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PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TWO THOUSAND  
EIGHT HUNDRED AND SIXTY-SEVENTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,  
on Friday, 9 June 1989, at 11 a.m.

President: Mr. PICKERING

(United States of America)

Members: Algeria  
Brazil  
Canada  
China  
Colombia  
Ethiopia  
Finland  
France  
Malaysia  
Nepal  
Senegal  
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics  
United Kingdom of Great Britain and  
Northern Ireland  
Yugoslavia

Mr. DJOUDI  
Mr. NOGUEIRA-BATISTA  
Mr. FORTIER  
Mr. YU Mengjia  
Mr. PEÑALOSA  
Mr. HAGOSS  
Mr. TORNUDD  
Mr. BLANC  
Mr. RAZALI  
Mr. RANA  
Mrs. DIALLO  
Mr. BELONOGOV  
  
Mr. BIRCH  
Mr. PEJIC

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The meeting was called to order at 11.25 a.m.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted.

THE SITUATION IN THE OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES

LETTER DATED 31 MAY 1989 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SUDAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL (S/20662)

The PRESIDENT: In accordance with the decisions taken at the previous meetings on this item, I invite the representatives of Afghanistan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Cuba, Democratic Yemen, Egypt, the German Democratic Republic, Israel, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mauritania, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Yemen and Zimbabwe to take the places reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber; I invite the Permanent Observer of Palestine to take a place at the Council table.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Roshan-Rawaan (Afghanistan), Mr. Al-Shakar (Bahrain), Mr. Mohiuddin (Bangladesh), Ms. Florez Prida (Cuba), Mr. Al-Alfi (Democratic Yemen), Mr. Badawi (Egypt), Mr. Kutschan (German Democratic Republic), Mr. Bein (Israel), Mr. Kagami (Japan), Mr. Salah (Jordan), Mr. Abulhasan (Kuwait), Mr. Treiki (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), Mr. Ould Mohamed Mahmoud (Mauritania), Mr. Shah Nawaz (Pakistan), Mr. Al-Kawari (Qatar), Mr. Shihabi (Saudi Arabia), Mr. Al-Masri (Syrian Arab Republic), Mr. Ghezal (Tunisia), Mr. Oudovenko (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic), Mr. Sallam (Yemen) and Mr. Tsokodayi (Zimbabwe) took the places reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber; Mr. Terzi (Palestine) took a place at the Council table.

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

Mr. BELONOGOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): I should like to take this opportunity to congratulate you, Sir, on your

(Mr. Belonogov, USSR)

assumption of the important post of President of the Security Council and to express my conviction that your professional experience and diplomatic abilities will enable you effectively to guide the work of the Council this month.

I should also like to express appreciation for your predecessor, Sir Crispin Tickell, Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom to the United Nations, for his great professionalism and his able guidance of the Council in May.

Today, we are all able to see how the general world trend towards establishing a new system of global and regional relations is gaining ground. One of its main distinguishing features is an increase in efforts by the United Nations to seek ways of unblocking conflict situations and finding practical settlements to them. At this important stage, no part of the world should be left out of this process of improvement in the international atmosphere. Unfortunately, there has been no real movement towards untying the Middle East knot - one of the oldest and most difficult. The fact that the key Palestinian problem remains unsolved has increased the suffering of the Palestinian people, and this requires immediate and effective peace-making efforts on the part of the international community.

The facts available to the United Nations, including those cited in the statement by Mr. Terzi, Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations, bear witness to a new escalation in the violence perpetrated by the Israeli occupying authorities against the civilian population, which has led to the death of a large number of Palestinians.

I shall not set forth the many illustrations and figures that are contained, inter alia, in Security Council document S/20668 of 2 June 1989. I would just like to draw attention to one fact that is particularly disturbing. I refer to the deliberate and carefully planned repressive actions of the occupying authorities, including actions against Palestinian youths. There is a growing number of victims

(Mr. Belonogov, USSR)

among Palestinian children. Schools in the West Bank are being closed. Clearly, that effort to create a fear complex among Palestinian youths is threatening the future of an entire generation.

(Mr. Belonogov, USSR)

No comment is required from me as to why that is being done.

In February this year the Security Council considered the situation in the West Bank and Gaza. Because of the negative position taken by one of its permanent members, however, it was not able to take a decision calling on Israel to halt illegal actions in that part of the world.

A little more than a month ago the widespread outrage of the international community was aroused by the violence in the Palestinian village of Nahhalin. The General Assembly, in its resolution 43/233, adopted by an overwhelming majority, once again condemned the policies and practices of Israel in the occupied territory, and requested the Security Council to consider with urgency the situation in the occupied Palestinian territory with a view to the adoption of measures needed to provide international protection to the Palestinian inhabitants.

It is our belief that the tragedy of the Palestinians is the tragedy of all the peoples living in the Middle East. A solution to it is to be found through a comprehensive settlement.

The Soviet delegation considers that favourable conditions have now been established in the region for movement towards peace. The broadest possible consensus has been reached on the core of the matter, through support for the convening of an international conference on the Middle East. Of course, it is no mere chance that there has been such movement in the mood of the international community. It is primarily the result of the fact that the Palestinian people on the West Bank of the River Jordan and in the Gaza Strip have stood so firmly and demonstrated such heroism. The courageous, peaceful uprising against the Israeli occupation has been continuing for more than a year. No less important is the fact that this intifadah enjoys the broad support of Arab peoples, the socialist and non-aligned States and world public opinion both in the East and in the West.

(Mr. Belonogov, USSR)

The shift to peace in the region is being facilitated also by the carefully balanced and constructive policy adopted by the Palestine Liberation Organization, which has given a real impetus to increased political activity around the problem of a settlement.

Against that background, the stumbling block is still the undeviating policy followed by Israel, which led the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev, to state the following in his message to King Hassan II of Morocco in connection with the emergency Arab summit meeting:

"Although the locomotive of a settlement has a full head of steam, it has not yet got under way".

Once again we call on the Government of Israel to reconsider its negative position and become involved in the international efforts to find a comprehensive settlement to the Middle East conflict, including the core of the matter: the question of Palestine.

An international conference on the Middle East, as a universal mechanism for unblocking the Arab-Israeli conflict, would make it possible to apply in practice the principle of ensuring a balance of interests of all parties by enabling the Palestinian people, like the people of Israel, to exercise its right to self-determination; returning to the Arabs their occupied land, on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973); and guaranteeing to all the peoples and Governments in the Middle East the opportunity to live in conditions of peace and security.

The Soviet proposals are well known to everyone. They are geared towards and based on constructive interaction with a view to the convening of the conference as soon as possible. A central place is given to the peace-making potential of the

(Mr. Belonogov, USSR)

Security Council. In that connection we have proposed, inter alia, that there should be a special meeting of the Security Council at the level of foreign ministers. That proposal is still before us. Also of importance could be multilateral and bilateral talks among the interested parties, carried on directly or indirectly through mediators. In calling on others to become involved in such talks, we for our part are trying to build up a broad and constructive exchange of views with all parties. In our view, it is important that the path towards a settlement should be constructed together, through collective actions, through dialogue and through the broadening of the area of mutual understanding.

The non-aligned countries members of the Security Council have submitted to us a draft resolution that takes account of the urgent need to adopt measures to halt the terror and the deportation of Palestinian civilians from the occupied territories, to ensure respect by Israel for the 1949 Geneva Convention and to protect Palestinian civilians in the occupied territories, including Jerusalem. The draft resolution is a humanitarian one; it is carefully balanced, and it is by way of a compromise.

The delegation of the Soviet Union supports this draft resolution.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. TORNUDD (Finland): May I first of all convey to you, Sir, the sincere congratulations of the delegation of Finland on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of June. We know that both your personal qualities and your experience make you eminently qualified to conduct the work of the Council, and we wish you every success in your task.

At the same time, I wish to extend my delegation's thanks to Sir Crispin Tickell, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom,

(Mr. Tornudd, Finland)

for his effective leadership as President of the Security Council during the month of May.

Discussions about the situation of the civilian population in the territories occupied by Israel tend to become repetitious. We have heard most of the arguments before. However, repetition or not, the situation must always be examined with seriousness and attention.

Apparently there is agreement between the Israeli authorities, the Palestinians and other interested parties on at least one thing: the continuation of the present situation is untenable; there must be a change.

The leaders of Israel will know from their own experience that suppression does not work against a people that is animated by a common purpose, a common national consciousness. Many of those who are taking part in the uprising against occupation were born under occupation. The self-esteem and determination of these young Palestinians have grown under pressure. Repressive measures have strengthened their spirit of resistance. The methods used so far by the occupying Power have therefore not succeeded in quenching the uprising. Nor is it realistic to expect that acts of defiance and protest will stop by themselves.



(Mr. Tornudd, Finland)

What is needed, therefore, is bold steps by the occupying Power. They are urgent, and they should show the way out of the present situation. In the first instance, the well-being and security of the population under occupation are at stake. At least indirectly, the moral and physical well-being of the whole people of Israel is at stake. The current policies and practices of Israel in the occupied territories do not go in the right direction.

Human rights belong to all, but in addition to the universal human rights there are specific principles regarding the protection of civilians under occupation. Ensuring full respect for these principles, as defined in the relevant Geneva Convention, is one of the necessary first steps.

Of course everybody understands that occupation will not end overnight. The Palestinians need opportunities and outlets for economic, educational, cultural and political activities even before the occupation ends. Israelis and Palestinians will always live as the closest neighbours of each other. To make bitterness, hate and hostility the dominating features of the national consciousness of the Palestinians is not in anybody's interest, least of all the interest of Israel. Violence from any quarter is unacceptable. However, the Palestinians should have positive incentives instead of having to face curfews, closed schools and bullets.

In this connection the role of the Israeli settlers in the occupied territories deserves special attention. We believe that the Israeli settlements in those territories are a clear violation of international law. As such they serve to increase tensions. As long as such settlements do exist, however, we would have expected the settlers to approach their Arab neighbours with humility and respect. It seems to us that the only attitude which could help to lay the basis for a better future in the long run is a sincere desire to build confidence and establish friendly co-operation between Israelis and Palestinians.

(Mr. Tornudd, Finland)

Various conceivable measures to provide international protection for Palestinian civilians under occupation have already been analysed in the Secretary-General's report that was submitted to the Security Council in January 1988. Their implementation seems to depend principally on the consent and collaboration of Israel, the occupying Power.

My country was not a member of the Security Council when the report was discussed, so I will take this opportunity to say that we endorse its conclusions and find them fully valid and applicable today. We hope in particular that the activities of the International Committee of the Red Cross and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East will be further supported and strengthened. We also believe it will be important to receive in the future additional reports by the Secretary-General on conditions in the occupied territories.

The aim must be to give Palestinians the means to express with dignity their own will to self-determination, thus taking the road towards the end of occupation and a just, durable and comprehensive settlement. Agreement on the principles for a comprehensive settlement is an early necessity. We believe that those principles include recognition of the right of all States in the region to live within secure and recognized borders and recognition of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination. An international conference under the auspices of the United Nations in which the Palestinians are fully represented still appears to be the best way in which to achieve a durable solution to the Middle East conflict.

The decisive factor would be the beginning of a process of negotiations without preconditions from any side.

We remain open as to the way of ensuring representative Palestinian participation in the peace process. Since there is no other organization enjoying wide support among the Palestinian population, it is evident that the Palestine

(Mr. Tornudd, Finland)

Liberation Organization will have to be represented. It should also be possible to consider complementary arrangements for electing representatives, for example through elections in the occupied territories, if that can be agreed upon between the parties concerned.

Let me emphasize once more that bold and innovative steps are needed now, in a situation which has only been worsening. We do not believe that the situation has to get worse in order to get better. Both Israelis and Palestinians must be offered new options, new directions, and we believe that leadership is possible.

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

Mr. BLANC (France) (interpretation from French): At the outset, on my own behalf and on behalf of my delegation, I should like to convey to you, Sir, our congratulations on the accession of the United States to the presidency of our Council for the month of June.

I would also avail myself of this opportunity to express our thanks to Sir Crispin Tickell, Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom, who presided over our work last month.

My country believes that the continuation of confrontations in the West Bank and Gaza, and the particular gravity of the most recent confrontations, are truly alarming. The repression conducted by the occupying forces in those territories, which has continued to take a large toll of victims including adolescents and young children, has been compounded in recent days by repeated attacks conducted by Israeli settlers against Palestinian villages. An escalation of the increasing violence, those attacks are particularly disturbing.

Our Council has not been able to express itself since 26 August 1988 on the tragic situation, albeit one that is known to all, that prevails in the occupied territories. But the Council cannot remain indifferent to these events. France,

(Mr. Blanc, France)

for its part, has consistently condemned the violence, which can only aggravate resentment and despair among populations that are destined to live together. The French authorities have repeatedly approached the Israeli authorities, as well as various forums, including this Council, to call upon Israel urgently to reconsider its policy in the occupied territories and to comply with the Fourth Geneva Convention, which places upon it the obligation as an occupying Power to provide protection and security for the populations of those territories.

It is high time to stop the confrontations, to ease the tensions and finally to allow dialogue and negotiation to prevail.

Promising signs have appeared in recent months. We should welcome that, and promote the trend. It is only through mutual recognition of their respective rights and aspirations that Palestinians and Israelis will be able to lay the foundations for a real and lasting peace. That peace must ensure the right of Israel to live within secure and recognized boundaries and the right of the Palestinians to have a homeland in which they may build the society they choose.

For its part, as everyone knows, France spares no effort to foster progress towards a settlement based upon those principles.

(Mr. Blanc, France)

The international community has responsibilities in this respect. It must take stock of those responsibilities and live up to them. More than ever it is necessary for the permanent members of the Security Council, with the parties directly concerned, to begin laying the groundwork for an international peace conference that will deal with all aspects of the conflict - a conference in which all parties will be invited to participate.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of France for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. BIRCH (United Kingdom): It is a great pleasure for my delegation, Sir, to see you as President of the Council this month. Your wisdom and your knowledge of the problems before us will be of great value to the Council and we look forward to working with you.

It was only a few months ago, in February, that we had an exhaustive debate on the occupied territories. It is a matter of great sadness to us that the situation on the ground has shown no improvement and that we are again compelled to consider the plight of the Palestinian population.

My Government of course supports all moves towards an early negotiated solution to the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians as part of a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the Arab-Israel conflict.

We all know the dangers of letting violence take its course, both in the occupied territories and in Israel itself. Violence begets violence. I was encouraged to hear the Permanent Representative of Israel repeat yesterday morning that his Government opposes all acts of violence and believes that no person, be he Jew or Arab, is entitled to take the law into his own hands.

The need is more urgent than ever for the two sides to come together in direct negotiations that will prepare the way for a comprehensive settlement. In this respect we welcome unequivocally the Palestine Liberation Organization's declared

(Mr. Birch, United Kingdom)

commitment to peace with Israel. The Israeli Government's recent proposals for elections in the occupied territories are also a useful step forward, though we stress the importance of a clear promise by Israel of progress towards negotiations and a solution based on territory for peace in fulfilment of the Council's resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). We think there have been some encouraging developments in the political field over the past six months, and we would like to see more urgent efforts to make use of these new opportunities. We continue meanwhile to make clear our grave concern at Israel's policies and practices in the occupied territories.

The Permanent Representative of Israel reminded us yesterday of the terrible cost in human lives, both Arab and Jewish, that this tragic conflict has brought over the years. To this must added the moral cost to Israel of practices in the occupied territories, which are so deeply deplored by the international community. They ill become a State that was founded, after so much suffering by its people, on humane and democratic principles. More and more people in Israel, and supporters of Israel around the world, are speaking out against the wrongs being done in the occupied territories. The representative of Israel described our proceedings in this Council as a "futile debate". That is a grave misreading of the international and humanitarian will.

Indeed, my delegation welcomes the fact that the Council has again been asked to consider the situation of the population of the occupied territories in the light of continuing actions by the occupying Power which have led not only to a heavy toll of deaths and injuries, but also to widespread economic and social hardship. I draw particular attention to the damaging effects of the blanket closure of schools, including primary schools, in the West Bank, which already has serious implications for the education for an entire generation of Palestinian

(Mr. Birch, United Kingdom)

children. A statement on this subject was made by the 12 Members of the European Community on 31 May.

My delegation welcomes the fact that speakers in this debate have concentrated on the need for measures to protect the population under occupation. We share their concern and hope the Council will consider urgently what action it could take.

At the same time, we call upon Israel, as a High Contracting Party to the Fourth Geneva Convention, to abide by its obligations as the occupying Power, including the obligation to treat the population of the territories humanely at all times.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the United Kingdom for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. FORTIER (Canada): As we enter another month of activity in the Security Council, allow me to begin my statement in this debate by congratulating you, Sir, on having assumed the presidency for the month of June. Your reputation as a skilful, experienced and dedicated diplomat has preceded your arrival in this forum. My delegation is convinced that your stewardship of the Council will be outstanding.

Allow me also to pay tribute to your predecessor, our colleague Sir Crispin Tickell, for his dedicated and most efficient service as President of the Council during the month of May.

The continuing violations of the human rights of the inhabitants of the occupied territories remain of great concern to the Government of Canada and the Canadian people. The information available to my Government indicates a new and possibly quite grave deterioration in the level of violence in the West Bank and Gaza. In Gaza especially, new measures to control the movement of individuals, including repeated curfews, have produced tinderbox conditions that an incident could ignite. In the West Bank, settler vigilantism threatens to degenerate into

(Mr. Fortier, Canada)

the large-scale bloodletting between civilians which has threatened in the past but which has so far been avoided.

My Government, which continues to be critical of numerous aspects of the policy attempting to repress the uprising in the occupied territories, commends the Israeli authorities for standing up to the vigilantes and urges them to continue with determination to prevent settler attacks against local populations.

Canada remains very much concerned with the prolonged closure of schools. Children in the occupied territories, including camps run by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), have been deprived now of a second scholastic year. Requests for the distribution of pedagogical material outside of schools have been denied. Schooling is essential to a sense of hopefulness about the future, and we renew the request, which we have made privately to the Israeli authorities, that decisions in this respect be reviewed as a matter of urgency.

In present conditions no single development could have a more significantly helpful impact than the application to the West Bank and Gaza of the Fourth Geneva Convention, which is that part of international law which applies to situations of military occupation. Recognition of the Convention and respect for its provisions are a required contribution to the establishment of a climate in which negotiations between the parties can produce early results.



(Mr. Fortier, Canada)

The statements by the Palestine National Council in November 1988, and subsequent statements by the Chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization, as well as the Government of Israel's proposal to hold free and fair elections in the occupied territories have, in the last seven months, given some hope that a peaceful solution to the Arab-Israeli dispute can be found on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). We hope that all the parties will use these positive developments to build common ground between themselves.

Canada fully supports all efforts to work towards building peace in that troubled region and, to that end, we firmly believe that all actions which we are in violation of human rights, or which do not contribute to building an atmosphere of mutual trust and goodwill, must be avoided. We hope that the debate we are holding in this forum will contribute to the cause of peace. My delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution, as amended, which is now before the Council.

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

Mr. YU Mengjia (China): Allow me first to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council. I am confident that the work of the Council this month will benefit from your diplomatic talent and rich experience and achieve positive results. I should also like to express my appreciation to Ambassador Crispin Tickell of the United Kingdom, whose skilful guidance enabled the Council to discharge its heavy workload last month.

Since the General Assembly considered the question of Palestine at its resumed session on 19 April last, there has been no improvement in the state of affairs in the occupied Palestinian territory. On the contrary, the situation there has continued to deteriorate. The Chinese delegation is of the view that the

(Mr. Yu Mengjia, China)

international community must not allow this grave situation to go on. General Assembly resolution 43/233, and other relevant resolutions, should be strictly carried out and necessary measures taken to protect the local Palestinian civilians and to make further efforts to solve the question of Palestine.

The United Nations and the Security Council have in recent years played an increasing role in settling regional disputes and safeguarding world peace. Similarly, they should make contributions to the settlement of the Palestine question. We believe that the convening of an international conference on the Middle East is an appropriate way to bring about such a settlement. This proposition is receiving support from more and more countries around the world. The recent Extraordinary Arab Summit Conference reiterated its endorsement of the convening of such a conference.

The Chinese delegation continues to believe that the way to relax tension in the occupied territory and protect the Palestinian civilians lies, in the final analysis, in Israeli withdrawal from the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied since 1967, and in the exercise by the Palestinian people of its right to self-determination. On this basis, all countries in the Middle East would enjoy the right to security and existence. We shall continue to do our part to bring about a just settlement to the Middle East question.

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

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

Mr. OULD MOHAMED MAHMOUD (Mauritania) (interpretation from French):

Allow me first to express to you, Sir, my warmest and most sincere congratulations on your assumption of the presidency of the Council this month. Your long diplomatic experience, your thorough knowledge of Middle East problems, and your human qualities, which I have had occasion to appreciate personally, are guarantees that under your presidency this lofty body has every chance of achieving its peaceful aims.

We also pay a tribute to your predecessor, Ambassador Crispin Tickell, for the able and clear-sighted manner in which he presided over the work of the Council last month.

Our appreciation goes as well to our distinguished Secretary-General for his tireless efforts in the cause of peace throughout the world, and particularly to alleviate the sufferings of the martyred Palestinian people.

The gravity of the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories today need hardly be stressed. The numerous reports of the Secretary-General, the tireless activity of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, and the recent report of the United States State Department on human rights violations in Palestine have greatly contributed to revealing the nature of the Israeli policy. They all impress upon us how imperative it is to bring an end to this intolerable situation. The last session of the General Assembly, through the virtually unanimous adoption of General Assembly resolution 43/176, confirmed once again that the most realistic and only acceptable way of achieving a settlement of the Middle East crisis, the core of which is the Palestinian problem, would be to convene without delay an international conference in which all parties directly concerned, including in particular the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), would participate on an equal footing.

(Mr. Ould Mohamed Mahmoud, Mauritania)

The intifadah, which began 18 months ago, represents the determined expression of a people resolved to recover its inalienable rights. Since its beginning the intifadah has amply demonstrated that neither blind repression nor deportations can stifle the will of the Palestinian people to recover its usurped rights.

The historic decisions of the Algiers meeting of the Palestine National Council of 15 November last, while embodying that aspiration, also provide a reasonable alternative to the current spiral of violence and repression. The moderation and sense of responsibility shown by the Palestinian leaders on that occasion clearly indicate the road to be followed. The entire world, with the exception of Israel, welcomed their decisions and initiatives.

It is in terms of that approach that the opening up of the American-Palestinian dialogue on 13 December 1988 represents an important and encouraging step forward. My Government welcomed the initiation of the dialogue at the time, entrusted on the American side to a seasoned diplomat whom we had the pleasure of knowing in Mauritania. We appreciate the determination of the United States to continue these meetings, which can only be beneficial. We are convinced that no initiative can be credible as long as one of the legitimate parties is disregarded, namely, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).

The Council is once again called upon to express itself on the deteriorating situation in occupied Palestine. Mauritania, which has never failed in its duty as regards its solidarity with the Palestinian people, sincerely hopes that the Security Council will take effective steps to halt the persistent massacres and the latest forms of repression, the desecration of the Holy Koran and the forcing of the Palestinians in the occupied territories to wear identification badges.

(Mr. Ould Mohamed Mahmoud, Mauritania)

The international community can no longer stand idly by watching the methodical genocide which for more than 40 years, at the rate of two or three deaths a day, has been aimed quite simply at eliminating an entire people. That would be all the more alarming since it now appears that it is no longer only Israeli soldiers who are shooting, but civilians as well.

The situation in Palestine and in the Middle East in general will remain unstable and dangerous until Israel's aggressive policies are brought to an end. By virtue of its special responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, the Security Council must take action.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Mauritania for the kind words he addressed to me.

It is my understanding that the Security Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that that is the case.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

Before putting the draft resolution to the vote I shall call on those members of the Council who wish to make statements before the voting.

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as representative of the United States.

The United States fully shares the concerns of other Council members over the situation in the occupied territories. We are deeply disturbed by the continuing violence there and the hardship this imposes on the local population. We deplore the bloodshed that has occurred in the occupied territories. We appeal again to all parties to refrain from acts of violence. We appeal in particular to the Government of Israel to utilize methods of maintaining order in the territories that do not result in unnecessary deaths and casualties or impose unacceptably high costs on the Palestinian population as a whole.

(The President)

The recent escalation in attacks by Israeli settlers against unarmed Palestinians is an especially disturbing development. So too is the increase in violence committed by Palestinians against other Palestinians suspected of co-operation with Israeli authorities. And we view with serious concern the recent increase in attempted cross-border raids by Palestinian groups.

Israelis and Palestinians alike must do their share to reduce tensions and to replace confrontation by political dialogue. As members of the Council are aware, the United States is engaged in active efforts to help bring that about. We seek an end to the violence not only to alleviate the human suffering but also to help create a climate in which a workable negotiating process can succeed. We remain convinced that the problem of the occupied territories can be resolved only through a negotiated settlement for a comprehensive peace based on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973).

In his 22 May address before the American-Israel Public Affairs Committee, Secretary of State Baker enunciated clearly the United States approach to the occupied territories and the broader Middle East peace process. He reaffirmed the basic principles guiding our policies in the region. With those principles in mind, our focus is on the pragmatic question of how to get such negotiations for a full peace under way. As a practical step in that direction we believe that free and fair elections in the occupied territories, grounded in a broader political process, provide a basis for moving ahead.

In that regard we have welcomed the initiative of the Israeli Government while acknowledging that much work needs to be done by Israelis and Palestinians to flesh it out and define the Israeli proposals, and to bridge the differences between Israel and the Arabs over how such elections would be conducted. We do not underestimate the difficulties involved in that process, but that should not deter us from trying. We see no other workable alternative.

(The President)

Over the years the United States has repeatedly urged that in addressing the Arab-Israeli problem the Security Council refrain from unhelpful, divisive, one-sided rhetoric. We have urged that instead the Council use its considerable authority to help reduce tensions and foster a spirit of accommodation and mutual trust in the region. We regret that, as on other occasions, the draft resolution now before the Council has again fallen short of that goal. My Government has carefully reviewed the draft resolution before the Council today and proposed changes to the text that we believed would have been constructive.

There is much in the draft resolution as submitted with which we agree. For example, we agree that the Geneva Convention of 1949 is applicable to the occupied territories, and we have repeatedly urged Israel as the occupying Power to abide by its responsibilities under that Convention. We have publicly condemned the actions of settlers taking the law into their own hands. Also, we have consistently stated our firm opposition to the deportation of Palestinians from the territories, a practice we believe is inconsistent with the Geneva Convention. Secretary Baker in his recent speech urged that schools in the occupied territories be reopened, as we have done numerous times in the past directly with the Government of Israel.

We cannot, however, support this draft resolution, because it contains other elements that are unacceptable. It is unbalanced in that it makes sweeping condemnations of Israeli policies and practice without any reference to any of the serious acts of violence by the other side. It appears to be oblivious of the political and security context in the occupied territories. Most specifically, the text does not condemn violence from all quarters; nor does it affirm that all parties have a responsibility to help reduce tensions. Such fundamental principles should be the basis for any official pronouncement on the situation in the occupied

(The President)

territories by the Council, which is charged under the Charter with maintaining international peace and security.

The United States takes seriously its responsibilities as a member of the Security Council. In considering this draft resolution I can assure you that we have been and are sensitive to the concerns of other members and of the international community over the troubled situation in the occupied territories. We appreciate the position of those who have helped to try to bring into this proposed resolution the key principles to which we have referred.

In determining our position, however, we must ask ourselves: Does the proposed Council action advance or detract from efforts to achieve peace in the region? Does it help to bring the parties together or does it deepen existing divisions? Does it enhance the role of the Council and the United Nations generally in the peace process? On balance, we must regretfully conclude that the draft resolution before the Council does not meet those key tests. The United States must therefore vote against it.



(The President)

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I shall now put the draft resolution (S/20677) to the vote.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour: Algeria, Brazil, Canada, China, Colombia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Malaysia, Nepal, Senegal, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Yugoslavia

Against: United States of America

The PRESIDENT: The result of the voting is as follows: 14 in favour and 1 against. The draft resolution has not been adopted, owing to the negative vote of a permanent member of the Security Council.

I shall now call on those members of the Council who wish to make statements after the voting.

Mr. BIRCH (United Kingdom): The draft resolution on which the Council has just taken a decision contains various language referring to Palestinian and other territory occupied by Israel. My delegation has made it clear on several previous occasions that its vote on draft resolutions containing such language should not be taken as implying any change in my Government's view as to the status of such territory. My Government will not necessarily explain its vote in this way in relation to future resolutions adopted by United Nations organs or specialized agencies containing the same or similar language, but the fact that it does not do so on any particular occasion should not be interpreted as indicating any change in my Government's position.

The PRESIDENT: The Permanent Observer of Palestine has asked to speak, and I call on him.

Mr. TERZI (Palestine): We are certain that all the members of the Council seated around the Council table take seriously their responsibilities here. That is why 14 voted in favour.

Let me first address the issue of the draft resolution. The representative of the United States claimed that he voted as he did because the action proposed was not balanced. I am looking at the draft resolution (S/20677) and trying to discover exactly what unbalanced action was requested. The only request for action is in paragraph 6, which

"Requests the Secretary-General to continue to monitor the situation in the occupied Palestinian territory by all means available to him, to make timely reports to the Council, including recommendations on ways and means to ensure respect for the Convention and protection of Palestinian civilians in the occupied territory, including Jerusalem".

Then, in paragraph 7, the draft resolution

"Requests the Secretary-General to submit ... such report no later than 23 June 1989".

Everyone has the right to his own opinion, but we perceive nothing unbalanced in the draft resolution.

The representative of the United States said that the United States Government wanted to see some action grounded in a broader political process. We welcome that. As a matter of fact, that is what we understand by the need to convene an international peace conference to address all aspects. That is why these meetings of the Council have focused on only one aspect - providing protection as a step towards the establishment of peace.

Naturally, any action would not be a matter simply between Israel and the Arabs. Something seems to have been forgotten. We are not talking about a local

(Mr. Terzi, Palestine)

population; we are talking about human beings who happen to be Palestinians. What we inferred from the statement of the United States was that it was concerned about the local population and about some agreement with the Arabs. We do not have a copy of that statement, but immediately we can say that the first and principal parties to the peace process are the Palestinians and the Israelis. The Palestinians have chosen the Palestine Liberation Organization to be their spokesman and the Israelis have chosen their Government to be their spokesman. So why raise obstacles?

The representative of the United States mentioned free elections. Is there not a contradiction between free elections and denial of the right to self-determination? How can the United States Government speak about free elections for a people which is a priori denied the right to self-determination? There must be some confusion in the minds of some people, but there is none in our minds.

Be that as it may, the United States has chosen to single itself out against the whole international community. We hope that protection will somehow be provided to the Palestinians.

Representatives have said that they appreciated what Israel was doing to prevent some elements taking the law into their own hands. Of course, we appreciate that, but was the declaration by the representative of Israel sufficient?

We are informed that on 6 June the President of Israel commuted the prison sentence of three Jewish underground members. Those settlers who had been sentenced to life imprisonment in 1985 for fatally shooting four Palestinians and committing other crimes had their sentences reduced to 10 years. The original sentences were life, then they were commuted to 24 years, more recently to 15 and now to 10. Those settlers had been found guilty of murder, attempted murder,

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illegal possession of weapons and membership of a terrorist organization, an organization that attacked the Islamic College in Hebron with machine-guns in 1984, killing four students and wounding more than 30 others. It is an organization that committed the crime of crippling two West Bank Arab mayors with car bombs in 1980, that planted bombs in 16 Arab buses in East Jerusalem and tried to destroy the Al-Aqsa Mosque on the Temple Mount.

It is no way to discourage such criminal acts by commuting their sentences to 24 years, 15 year and 10 years - and possibly on the next holiday, or something like that, releasing those concerned. When people take the law into their own hands the Government, the responsible people in Israel, must take action to prevent encouragement being given to the committing of further such criminal acts.

We are told not only about the President of the State but about how the courts react. We are told that a certain Hani al-Shami was trying to block soldiers from entering into his home in which stone-throwers were believed to have found shelter. According to the Israeli press, arrest for the purpose of interrogation would obviously have been in order, as would application of a reasonable degree of necessary physical coercion. Instead, according to the Jerusalem Post of 29 May, al-Shami received, first in his home and then in an IDF holding area inside a camp, a savage and prolonged beating on all parts of the body, to the results of which a physician, later a defendant in a court case, paid little heed and which led to his death. Those who were brought to trial were four soldiers and the doctor. They were all convicted, but what happened to them? Of course, there was an appeal, and the court acquitted them. Why? According to the court, it was because the judges maintained that they were acting under orders.

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My God, if everybody were to be acquitted because he had received orders to murder, what would have happened to the Nuremberg trials? The best excuse would have been: "I received orders to burn some and kill others". Since Nuremberg, at least, the "I-received-orders" defense has been no defense whatsoever. Thus, even the judiciary in Israel is collaborating to encourage such criminal acts. And yet, we are told that people are forbidden to take the law into their hands.

Reverting to the statement of the representative of the United States, we were told by him that his delegation had received a draft resolution and proposed some changes. We are aware of those changes and, to say the least, are shocked by them. We are shocked because the United States, for the first time, tried to remove the expression "including Jerusalem" from the reference to the territories occupied by Israel since 1967.

Has the United States changed its position concerning the status of Jerusalem? Perhaps it has: According to an agreement I have before me dated 18 January 1989, between the Government of the State of Israel and the Government of the United States, "the Government of the United States wishes to construct new diplomatic facilities in Jerusalem". That agreement, whereby the United States will establish diplomatic facilities in Jerusalem, was signed.

We are really concerned. Does the United States wish to establish its embassy in Jerusalem as of 1992, as that agreement says? If it is starting the process by eliminating reference to Jerusalem in the language of the draft resolution, then we have every good reason to believe that the United States is proceeding in that direction.

We regret very much that the Security Council has not succeeded in bringing the work that it has been undertaking for months and years to fruition. But we do

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believe that the debate will contribute to the cause of peace. It is not so much the resolution as the consciousness and goodwill expressed here that are greatly appreciated by our people.

The PRESIDENT: There are no further speakers. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on the agenda.

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.