essentially, these principles include: first, the exercise of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including its right to return to its homeland, its right to self-determination, and its right to establish its own independent State in Palestine; secondly, the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territories by force, and consequently the need to secure the withdrawal of Israel from all territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem; thirdly, the need to resist and to reject those Israeli policies and practices in the occupied territories which are contrary to international law, particularly the policy of settlements in the occupied territories; fourthly, the right of the Palestine Liberation Organization [PLO], the representative of the Palestinian people, to participate on an equal footing with other parties in all efforts, deliberations and conferences on the Middle East; and, fifthly, the right of all States in the region to existence within internationally recognized boundaries with justice and security for all.

16. I would mention that the adoption by consensus of that last principle, after long and delicate negotiations, is evidence of the openness and the desire for dialogue shown by all delegations, for they were convinced that it is necessary from now on to move beyond certain clichés and to work resolutely for a future of peace and harmony for all the peoples of the region.

17. To give effect to these guiding principles, the Conference considered it essential that an international peace conference on the Middle East be convened, on the basis of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the relevant resolutions of the United Nations, with the aim of finding a comprehensive, just and lasting solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict, of which an essential element would be the creation of an independent Palestinian State in Palestine. This peace conference should be convened under the auspices of the United Nations with the participation on an equal footing of all the parties to the conflict, including the PLO, as well as the United States of America, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the other States concerned. In this context, the Security Council has the primary responsibility for making the appropriate institutional arrangements on the basis of relevant United Nations resolutions in order to guarantee and implement the agreements reached at the international peace conference.

18. That is the most important of the Conference's recommendations, and it is certain that if the international peace conference were to be held it would constitute a decisive step towards a comprehensive settlement of the Palestinian question.

19. The Programme of Action for the Achievement of Palestinian Rights addresses itself first of all to States Members. It calls on them to intensify efforts for the establishment of an independent Palestinian State within the framework of a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the Middle East conflict. It also calls on them to oppose and reject the expansionist policies pursued by Israel in the Arab territories occupied since 1967 and in that context to refrain from providing Israel with any military, economic or political assistance of such a nature as to encourage it in those policies. Similarly, the Programme of Action calls on States not to encourage migration to the occupied Arab territories until Israel has

put an end to its illegal policy of establishing settlements in those territories. States are invited to make or increase special contributions to United Nations funds for assistance to the Palestinian people.

20. The Programme of Action also requests States to encourage the formation of national committees in support of the Palestinian people and, if they have not yet done so, to recognize the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people and to establish appropriate relations with it.

21. The Programme of Action then addresses itself to the Security Council, inviting it to take urgent action to bring about the cessation of Israel's policies in the occupied territories. The Council is also invited to facilitate the organization of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East and to make the appropriate institutional arrangements in order to guarantee and carry out the agreements reached at that Conference. The measures agreed on should include ensuring Israel's withdrawal from the territories occupied since 1967, with a specific timetable; subjecting those territories to a short transitional period under the supervision of the United Nations until elections to a constituent assembly take place, elections in which all the Palestinians shall participate; and providing, if necessary, temporary peace-keeping forces.

22. As to the question of assistance to the Palestinian people, the Programme of Action requests the Secretary-General to convene a meeting of the specialized agencies and other organizations associated with the United Nations to look into the most effective inter-agency machinery to co-ordinate and intensify United Nations assistance to the Palestinian people.

23. Finally, the Programme of Action addresses itself to intergovernmental organizations, which it urges to increase awareness by the international community of the plight of the Palestinian people.

24. For 10 days, representatives and plenipotentiaries from all the regions of the world met at Geneva and, with a commendable concern for effectiveness, realism and human generosity, devoted their thinking and their efforts to the consideration of the important question of Palestine.

25. They agreed that it was important and urgent to embark on the course not only of law and justice but also of truth and reason, in order to restore to the Palestinian people its dignity and the recognition of its rights, without thereby encroaching on the dignity or rights of other peoples or States of the region.

26. It is now for the present session of the General Assembly, together with the Security Council—responsible for guaranteeing peace in the world and for protecting the security of peoples—to commit itself, despite the obstacles in its path, to the implementation of the relevant conclusions of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine.

27. The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, which remains open to all States Members of the United Nations, is at the Assembly's disposal for the purpose of making progress on that path.

28. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Spanish*): I now call on Mr. Victor Gauci, of Malta, Rapporteur both of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and of the Preparatory Committee for the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, to present the reports of those two Committees, as well as the report of the Conference itself.

29. Mr. GAUCI (Malta), Rapporteur of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People: The first report [A/38/35] is the traditional account of the activities carried out by the Committee during the year under review. The events on the spot made it a year of dismay and bitter regret for the Committee. Equally, however, it was a year of hope, mainly because of the wide dissemination among public opinion on all continents attained by the Committee's work, as well as because of the surge in support for the Committee's recommendations. We believe that those recommendations remain a practical basis for giving satisfaction to the Palestinian people in its quest for independent statehood in the context of a wider, peaceful settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

30. The second report [A/38/46] gives a concise account of the organizational activities of the Committee in its role as the Preparatory Committee for the International Conference on the Question of Palestine—the Conference held at Geneva from 29 August to 7 September of this year—and also for regional meetings in advance of the Conference, held in the United Republic of Tanzania, Nicaragua, the United Arab Emirates, Malaysia and Switzerland.

31. The third report is a full account of the Conference itself,<sup>1</sup> which was held in difficult circumstances but nevertheless was successfully concluded. An outstanding feature of this Conference was the fact that the combined number of eminent persons and non-governmental organizations participating constituted a record which will also be translated into a coherent programme of action. An impressive number of analytical studies were prepared in time for the Conference.

32. The time has now come for the Assembly to consolidate the fruits of all this effort which reached its climax this year. Therefore, I should like, in the first place, once more to record the Committee's appreciation of the dynamic leadership of its Chairman, Mr. Sarré, of Senegal. The Committee also highly valued the dedicated services of Mrs. Lucille Mair, appointed Secretary-General of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, as well as of the Division for Palestinian Rights, headed by Mr. Yogasundram. The services of the Secretariat were invariably faithful and responsive to the needs of that Committee. I believe that the reports speak for themselves. The Chairman of the Committee has already highlighted the most significant features. The reports were distributed in good time for the debate we are about to embark on.

33. I think it will be evident to all that this was a particularly active year for the Committee—hectic is probably an even more accurate description. I do not intend to highlight the many important activities undertaken by the Committee, since they are fully covered in the report. I believe we can all derive satisfaction from the fact that, as a result, on every continent there is a deep awareness of the need to redress the present unacceptable situation of the Palestinian people and, as a corollary, a determination to act to bring about positive change in national attitudes. What is even more important is that all our audiences agreed that the Committee's original recommendations, first brought to the attention of the Assembly in 1976, were seen to be fair, legally founded and peaceful and thus could be expected to last when implemented.

34. I also believe that there is now a heartfelt desire to put the unhappy past behind us. Dwelling on the past does not generate a solution. The past, of course, cannot be forgotten, but it is to the future that we must look.

35. The International Conference on the Question of Palestine, at Geneva, went deeply into all the various

aspects of the question of Palestine. Its final outcome was a message of hope. Its decisions were the result of protracted negotiations, but they were adopted by acclamation. We are therefore proud to present them for the favourable consideration of the Assembly. We venture to hope that the Geneva Declaration on Palestine<sup>2</sup> will be unanimously endorsed as setting out all the elements necessary for an equitable, peaceful solution to the plight of the Palestinian people. The Programme of Action for the Achievement of Palestinian Rights<sup>2</sup> is designed to give practical effect to those principles and is also deserving of concerted action.

36. In the spirit of faith and hope in the United Nations and in the dedication of all countries to a negotiated peace, I shall pass over in silence and draw a charitable veil over the most regrettable events that have taken place on the spot during the year under review. The sorry and sordid details are in any case all recorded in the report. I shall limit myself to extracts from an article entitled "The Love of Force" by Anthony Lewis in *The New York Times* of 7 November last:

"The purpose of the operation was not just to clear PLO forces from the border area as the Israeli Cabinet thought. There were large political goals: to crush Palestinian nationalism, thus removing the last obstacles to Israel's absorption of the West Bank, and to create a unified Lebanon friendly to Israel.

"The result was disaster. . . .

"The lesson was not lost on Israel. The political mood of the country has moved toward a more realistic view of the limitations of military power. The *Jerusalem Post*, in an editorial a year after what it called 'The misbegotten war in Lebanon', asked: 'Who today, besides Ariel Sharon and Rafael Eytan, retains the gall to strut upon the public stage defending a war that was to bring, in Prime Minister Begin's words, 40 years of peace?'"

37. I have deliberately not delved into the past, as an example which I trust other participants in the debate may be disposed to follow, because what is necessary now, in the words of the fourth recommendation of the Committee this year, is:

"resolute action by all nations, particularly those in the region, through the Security Council, so that the present destructive momentum will be reversed, conflict will cease and a steady course of action in the search for durable and comprehensive peace will be set in motion." [A/38/35, para. 97.]

38. As a practical step in that direction, the Committee is also recommending the convening of an international conference on the Middle East, the sooner the better, so as finally to embark on a comprehensive peace effort in a region that has been tormented—and is still being tormented—by conflict, fear and uncertainty, groaning under an intolerable burden of military expenditure. I trust that this, the Committee's most important recommendation, will also earn the support of those countries whose active co-operation would be necessary in order to enhance the prospects of success.

39. I therefore repeat what I said last year. It is late, but not too late to start building the blocks to peace not on the force of arms but rather on the soundness of reason. The protagonists—all the protagonists—will be the main beneficiaries, but the whole world will breathe more freely then and we shall have given the United Nations—our one and only Organization—a tremendous boost.

40. Let us recall it once more: peace is the *leitmotiv* of the United Nations and the Organization itself is the

centre for harmonizing the actions of nations in the attainment of common ends. There could hardly be a cause more common to all than the practical attainment by the Palestinian people of their rightful place within the family of nations.

41. The Committee therefore appeals to all nations to respond positively to this timely call. We have seen how gravely prejudicial to peace has been the indifference of those who preferred to overlook or to doubt the sincerity of the "olive branch" offered to the Assembly in 1974.

42. Let us try once more to encourage and initiate a sustained diplomatic effort to replace the love of force by the spirit of hope, reconciliation, negotiation and, finally, peace.

43. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Spanish*): The next speaker is the Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization. I call on him in accordance with General Assembly resolution 3237 (XXIX) of 22 November 1974.

44. Mr. KADDOUMI (Palestine Liberation Organization) (*interpretation from Arabic*): It gives me great pleasure, Sir, speaking for the first time at the present session of the General Assembly, to extend heartfelt congratulations to you on your election as its President. I am confident that with your well-known experience and statesmanship you will be able to carry out the task entrusted to you by the General Assembly efficiently and effectively. It also gives me pleasure to express our deep appreciation of the noble efforts of the Secretary-General in the service of the causes of peoples and of international peace and security, in accordance with the principles and the Charter of the United Nations.

45. I should also like to extend congratulations to Saint Christopher and Nevis on its attainment of independence and accession to the international community and to the United Nations, and to wish it great progress and prosperity.

46. Once again the General Assembly is considering the question of Palestine, as it has at every session since 1947. This is taking place in the wake of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, held at Geneva from 29 August to 7 September 1983.

47. As members know, this important Conference was convened in accordance with resolution 36/120 C, adopted by the General Assembly on 10 December 1981. This Conference was scheduled to take place next year but, since events in the region increased the concern of the international community as to the risks entailed by the aggressive, expansionist policy of Israel in its attempts to annihilate the Palestinian people, destroy its national character and deny it its inalienable rights, the date of the Conference was advanced in another attempt to deter the ceaseless Israeli aggression and lay the foundations for the just and lasting solution of the question of Palestine and the conflict in the Middle East, based on the principles of the Charter and the decisions of the United Nations.

48. Many attempts were made from the outset to stall and prevent the holding of this Conference. Moreover, some Western Powers boycotted the Conference, in particular the United States, thus shirking its responsibility as a permanent member of the Security Council and defying the international unanimity and the resolutions of the General Assembly itself.

49. Despite all this, the wide international participation in the Conference by States, non-governmental organizations and prominent world personalities furnished "new" proof of the magnitude of world support for the Palestinian people's struggle for its inalienable rights, and

of the outstanding international position occupied by the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of this people.

50. Despite its continuous preoccupation throughout past years with resisting the constant Israeli armed aggression against its people and camps, which culminated in the aggression against Lebanon and the siege of the heroic city of Beirut last summer, the PLO has not ceased to participate in all international forums and to contribute positively and effectively to every sincere international effort aimed at finding a just solution to the question of Palestine. The fact that we belong to the United Nations and participate positively and continuously in the work of all the international specialized organizations proves our commitment to international legitimacy and to the United Nations, as well as to its resolutions on the question of Palestine as the basis for a just solution that guarantees the inalienable rights of our peoples and ensures the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the region, where the question of Palestine constitutes the core of the conflict.

51. The International Conference on the Question of Palestine, which adopted the Geneva Declaration on Palestine<sup>2</sup> and the Programme of Action for the Achievement of Palestinian Rights,<sup>2</sup> was an international event of great significance in which 119 States, the PLO and Namibia participated fully, another 20 States participated in the capacity of observers, and 101 non-governmental organizations, 16 prominent personalities and 40 United Nations agencies and organs also took part. Its deliberations and discussions were carried out in a balanced and objective manner.

52. We believe that the Geneva Declaration on Palestine and the Programme of Action are clear evidence of unparalleled international unanimity on the question of Palestine and the means of solving it, and are basically inspired by the Charter and the resolutions of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the principles of international law. The Geneva Declaration on Palestine reflects the international community's appreciation of the importance of the time element in solving the question of Palestine, which has been before the Assembly continuously since 1947, and affirms the conviction that no partial or temporary solutions have ever or will ever bring peace to the area, but only more war and destruction.

53. The Declaration states unequivocally that the main cause of the conflict in the Middle East is the denial by Israel and those that support its expansionist policies of the genuine, inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. Like the General Assembly in its resolutions, the Declaration clearly and explicitly defines these rights as follows: first, the right of the Palestinian people to return, to self-determination and to establish its own independent State in Palestine; secondly, the right of the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, to participate on an equal footing with other parties in all efforts, deliberations and conferences concerning the question of Palestine and the Middle East; thirdly, the need to put an end to Israel's occupation of the Arab territories, in accordance with the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, and, consequently, the need to secure unconditional and complete withdrawal by Israel from the occupied Arab and Palestinian territories, including Jerusalem; fourthly, the need to oppose and reject all Israeli policies and practices in the occupied territories, including Jerusalem, particularly the establishment of settlements, the expropriation of land and property and the imposition of legislation that is contrary to international law and United

Nations resolutions, and to reaffirm that all such legislation is null and void; fifthly, the need for the Security Council to guarantee the application of those principles and provide guarantees for peace among all the States of the area, including the independent Palestinian State, whose capital is Jerusalem, as affirmed by the Twelfth Arab Summit Conference, held at Fez from 6 to 9 September 1982.

54. The International Conference on the Question of Palestine also responded to the proposal by the PLO to convene an international conference on peace, on the basis of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and United Nations resolutions concerning the question of Palestine, with a view to finding a just, lasting and comprehensive solution to the conflict in the Middle East, one of the basic elements of which would be the establishment of an independent Palestinian State. The conference should be convened within the context of the United Nations and all the parties concerned, including the PLO, should participate on an equal footing. Participants should include the United States, the Soviet Union and other States concerned.

55. This proposal, which has met wide international response, constitutes a constructive and important step towards finding a practical means of implementing United Nations resolutions, which is always prevented by the American veto. This is aimed against our people, its rights and its objectives and abets Israel's policy of aggression, expansion and settlement.

56. We are confident that the Assembly will adopt this proposal at the present session and that the international community will firmly insist on its being implemented, with a view to achieving its noble objective of security and peace for all the peoples of the world, including the Palestinian people, which is suffering every form of oppression, displacement and terrorism.

57. There is no doubt that the Assembly will also endorse the Programme of Action adopted by the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, which is aimed at easing some of the suffering of our people and providing it with the necessities of life and the courage to resist and go on in the face of the brutal force of the Israelis, supported morally and materially by the United States, and at restoring the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, which like the rest of the peoples of the world simply aspires to an independent, sovereign and free life in its own homeland.

58. In this regard, I should like once more to declare from this rostrum, on behalf of the Palestinian people and of the PLO, our sincere thanks and appreciation to all the States, organizations and individuals that participated in the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, held at Geneva, and that contributed to its success notwithstanding the pressures and hostile campaigns to which some were subjected. We should also like to express our thanks and appreciation to the members of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and to its Chairman, Mr. Massamba Sarré. We wish to commend the invaluable efforts of the Secretary-General and of Mrs. Lucille Mair, Secretary-General of the Conference, who contributed much to its success. We would also be remiss were we not once again to express our thanks to those fraternal and friendly States, the United Arab Emirates, the United Republic of Tanzania, Nicaragua and Malaysia, which acted as hosts to the regional preparatory meetings. As for the Government of Switzerland, it deserves all our thanks and appreciation for having acted as host to the European Regional Preparatory Meeting and to the

Conference itself with such a spirit of responsibility and hospitality, affording us all the means for success.

59. I deliberately began my statement by speaking of the means for finding a just solution to the Palestinian question to which we all aspire to underscore the firm determination of our people to achieve a just peace, for the Palestinian people, like the other peoples of the world, reject war and struggle for right and justice. Our people do not fight for the sake of fighting but for the sake of peace based on justice. However, there is a difference between the peace we seek and the capitulation that the United States and Israel are trying to impose upon us. As has been demonstrated throughout the ages, brute force may force capitulation upon a people, but history has taught us that that can last only for a certain period. Brute force can never lead to the establishment of peace in the world. Instead, peoples have continued to struggle and to fight until they have attained their freedom and independence.

60. If we reflect a little on the situation prevailing in all the hotbeds of tension throughout the world, we can clearly see the reason for this tension. The United States, Israel and South Africa, which embody the arrogance of unbridled power in our modern world and which ignore the United Nations, its Charter and its resolutions, are attempting to impose their hegemony and domination upon the peoples of Asia, Africa, Central America and South America. The American invasion of the tiny island of Grenada is an extension of Israel's invasion of Lebanon last year and of racist South Africa's invasion of Namibia and its repeated acts of armed aggression against neighbouring countries. Just as Israel and South Africa refuse to recognize the right to self-determination of the peoples whose territories they occupy and dominate on the basis of a repulsive settler, colonialist and racist ideology, in the Middle East and Central America, the United States acts on the basis of a policy of hegemony and the imposition of its influence through direct military intervention without demonstrating any readiness whatsoever to take into account the aspirations and wishes of peoples and without giving any weight to the opinion of the international community, riding roughshod over the profound social, economic and political contradictions various countries in those regions are experiencing as a result of American imperialist and colonialist policies and of the puppet régimes it has supported and maintained against the peoples of the third world in recent years.

61. The imperialist policy of intervention and threat of force against the peoples of Grenada, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Cuba being pursued by the United States in Central America and in the Caribbean is part and parcel of overall American policy throughout the world, beginning with the arms build-up and the intensification of international tension, through the deployment of nuclear missiles and ending with the Israeli massacres of the Lebanese and Palestinian peoples.

62. As for the question of Palestine, the United States has, without exception, stood against the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people to freedom and independence and has provided unlimited support to Israel and its policies of expansion and aggression, giving it all the modern means of destruction to displace or murder our peoples in Palestine, in Beirut and in the camps of Sabra and Shatila. As for the situation in the Middle East, the United States has made no real effort to establish peace there. Rather, it has sought to dominate the region and to seek fragile and partial solutions that have never led to peace but only to more destruction and wars.

63. What has occurred and is occurring in fraternal Lebanon is a case in point. The American Administration and its Secretary of State, Alexander Haig, encouraged Israel to attack Lebanon and to occupy its territory under spurious pretexts and claims that have subsequently been exposed by events. When the Americans undertook to lead the so-called peace process in Lebanon and to reach the so-called Israeli-Lebanese agreement, in violation of Lebanese sovereignty, they were actually rewarding the Israeli invaders for their aggression and for their massacres. In spite of repeated promises to achieve Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon, the United States has not lived up to them. Its policy has instead encouraged Israel to disregard Security Council resolutions 508 (1982) and 509 (1982) and has led to a new outbreak of fighting on Lebanese territory, thus again proving that what happened in Lebanon was not caused by the Palestinian presence there but by the expansionist and aggressive designs of Israel, which were to annex south Lebanon as it had annexed Jerusalem and the Golan Heights and as it is planning to do in a definitive manner in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, having already done so to all practical intents and purposes.

64. A disinterested examination of the American position on the peace efforts in the Middle East affirms what we have said, namely, that the United States not only has shirked its international responsibility but has sought to sink all other international efforts in this connection. In spite of the many resolutions of the Security Council which the United States Administration has accepted and which deemed the settlements in the occupied Arab territories to be illegitimate and an obstacle to peace, the United States has continually provided Israel with the vast financial assistance that has enabled it to establish additional settlements in our homeland. The United States also prevents the adoption of any resolution by the Security Council designed to dismantle such settlements, as it did last August when its delegation used the veto against a draft resolution to that effect.<sup>3</sup> The veto is the perennial American vote in the Security Council whenever there is a question of Israeli acts of aggression against our peoples and territories, in violation of the principles of international law, the resolutions of the United Nations and fundamental human rights.

65. Once again, when President Reagan undertook to put forward his proposals for peace in the Middle East through his initiative of September 1982, he deliberately ignored all the basic elements of peace that enjoy international unanimity by his *a priori* rejection of the natural rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination, and he ignored the occupation of Palestinian territories by Israel and the Israeli settlements. Worse, the American Administration was up in arms against the PLO, which it does not recognize and with which it refuses to talk because of its position on this initiative, which contravenes the inalienable rights of our peoples and their aspirations, while it remains completely silent on the Israeli position, which rejected the initiative chapter and verse.

66. When the Soviet Union made its initiative for peace in the Middle East, our National Council welcomed it while the United States ignored it completely and arrogantly declared that the USSR had no role in the peace process, a stand incompatible with the international situation and with objective facts and one that does not demonstrate a sincere wish to seek peace. We are reminded of the American position on the eve of the Vance-Gromyko agreement on the basis for a political settlement in the Middle East that was included in the joint communiqué of October 1977, a position that was

also welcomed by the PLO. The United States, however, renounced it and abrogated its commitment to that agreement a few days after its adoption. When, during the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982, France and Egypt attempted to put forward a plan for peace in the Middle East in the Security Council,<sup>4</sup> the United States threw its weight against it, refusing to discuss it, and threatened to use its veto against it because it included a recognition of the rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination.

67. As everyone knows, in the endeavour by the Arab States to find a just solution to the conflict in the Middle East, the Twelfth Arab Summit Conference, held at Fez, adopted, on 9 September 1982, the Arab plan for peace in the Middle East contained in its Final Declaration,<sup>5</sup> which enjoyed full Arab unanimity and which was approved by the Palestine National Council at its session last February in Algiers. It was also approved by the non-aligned countries, the African States and the Islamic States, and was supported by the socialist States and some Western European States, since it formed a sound basis for achieving peace based on justice in our region.

68. However, this plan once more ran into American-Israeli rejection. As opposed to the impediments placed by American policy in the path of the PLO and the policy of hostility to the people of Palestine, pursued through denial of its national and inalienable rights recognized by all the peoples of the world, we notice the huge extent of economic and military aid, apart from the political aid, provided by the United States to Israel, which culminated in the American-Israeli strategic accord which has been revived to become an instrument to threaten the entire Arab peoples, a means to promote the Israeli policy of aggression and expansion and a basic element in the policy of confrontation and the arms race pursued by the United States Administration, which seriously threatens the peace and security of the world and causes us to run grave risks.

69. On the basis of this bitter experience with the American Administration, our Palestinian people and the Arab nation have become convinced—including those who were deceived by the slogans of freedom, democracy and human rights to which the United States pays lip-service from time to time—that the United States and Israel will only accept full capitulation on our part without any conditions.

70. But our people, which knows how to struggle and which has withstood displacement, terrorism and injustice for more than 30 years and provided scores of thousands of victims and martyrs, refuses to capitulate but every day grows more insistent on achieving its full rights and its Palestinian identity. Israel, for its part, wants to occupy the whole of Palestine without the Palestinians. To achieve that end, it has undertaken a campaign of systematic and complete annihilation of the Palestinian people which has not stopped since 1947, in which various means of violence, terrorism and genocide are used, as shown by the massacres of Deir Yassin in 1948 and Sabra and Shatila in 1982.

71. Since its inception, Israel has pursued a policy of racial discrimination against the sons of our Palestinian people who did not leave their land, and considers them second-class citizens. Their rights, lands and possessions have been confiscated by Israel. Since 1967, after Israel had occupied the rest of Palestine, it has persisted in the same racist, expansionist policies. It confiscated land on which it built settlements, displaced citizens, evicting them by force and arresting thousands of them. Their homes were destroyed, schools and universities were closed down, mosques and churches were desecrated, mayors

were assaulted, and Israel allowed armed fascist gangs to kill innocent citizens in broad daylight, which is what happened in Hebron recently. Israel did not stop at that, but followed Palestinians to their refuge in Lebanon, murdering them and bombarding them with American weapons, using internationally prohibited weapons, and detained thousands of them in concentration camps like the infamous Ansar camp, which reminds us all of the horror and viciousness of Nazi practices against Jews in the past. I do not want to belabour this subject because these inhuman and arbitrary practices are an open secret. The General Assembly itself has this year again, as it has every year, condemned Israeli practices and the violation of human rights in the occupied territories, without deterring Israel from riding roughshod over all values and secular and divine teachings, relying on full American support and its domination of the mass media, and silence on the part of some who are its accomplices.

72. As a result of this policy, 5 million Palestinians remain deprived of the most elementary human rights. They live scattered all over the world, and some live as refugees in the neighbouring Arab countries under very harsh and complicated social and material conditions. As for those who stayed in their homeland under Israeli occupation, they live as strangers in their own land, denied the most elementary rights and subject to Israeli oppression. Israel now effectively controls the greater part of the lands in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, as well as the sources of water, as it seeks to shatter the dreams and aspirations of our struggling people.

73. The Palestinian people has suffered from an unparalleled human ordeal and has suffered tragedies without losing its hope, its will or its faith in the principles of right and justice and in the human conscience, with all of which it will eventually triumph over injustice and oppression. In its ceaseless struggle, it uses its legitimate right to self-defence by all means approved by the norms of international law and by the Charter of the United Nations.

74. What gives rise to greater sadness is the fact that the aggressive, racist, Zionist movement not only inflicted harm on the Palestinian people but also on the Jews themselves whom it mobilized in a large ghetto called Israel, isolated from humanist values and principles and from the tolerant spiritual heritage of Judaism as a divine religion, making its citizens into soldiers who sow death, hatred, rage and destruction everywhere. Less than 40 years after the establishment of the State of Israel on the ruins of the Palestinian homeland, and after the wars waged by the neo-Nazi generals against us, Israeli society, as a result of this policy of aggression, has become a society which is torn apart, suffering from economic and ideological bankruptcy, from social and ethnic contradictions, from international isolation and a lack of internal peace. Hence, the fall of Begin and Sharon became inevitable after their guns and massacres failed to eliminate the Palestinian people and the PLO. Just as Shamir, the assassin of Count Bernadotte, will not be able to save the remaining dreams of settlement, domination and expansion.

75. What is promising, amid the total darkness and ignorance which guide the policies of Israel, is the fact that we are witnessing the growing realization among the Israeli Jews themselves of the gravity of the persistence of this aggressive racist policy which not only threatens the Palestinians but is also transforming Israel itself into a Fascist State controlled by a handful of fanatical terrorists and extremists who still live outside the mainstream of history. They do not seem to have learned anything from the suffering and sacrifices of millions of Jews who suffered throughout generations from Fascist

racist régimes and ideologies which are similar and which adduced the same arguments and slogans raised by the leaders of Israel today, such as the argument about divine and historic rights, ethnic purity, cultural superiority, *lebensraum* and the policy of imposing the *fait accompli* by brute force.

76. With great sorrow I find myself forced to talk to you about the tragic events which befell the north of Lebanon, which claimed the lives of thousands of Lebanese and Palestinians. I will not go into details which have become known, especially since our world is small despite its immense size and the technology of the mass media travels fast. What has been and is still happening there is regrettable and tragic, since our Palestinian people needs no new suffering which will produce more victims. We do not deny that we have some internal problems which are natural and logical in all revolutionary societies. Under the conditions we are living in, enduring one of the most complicated problems of the age, which is the question of Palestine, it is only natural that there be different views and opinions. There is no doubt that these problems have become more complicated as a result of the feelings of frustration and despair on the part of some of our people due to the prolonged suffering and the harsh tragedies and events which befell us as a result of the American-Israeli policy of aggression.

77. These feelings of frustration will intensify if the question of Palestine is not soon resolved. Despite all that, we are convinced that these events would not have taken such a tragic form without foreign intervention, and that we, as Palestinians, could have found solutions to our problems through democratic dialogue. Despite all that, if we look beyond the mere facts and events, we see that the clear reality is the following.

78. The struggling, experienced Palestinian people chose its leadership from the legitimate cadres of the PLO and chose its path as defined by the decisions of the Palestinian National Council. It will never give up its right to chart its future freely, independently and without foreign intervention. Harsh experience—indeed, tragedy—has proved that the Palestinian people—throughout the Diaspora, in exile and in the camps, in the occupied territories, in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, and in Jerusalem—is unreservedly on the side of the PLO and its legitimate leadership, under brother Yasser Arafat, which was elected by the Palestinian National Council at its last session, at Algiers.

79. In this ordeal, faced with hostile forces attempting to sow dissension in the PLO and slandering the Palestinian revolution, we are biting the bullet, feeling proud of this mobilization of the masses around the PLO. We also feel grateful to all friendly States: the socialist States and the non-aligned countries, especially the USSR, the German Democratic Republic, Cuba and India, and others, such as France, Greece and the sister Arab States which made such praiseworthy efforts to stop the bloodshed. What gives us consolation is that the image of the PLO was never shaken, either in the Palestinian context or in the international context.

80. Everybody has come to realize the depth of the Palestinian sense of belonging to the PLO. Events have proved the importance and effectiveness of the PLO in international life, and the importance of its existence and continued survival as an essential, positive element for which there is no substitute and which enriches all the efforts to achieve a just peace. It is not only the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, but also the symbol of a homeland in exile for all Palestinians who struggle and aspire to return soon to a free homeland and an independent State in the land of Palestine.

81. At the outset of my statement today, as on previous occasions, I referred to the fact that the question of Palestine was born with the establishment of the United Nations itself and has been a perennial item on its agenda since 1947. If we look at the negative side, we must say that the Organization is unable to impose and implement its resolutions, achieve its objectives and fulfil the promises it made to the peoples of the world. But we prefer to look at the positive side, because the long period of time devoted by the United Nations to the discussion of the question of Palestine—which is without parallel—clearly and unambiguously reflects the immense concern of the international community and its desire to bring to an end the oppression of and aggression against the Palestinian people. It also reflects the concern of the international community about the situation in the Middle East, where the question of Palestine forms the core of the conflict, as a dangerous situation threatening international peace and security. This persistence and this effort on the part of the international community and the United Nations deserve the greatest recognition and appreciation.

82. Furthermore, the fact that the question of Palestine has been on the agenda of the United Nations throughout all this time, despite the stalling tactics of the United States, which paralysed the Security Council's effectiveness in this regard, has great significance. The international community aspires to the establishment of justice, rejects *faits accomplis* based on force and aggression, and refuses all attempts to impose a single will on the Organization. The declared responsibility of the international community, as expressed in various forms in the context of the United Nations, is a fixed and acknowledged responsibility in all issues relating to the liberation of peoples and the right of self-determination, which form the linchpin of the international political system in the Charter of the United Nations, with its purposes and principles.

83. Our people looks up to the international Organization and hopes that the Security Council and the General Assembly will take practical action to put an end to the aggression through the deterrent sanctions provided for in the Charter and not settle for mere condemnation and denunciation. The Palestinian people, despite obstacles and hardships, will persist in its struggle, regardless of sacrifice, supported by the noble will of the international community and with the help of all the friendly countries in the socialist bloc, the Islamic countries and the non-aligned countries, in Africa, Asia and Latin America, and all the honest forces throughout the world which stand by our people and its struggle.

84. We also express our appreciation to those Western States which support our struggle for our legitimate, inalienable rights, and call upon those States which still hesitate to develop their positions on the basis of the mutual interests and the mutual security which bind Western Europe to the Middle East, on the basis of those high principles of freedom and independence for which all our peoples have struggled and are still struggling and which constitute the common heritage of mankind.

85. The preservation of this heritage, these values and these principles will only be possible if all peoples are allowed to enjoy their freedom, sovereignty, and independence, and if colonialism, exploitation, zionism, racism and all forms of oppression and suppression are ended once and for all.

86. Mr. AL-SABBAGH (Bahrain) (*interpretation from Arabic*): The International Conference on the Question of Palestine, which was held at Geneva from 29 August to 7 September 1983, is undoubtedly a landmark in the history of the just cause of Palestine. The Conference

considered the various ways and means of clarifying the question of the legitimate Palestinian rights through the presentation of serious and practical studies and proposals.

87. The document entitled "United Nations initiatives on the question of Palestine", dated 5 July 1983,<sup>6</sup> and the document entitled *The Origins and Evolution of the Palestine Problem*, may well be said to have constituted the basic documents of the Conference. We should like to pay a tribute to the positive efforts of the participants in the Conference and to call on those countries which are directly connected with the Palestinian cause but which did not participate in this Conference to shoulder their full responsibility in this respect.

88. The first Zionist Conference was held at Basel in 1897. It adopted a resolution on the establishment of a Jewish State in Palestine. Then, in November 1917, we had the Balfour promise, which proclaimed the establishment of a national homeland for the Jews in Palestine.<sup>7</sup> Then the national homeland was replaced by the establishment of a Jewish State, so that Palestine became a political homeland for the Diaspora of Jews from all over the world. Then Israel denied the rights of other creeds and nationalities. The British mandated authority failed at the time to find a just and peaceful solution because of the extremely complex political conditions. It had to refer the Palestinian question to the newly established United Nations to tackle growing Zionist terrorism—led by Menachem Begin—against the British presence.

89. The Zionists gained another step later when they mobilized American public opinion and gained the support of members of the United States Congress and the State Department, and of the White House. We then saw a plan of the United States Government, based on the project of the United Nations *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Palestinian Question, calling for the partition of Palestine into two States, one Arab and the other Jewish. I will not dwell here on the rest of the details, not even the methods and pressures which were practised by the Jews, who had the ear of President Truman, to convince him of the need for the partition. So resolution 181 (II), on partition, which was unjust and illegal, won two thirds of the vote in the General Assembly, although the Assembly regrettably failed to permit the views of the Palestinian Arabs to be taken into account, so that they themselves could decide their future.

90. Today, we demand that the General Assembly take a firmer stand by endorsing the rights of the Palestinian people, particularly its right to establish its own State, and thus correcting the injustice which was committed against this great people. The General Assembly and the Security Council have passed hundreds of resolutions, and since its establishment the United Nations has been closely involved with the question of Palestine, which has been the subject of the greater part of its discussions and led to the adoption of many resolutions.

91. The international community today demands compliance with these resolutions, to the greater effectiveness of the Organization and of the maintenance of international peace and security. Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) have been deprived of their effect by Israel, which has also rejected any practical solution of the Palestinian question directed to the establishment of an independent Palestinian State with Arab Jerusalem as its capital. It has also driven out the Arab inhabitants of the West Bank, and is continuing to establish settlements, annex territories and destroy houses. It has persecuted the mayors, closed universities and so changed the character of the occupied Arab lands that they have become a vast prison filled with its own people, to say



nothing of the prisons in Israel, which have become more terrorist and cruel.

92. The Palestinian lost his land, his water resources and his freedom. Israel, with its inhuman practices, confiscated the essentials for the very existence of the Palestinians, but failed to kill the Palestinian will which is still strong and firm. Israel pursued the free spirits of Palestine and its thinkers all over the world. Its intelligence service murdered many Palestinian militants, such as Kamal Nasser, Mohamed Yussef El Nagar, Kamal Adwan and Ghassan Kanafany, in Beirut in the early 1970s. It is still pursuing its criminal methods. Today, Israel is still trying to destroy the national identity of the Palestinians, denying them their inalienable rights, and trying to liquidate them by terrorism.

93. When it occupied Lebanon, Israel detained 166 members of the staff of the United Nations, most of whom are still in Israeli prisons; thus it even disregards the safety of United Nations personnel.

94. A document dated 9 December 1982<sup>8</sup> contains evidence given by two medical doctors from Norway, Steinar Berge and Oyvind Moller, which proves that the cruel behaviour of the Israeli forces towards refugees from Palestine and Lebanese citizens in the south of Lebanon is beyond imagination. They spoke of their detention by Israeli authorities and about the inhuman treatment of prisoners by those authorities.

95. The absence of international deterrents allowed Israel to continue its aggression against and persecution of the unarmed Palestinian people. It exploited the explosive situation in the Middle East and tried to justify its aggressive policy. It tried also to undermine the collective international will and to divert the attention of the international community away from the cause of Palestine, which is the core of the conflict in this area. The policy of Israel in the region led to the escalation of tension and the continuation of trouble.

96. The policy of might and power will not endure for ever. There are more than 4 million Palestinians aspiring to return to their homeland, even despite severe hardship. There must be an immediate solution to the problem within the context of a comprehensive settlement of the question of Palestine, which is the core of the Middle East problem, instead of piecemeal solutions which lead only to an increase in the disputes between the Arab States and weaken their opposition to the Israeli occupation.

97. The peace initiatives require great determination by all parties, particularly Israel, which must acknowledge the right of Palestinians to self-determination. Then bridges of confidence and understanding can be established between Arabs and Jews and a real desire for coexistence will emerge. All this will lead away from the cycle of violence and death which is now the fate of the Palestinian people.

98. In the opinion of many reliable military institutes, Israel is today a strong military country; neo-colonialism is the Israeli colonialism in the region, as was mentioned in *The Economist*, which is why the United States should not provide Israel with lethal sophisticated weapons since this will help it to continue its occupation of the Arab lands. But I am confident that history is written by the movement of the peoples aspiring for justice, peace and love, and is not determined by the decisions of the racist leaders of Tel Aviv. We shall gain ground here in the General Assembly every day against zionism, its terrorism and its lies, and we shall gain greater understanding of the justice of the Palestinian cause, through the positive and fruitful process of our deliberations and discussions here in the United Nations.

99. The United Nations should restore its damaged prestige, and the Security Council should shoulder its full responsibilities. We would like to salute the Secretary-General for his initiatives and efforts to achieve a just and comprehensive peace. He has drawn the attention of the international community to the seriousness of this issue and the need to find a just and comprehensive solution. He also stated in his report on the work of the Organization [A/38/1] that the first step towards strengthening the United Nations would be a conscious recommitment to the Charter by all Governments, and that the problem of refugees can be resolved only with a settlement of the root political causes.

100. I am confident that the Palestinian people will remain firm and strong, despite all the schemes aimed at destroying its will. Its political foundation—represented by the PLO—is proof of the political achievements of the Palestinian people.

101. Mr. SAHNOUN (Algeria) (*interpretation from Arabic*): It is nearly a decade since the General Assembly determined to shoulder its responsibilities and break the guilty silence it had kept regarding the Palestinian tragedy by speaking out for the first time in favour of the restoration to the Palestinian people of its national rights, by certifying the PLO as that people's sole legitimate representative and by identifying the Palestinian question as the central element in any just and lasting settlement of the Middle East problem.

102. Since that historic return to legality and legitimacy, the General Assembly has continued, during its regular and special sessions, to reaffirm its unswerving commitment to restore to the Palestinian people its inalienable national rights.

103. But far from beginning a process leading to the restoration to the Palestinian people of its homeland and its freedom, we have been witnessing, in silent impotence, the accelerating deterioration of the situation and the unleashing of violence in that already sorely afflicted land of the Middle East, a situation brought about by war and colonization.

104. The occupation of Arab territories is being continued by the Israeli armed forces with cold determination and with complete impunity. After annexing Al Quds and the Syrian Golan Heights in an act of legal piracy almost without match in modern history, the Israeli leaders have continued, by the use of terror and multifarious subterfuges, to extend their seizure of Arab lands and resources and to carry out their plan to establish settlements, thereby defying the resolutions of the Security Council and reiterated condemnations on the part of the international community.

105. It is clear that the target—and the logical conclusion—of this illegal policy of rampant colonization can only be the final annexation and complete Judaization of the occupied Arab territories.

106. Did not the individual who a few months ago was guiding Israeli diplomacy state, in the *Jerusalem Post* of 3 March of this year, that Israel “did not conquer the territories from their legal owners, but liberated them from countries that conquered them in 1948. We have not ‘annexed’ them, and we shall not ‘annex’ them. They are part of *Eretz Yisrael*, and what is part of your country you do not annex”?

107. This desire to make the process of occupying Palestinian and Arab lands irreversible is coupled with the savage determination of the Zionist leaders to eliminate the Palestinian people, as has been eloquently attested to by the brutal oppression to which that people has been

victim in occupied Palestinian and the occupied Arab territories.

108. As stated in the report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories [A/38/409], the Arab populations in the occupied territories are subjected to a veritable régime of terror. Their rights and freedoms are daily trampled under foot, their goods and lands are confiscated for the most spurious reasons and their lives are in constant danger.

109. A climate of permanent violence and insecurity reigns today in the occupied territories, fostered not only by the Israeli occupying forces but also, and especially, by over-armed settlers who are subject to no authority but that of the terrorist and racist central Government. Encouraged by total impunity, these settlers set themselves up as the guardians of the Israeli order and step up their acts of violence and aggression against defenceless populations which, to escape the blind aggression launched against them, have no recourse but to flee and to go into exile.

110. The barbarous massacres at Sabra and Shatila which followed the invasion of Lebanon are a part of this deliberate policy of exterminating the Palestinian people even in the refugee camps where they had found asylum.

111. Such punishment could, furthermore, be repeated at any moment, so obvious is the determination of the Zionist occupier not to withdraw from southern Lebanon and to have done with the Palestinian people and its resistance.

112. It is clear that all the attempts to settle the Middle East problem have failed because they have obscured the key element of the problem: the Palestinian national reality.

113. Moreover, the General Assembly has had the opportunity to express its view on such partial agreements, and it has concluded that these are unacceptable, for peace in the Middle East must be a comprehensive peace.

114. I should recall here that any process intended to bring lasting peace to the Middle East which overlooks the Palestinian issue in its national aspect and its threefold claim of the right to return, the right to self-determination, and the right to independence, or which attempts to go forward without the Palestinian people and its sole legitimate representative, the PLO, cannot lead to a just and lasting solution and is thus doomed to failure.

115. The recent International Conference on the Question of Palestine, held at Geneva from 29 August to 7 September 1983, which was very timely in its reaffirmation of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, especially its right to establish a sovereign and independent State, also recalled the responsibility of the United Nations.

116. In this connection, together with the Conference and world public opinion, we appeal to and expect the Security Council to shoulder the responsibilities conferred upon it under the Charter, especially with regard to the implementation of all its resolutions and those of the General Assembly.

117. For its part, Algeria will continue to live up to its responsibilities and give its full support to the Palestinian people and to its resistance movement, the unity, independence and freedom of action of which must be safeguarded, for they are the best guarantee of the triumph of the Palestinian revolution.

*Mrs. Jones (Liberia), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

118. Mr. MANOLATOS (Greece): I have asked to speak in order to express the views of the 10 member

States of the European Community on the item before us.

119. Again this year, our debate takes place against a background of continuing upheavals and dangerous developments in the Middle East. One regrettable consequence of events in Lebanon has been to make progress towards settlement of the wider Middle East problem even more difficult. The Ten are deeply concerned by the hostilities taking place at present in northern Lebanon, notably in and around Tripoli, which cause intolerable suffering and considerable loss of human life, particularly among the civilian population of the region, both Palestinian and Lebanese. The Ten recall their statement of 9 November on the subject and urge the parties concerned to heed the call of the Security Council in its resolution 542 (1983) of 23 November to cease hostilities immediately and settle their differences exclusively by peaceful means and to refrain from the threat or use of force. The new outbreak of violence makes the urgent search for a negotiated solution to the problems of the region more necessary than ever. The need for a negotiated comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict is more pressing than ever.

120. The Ten continue to be deeply conscious of the importance that the problem of Palestine holds for the future peace and security of the Middle East. They firmly believe that a just solution of this problem is an essential element of any comprehensive peace settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. The Ten's commitment to the right of Israel to live in security and peace is fundamental and unwavering. In parallel, they further confirm that there can be no real peace or stability in the region unless the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people are recognized. In particular, self-determination for the Palestinian people, with all that this implies, remains a key issue which must be taken into account in the context of a comprehensive, just and durable settlement of the conflict. Thus, the essence of such a settlement must be the reconciliation of the State of Israel and the Palestinian people so that these two realities can live together in peace and security. A climate of confidence and understanding is an important element in the search for a comprehensive peace settlement. The Ten believe that such a climate can only be achieved by the parties concerned taking positive steps towards this goal, by ending acts of violence and by showing willingness to compromise.

121. The Ten have repeatedly stressed their conviction that Israel will not obtain the security to which it has a right by using force or creating *faits accomplis*. They further believe that Israel can find this security by applying the principles of a negotiated settlement and, in particular, by satisfying the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people. The Ten continue to believe that it is neither wise nor just for Israel to seek to deny another people the right it claims for itself. The Ten wish to see the Palestinian people in a position to pursue their demands by political means and desire that in achieving these demands account be taken of the need to recognize and respect the existence and security of all.

122. The Ten are convinced that negotiations are the key to the problem and that it is for the parties directly concerned to negotiate a lasting settlement. These negotiations will have to embrace all the parties concerned, including the Palestinian people, and the PLO will have to be involved in them. The Ten have demonstrated their willingness and resolve to work in a concrete way towards achieving such a solution. Their position was set out in the Venice declaration of 13 June 1980<sup>9</sup> and in the statements issued subsequently in Brussels, particularly those of 29 June 1982<sup>10</sup> and 20 September 1982.<sup>11</sup> The Ten will

continue to be active in their efforts to promote a peace settlement. The Ten will maintain and expand their contacts with all the parties concerned to help improve conditions for such negotiations.

123. A way to peace was indicated by President Reagan in his initiative on 1 September 1982<sup>12</sup> and by the Twelfth Arab Summit Conference, held at Fez, which demonstrated a readiness for it. The Ten appeal to all the parties in the conflict to move forward from the readiness for peace which all of them have expressed in the past towards mutual recognition as partners in genuine negotiations on the basis, *inter alia*, of Security Council resolution 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). The Ten recall in this context the French-Egyptian initiative in the Security Council.<sup>4</sup>

124. The Ten have repeatedly indicated the principles on which they base their position concerning the Arab territories occupied by Israel in 1967, in particular the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territories by war. The Ten reaffirm that until an end is put to the territorial occupation which Israel has maintained since 1967, within the framework of a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement, the provisions of the Hague Convention IV of 1907<sup>13</sup> and the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,<sup>14</sup> are applicable to all these territories. The Ten are deeply concerned because Israeli policies in the area have led to mounting tension and continued unrest. In particular, the Ten view with profound and increasing concern Israeli policies on settlements. They reaffirm their position that those settlements in the Arab territories occupied since 1967, as well as any changes in the status and demographic structure of those territories, are illegal under international law and constitute a growing obstacle to peace efforts. The continuation of this policy would only undermine the necessary basis for dialogue and trust, which are essential prerequisites for any constructive negotiation to reach a comprehensive peace settlement.

125. Moreover, the Ten reiterate that Israeli policy concerning East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights is contrary to international law and therefore invalid in their eyes. Furthermore, the Ten, in their statement of 19 June 1983 in Stuttgart, reaffirmed their serious concern at the distress of the Palestinian civilian population and expressed the hope that the relevant international organizations would be allowed to assist that population without hindrance [see A/38/297].

126. The Ten have given careful consideration to the report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/38/458. They take note of the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People [A/38/35]. The views of the Ten and such reservations as are maintained by them in regard to the Committee are well known. At the same time, the Ten appreciate the reference to their efforts which the Committee made in its report. The Ten have also noted, albeit with reservations, the final documents of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine.

127. Before concluding, I should like to reaffirm the Ten's support for the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. Recognition of these rights remains one of the fundamental principles to which I have referred and which, in the Ten's view, must underlie the search for a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement in the Middle East.

*The meeting rose at 5.15 p.m.*

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> *Report of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, Geneva, 29 August-7 September 1983* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.83.I.21).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, chap. I.

<sup>3</sup> *Official Records of the Security Council, Thirty-eighth Year, Supplement for July, August and September 1983*, document S/15895.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, *Thirty-seventh Year, Supplement for July, August and September 1982*, document S/15317.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, *Supplement for October, November and December 1982*, document S/15510.

<sup>6</sup> A/CONF.114/10.

<sup>7</sup> See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Second Session, Supplement No. 11*, vol. II, annex 19.

<sup>8</sup> A/37/705.

<sup>9</sup> See *Official Records of the Security Council, Thirty-fifth Year, Supplement for April, May and June 1980*, document S/14002.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, *Thirty-seventh Year, Supplement for July, August and September 1982*, document S/15265.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, document S/15421.

<sup>12</sup> See *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents*, Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1982, vol. 18, No. 35, p. 1081.

<sup>13</sup> See Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, *The Hague Conventions and Declarations of 1899 and 1907* (New York, Oxford University Press), 1915.

<sup>14</sup> United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, No. 973, p. 287.