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President: Mr. Indalecio LIEVANO (Colombia).

*In the absence of the President, Mr. Simbananiye
(Burundi), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

AGENDA ITEM 31

**Question of Palestine: report of the Committee on the
Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian
People (*continued*)***

1. Mr. JAMAL (Qatar) (*interpretation from Arabic*): First of all, I should like to express my thanks and appreciation to the Chairman and members of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People for the highly objective report on its study of the matter and its recommendations [A/33/35 and Corr.1/Rev.1]. I should like also to pay a tribute to the Secretary-General of the United Nations for his unflagging efforts in the service of the cause of peace in the world and of human rights based on justice and equality.

2. The whole world is unanimous on the need to reach a just and lasting solution of the Palestinian problem, which is the very core of the struggle in the Middle East. Failure on the part of the international community to arrive speedily at an equitable solution will certainly lead to dangers with consequences that go beyond the countries of the Middle East and affect huge areas of the world. Thus the whole of mankind would be in danger.

3. Despite the efforts of certain circles to ensure that it is viewed in a different way, the question of Palestine is above all a political problem, the solution of which is impossible without the participation of the Palestinians, through their legitimate representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization [PLO]. The question is not a regional matter between independent States, as Zionism would have us believe; it is not a purely humanitarian matter either, because this aspect of the question of Palestine cannot be dealt with permanently and authentically unless the whole matter is placed in its true context, which means putting an end to aggression itself.

4. Modern history has witnessed one of the most odious and violent forms of colonization, namely the expulsion of

an entire people from its homeland, the occupation of its territory, the erosion of its social identity and acts of oppression and crimes of mass annihilation against it. That is indeed the tragedy of the Palestinian people. The Zionist invasion is an occupation that has taken the most cruel form. The people of Palestine have been supplanted by people coming from various corners of the world who are united by colonizing interests and are motivated by an imperialist and racist movement—the Zionist movement—and are assisted by the resources made available to them by the countries that are the most powerful in the financial, political and information fields. This direct colonialism takes still another form, namely, aggressive expansion. In order to entrench itself, the Zionist occupation has deprived the Palestinian people of their heritage, has prevented them from being represented on the international scene and has broken the geographical, political, economic and social unity of the people, whom the Zionists have supplanted and upon whom they have sought to impose an incontrovertible fait accompli.

5. The Palestinian people, realizing that their cause is just, have rejected all attempts to confine this question to the purely humanitarian aspect. The Palestinian people, driven by the desire to recover their own land and decide their own destiny, have rejected all those conspiracies, because they are convinced that they cannot live happily except in their own land, Palestine.

6. Thanks to their constant and dedicated struggle, the Palestinian people have won recognition of their existence and their legitimate right to self-determination. In General Assembly resolutions 3375 (XXX) and 3376 (XXX) the United Nations has recognized the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, and has affirmed that the Middle East crisis cannot be resolved or a just and lasting peace established unless the Palestinians are allowed to exercise all their legitimate rights, including the right to self-determination, the right to return to their homes and the right to create their own independent State. There is no longer any doubt about the rights of the Palestinian people; the problem lies in the way in which those rights should be exercised. The General Assembly also adopted resolution 3236 (XXIX), in which it reaffirmed United Nations recognition of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. And by resolution 3376 (XXX) it established the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. That Committee in its report has affirmed that the question of Palestine is at the heart of the Middle East problem and that the problem cannot be resolved unless the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people are taken into account and the PLO is allowed to take part on an equal footing in any search for a just and comprehensive solution to the Middle East problem. Since the acquisition of land by force is for-

* Resumed from the 62nd meeting.

bidden, Israel must withdraw rapidly from all the territories it has been occupying.

7. The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People has recognized that those are the essential and indispensable principles on which a solution of the Palestinian problem and the realization of peace in the Middle East must be based. The Committee has adopted a programme of action to give effect to those principles without any complications.

8. By virtue of the fundamental principles of modern international law, all members of the international community must strive to protect international peace and security, settle international disputes by peaceful means, refrain from using force against the territorial integrity and independence of any other State, respect international laws and custom and ensure that the United Nations and its Charter serve as a basis for the co-ordination of the activities of nations and the settlement of disputes within the framework of the common international objectives of mankind. It is essential that the objectives of the international Organization are respected. These are the principles which must prevail in the international community. However, Israel has violated all these human, ethical and legal international principles.

9. Israel was founded on aggression, and aggressiveness is in fact its salient feature. Israel was created on land on which a people, the Palestinian Arab people, had been living for centuries. Israel carried out a terrorist plan to evacuate the population of Palestine so as to be able to seize the territory, with unlimited support and assistance from the forces of imperialism and neo-colonialism, in order to achieve its expansionist aims to the detriment of the Palestinian and other Arab peoples.

10. In 1948, thanks to terrorism and to material and moral assistance from imperialism, Israel was able to usurp a land inhabited by an overwhelming Arab majority, a land which extended beyond the frontiers laid down in the 1947 partition resolution of the General Assembly. In 1956, Israel, with the support of the traditional forces of imperialism, unleashed a tripartite aggression against Egypt. In 1967, in accordance with a premeditated plan, Israel occupied the remaining territory of Palestine as well as Syrian and Egyptian territories.

11. The State of Israel, which was created by the United Nations in 1948, spread itself over large areas of Palestinian Arab land and became a Member of the United Nations in less than a year. Nevertheless, its admission was made contingent on its respect for the Charter and the resolutions of the United Nations. But Israel, in defiance of the United Nations and its resolutions, succeeded in the space of 20 years in increasing its territory sevenfold through a policy of aggression and expansion at the expense of the Arab nation. Israel defied the various United Nations resolutions by doubling its population through the admission of Jewish immigrants coming from all corners of the world, with the result that its population as a whole increased fivefold at the expense of the Palestinian people and other Arab peoples. Israel refused to allow the return of the Palestinians despite the United Nations resolutions in defiance of the General Assembly and the Security Council.

12. Israeli practices conducted against the Palestinian people both within and outside the occupied territories include annexing their land, evacuating their inhabitants and despoiling them of their property and their houses, practising a policy of genocide and repression, blowing up their houses and their villages, and imposing upon them collective sanctions that are degrading to human beings. This is a flagrant violation of the resolutions of the United Nations, of The Hague Convention of 1907 respecting the Laws and Customs of War on Land,¹ the 1949 Geneva Conventions, and of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which provide for international sanctions and define the obligations incumbent on the occupation authorities as well as the rights of the civilian population in occupied territories.

13. Israel's continued defiance of the United Nations and its resolutions and its disregard of the efforts made to establish peace and its obstinate pursuit of the policy of occupation and aggression pose a threat to world peace. Israel is constantly committing crimes against the Arab people: genocide, torture and the annexation of territories which belonged to the indigenous population. All these acts are war crimes as described by article 46 of the Hague Convention and article 6 of the Charter of the International Military Tribunal at Nürnberg.²

14. In 30 years the United Nations has proved unable to defend the law and to restore the rights and protect the integrity and security of the Palestinian people and their right to self-determination in their own land, although the United Nations is responsible for international peace and security. But this does not mean that human values are to be sacrificed and that a people can be subjected to colonialism and aggression. International law recognizes that peoples and States have the right to self-defence, to the recovery of their legitimate rights, to self-determination, independence and sovereignty.

15. In today's world my country realizes that all peoples who cherish peace and justice must join their efforts in order to put an end to a situation which is of such danger to mankind and which could give rise to bloodshed and destructive war. The peoples of the world must strive to establish a just peace in the Middle East; and give their support to the Palestinian people in their struggle against repression and injustice so as to put an end to their sufferings.

16. No approach to peace can possibly achieve success unless the United Nations and the international community shoulder their responsibilities in the face of the injustice inflicted on the oppressed peoples and unless they act to enable those peoples to recover their legitimate rights.

17. Peace in the Middle East cannot be attained without the withdrawal of Israeli forces from all the occupied Arab territories and respect for all the legitimate national and inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including the rights to return, to self-determination, to sovereignty,

¹ Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, *The Hague Conventions and Declarations of 1899 and 1907* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1915).

² See United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 82, No. 251, p. 279.

to independence and to the establishment of their independent State in Palestine.

18. The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People is today observing an International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. On this occasion, I should like to quote an extract from the message addressed by Sheikh Khalifa bin Hamad Al-Thani, Emir of Qatar, to the Committee:

“The purpose of the observance of 29 November of each year as the annual day for the expression of international solidarity with the Palestinian People is to remind the international community that aggression unprecedented in history with regard to the unparalleled injustice which it inflicts on a whole people is still . . . oppressing members of this people . . . Our greatest hope, therefore, is that this reminder will convince the leaders of the world that the time has really come for their duty of solidarity with the Palestinian people to take the form of the adoption of positive and effective positions which they should assume in order to achieve the legitimate rights of this people, which they have been supporting within our supreme international Organization, through the adoption of its resolutions on the question. . . .” [See A/33/407, annex.]

19. Mr. ASHTAL (Democratic Yemen): It is highly significant that for the first time this twenty-ninth day of November is being observed as the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. Since the brutal partition of Palestine, the Zionists have vainly tried not only to break the will of the Palestinian people, their will to resist Zionist colonialism, but indeed to deny their very national existence and their national identity.

20. Three decades ago, in the heyday of imperialist hegemony, the Palestinian people had but few friends. Today the international community overwhelmingly supports the Palestinian cause for national self-determination and statehood.

21. Three decades ago the Arab countries were mostly under colonial domination, divided and weak. Today they jointly constitute a formidable power against Zionist occupation and aggression, notwithstanding the Camp David agreements.³

22. Despite their heroic uprisings and their resistance to Zionist occupation, the Palestinian people then lacked coherent and internationally recognized national leadership. Today the PLO is the uncontested leader and sole representative of the Palestinian people. It is recognized and indeed supported by the League of Arab States, the Islamic Conference, the Organization of African Unity [OAU], the non-aligned movement and the United Nations. Moreover, the PLO is actively supported by all the socialist and progressive States and forces.

23. Is it not ironic that the Camp David agreements, which undermine the national rights of the Palestinian people,

have come at a time when support for the Palestinian cause is so overwhelming and when the Arab States seem more capable, more effective and more willing to join hands and jointly channel their resources for the liberation of the occupied Arab territories and the establishment of a sovereign Palestinian State?

24. William Porter, who was recently the Ambassador of the United States to Saudi Arabia, wrote in an article published yesterday in the *Christian Science Monitor* that:

“A reading of the documents released after the Summit would surely convince most people, now that the euphoria sponsored by the Administration and the TV media has faded, that expediency influenced much of the drafting at the time. In actual fact Camp David was simply an agreement to negotiate on a narrow set of issues.”

25. As far as we can see, the Camp David agreements represent a very serious political development which negatively affects the Palestinian people and their cause, because, while claiming to defend the rights of the Palestinian people and to seek a comprehensive settlement, President El-Sadat of Egypt undermined those rights in the search for a political settlement that would bring into focus a new imperialist regional alliance baptized at Camp David. It is indeed ironic that President El-Sadat himself, in addressing the latest, thirteenth, session of the Palestine National Council, declared that:

“The Palestinian people is the sole decision-maker with respect to anything that concerns its destiny.

“No one, whoever he may be, may exercise a trusteeship over or impose his will upon the Palestinian people, for a decision which does not emanate from free will is devoid of its very essence.

“We in Egypt insist that the Palestinians shall remain sovereign and independent, free from bondage and interference. We equally insist that all the decisions that will have been generated be fully respected, foremost among which is the decision to designate the Palestine Liberation Organization as its sole legitimate representative, the defender of its rights and interests.”

26. The Camp David agreements deal with the question of Palestine, not as a national question of a people struggling for self-determination, but as a problem of inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza, and, ironically, it was President El-Sadat himself who designated himself the spokesman for those inhabitants.

27. But, Camp David or not, the Palestinian struggle will go on, and the Arab masses, including the heroic people of Egypt, will fight until victory.

28. Mr. MARTYNENKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) (*interpretation from Russian*): The Palestinian question continues to be the most complex of all the unresolved problems of the Middle East as a result of the expansionist, aggressive policies of Israel and its protectors and their stubborn refusal to resolve the Palestine problem fairly. That is one of the main reasons for the absence of

³ A Framework for Peace in the Middle East, Agreed at Camp David, and Framework for the Conclusion of a Peace Treaty between Egypt and Israel, signed at Washington on 17 September 1978.

peace in the Middle East and one of the main obstacles on the path to normalization of the situation in the world as a whole.

29. By ignoring the resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council Tel Aviv continues the policy of annexation and colonization of Arab territories, including the lands of the Palestinians. The Palestinian people, as before, are stubbornly being denied the exercise of their basic national rights. Moreover, the aggressor is carrying out a policy of genocide against that people.

30. That is why an immediate and just settlement in the Middle East is so necessary, a settlement that would duly take into account the legitimate rights and aspirations of all the peoples of the region, including the legitimate rights and interests of the Arab people of Palestine. In the struggle for exercise of their inalienable rights and the right to establish their own national homeland and independent sovereign State, the Palestinian people have made and continue to make great human and material sacrifices.

31. An important political success won by the struggling people of Palestine is the broad international recognition being given the PLO as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. A significant contribution to that recognition was the adoption by the United Nations General Assembly in 1974 of its resolution 3236 (XXIX), which recognized the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including its right to self-determination. In the strengthening of the struggle of the Arab peoples of Palestine against imperialism and Israeli aggression an important part has been and is being played by the broadening of co-operation between the PLO and the forces of progress, freedom and socialism throughout the world.

32. Imperialist and Zionist circles, understanding that the struggle of the Arab people of Palestine for the exercise of their inalienable rights is the main obstacle to the pursuit of their aggressive intentions in the Middle East, continue to conduct a policy aimed at liquidating the Palestine resistance. They are trying to kindle differences among Arab States in order to split them and to isolate them from each other and from their allies. That is the objective pursued by the policy of separate negotiations on the Middle East problem and the Camp David agreements. Through various manoeuvres their participants are endeavouring to divert efforts from cardinal decisions concerning the Palestine problem, to concentrate those efforts for a peaceful settlement in specific directions and to orient them towards separate deals so as to remove the Palestine problem from the settlement process and to exclude the PLO from any participation in a just and comprehensive settlement.

33. To divert attention, they are hawking various kinds of plans for "Palestinian autonomy" or "self-government" on the West Bank of the River Jordan. But such juggling with words like "autonomy" and "self-government" while Israel in fact maintains its occupation cannot really delude anyone or make anyone forget the real purposes of the occupation. As was so correctly emphasized by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq, Mr. Hammadi, the Camp David agreements are depriving the Palestinians of unity on and sovereignty over their territory and splitting them into two groups: the inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza on the one hand, and the refugees on the other.

34. That is why attempts like the so-called "settlement" of the Palestinian problem by seeking a "suitable homeland" for the Arab people of Palestine are unsound. As was emphasized at the Ninth Arab Summit Conference, held in Baghdad this month, the Palestinians have a homeland and a legitimate representative; the PLO. Therefore, a just and lasting peace in the Middle East can be achieved only by the complete and unconditional withdrawal of the Israeli forces from all the Arab territories occupied since 1967 and by enabling the Arab people of Palestine to exercise their legitimate and inalienable rights, including the right to self-determination and to establish their own, sovereign State, as well as the right of the refugees to return to their homes, in accordance with existing United Nations resolutions.

35. If the Palestinian problem is not settled in the interest of the Arab people of Palestine, there cannot be any question of a settlement of the Middle East problem as a whole. Yet the separate agreements worked out at Camp David recognize neither the rights of the PLO nor the rights of the Palestinians to a national State. These separate deals therefore represent a very serious danger for the Arab people of Palestine, particularly in respect of their exercise of their inalienable rights, which have been recognized by the United Nations—that is, their right to self-determination and to establish their own State. Thus, the status of the Arab people of Palestine as refugees would be perpetuated. The aggressors and their protectors must finally understand that any so-called "settlement" that does not solve the problem of the exercise by the Palestinian people of their inalienable rights, including their right of self-determination and to return to their homeland, is completely unrealistic. Such a "settlement" would only encourage the aggressors and in fact defend the interests of the imperialist circles that are endeavouring to turn the Middle East into their own property as a strategic base and a base for oil. That, of course, is not in keeping with the objectives of establishing a lasting peace and security in the area. In fact, it is fraught with the danger of further military conflicts.

36. In the circumstances, the General Assembly must resolutely support the struggle of the Palestinian people for the exercise of their legal rights, including the right to the establishment of their own national homeland; their own State.

37. It is therefore necessary to reconvene the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East, with the full participation of all the interested parties, including the PLO as the only legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. Only through the participation of the PLO will it be possible to achieve a really fair and lasting settlement of the Palestinian problem, a settlement that could form the basis for lasting peace in the region.

38. It is perfectly clear that, as has already been stated during this debate, the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East must not be used as a cover-up for any separate deals that would be detrimental to a just solution of the Middle East problem.

39. The delegation of the Ukrainian SSR supports the recommendations of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. Those recom-

mentations point out the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force and demand Israel's immediate and total withdrawal from all the territories occupied in 1967. They recognize the need for the immediate implementation of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to self-determination and to the establishment of a national, sovereign State. To disregard these recommendations would be to complicate still further the already explosive situation in the Middle East.

40. An important recommendation of the Committee is the following:

"The participation of the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people, on an equal footing with other parties, on the basis of General Assembly resolutions 3236 (XXIX) and 3375 (XXX), is indispensable in all efforts, deliberations and conferences on the Middle East which are held under the auspices of the United Nations." [A/33/35 and Corr.1/Rev.1, para. 61.]

That recommendation reflects the world-wide recognition of the necessity for the equal participation of the PLO in the work of the Geneva Peace Conference.

41. As is stressed in the recommendations of the Committee, the implementation of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people "will contribute decisively to a comprehensive and final settlement of the Middle East crisis" [*ibid.*, para. 60], for "no solution in the Middle East can be envisaged which does not fully take into account the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people" [*ibid.*, para. 59].

42. We believe that ensuring the legitimate national rights of the Arab people of Palestine, including their right to self-determination, to establish their own State and to return to their homeland in accordance with United Nations decisions must be an integral part of any comprehensive settlement in the Middle East.

43. The liquidation of dangerous hotbeds of war in that region and a just settlement of the Palestinian problem on the basis of the implementation of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people are tasks that deserve the greatest priority on the part of the United Nations and all its Members desirous of strengthening international peace and security. That would be in the interests of all States of the region and of the entire world.

44. Today we are observing, under the aegis of the United Nations, the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. That convincingly shows that all the progressive and democratic forces on our planet, all the people of goodwill, support the just struggle of the Arab people of Palestine and demand the immediate implementation of their inalienable rights.

45. The delegation of the Ukrainian SSR wishes to extend a warm welcome, from this rostrum, to the PLO at this thirty-third session of the General Assembly. We also greet the heroic Palestinian people on this important day and wish them success in their struggle for the exercise of their inalienable rights.

46. Mr. SOUTHICHAK (Lao People's Democratic Republic) (*interpretation from French*): The debate in the General Assembly on the question of Palestine is of decisive importance this year because of what has happened since the Assembly considered the question at its thirty-second session. These events, which have borne witness to the worsening of the situation in the Middle East, have resulted from the obstinacy of Israel, which continues to occupy illegally the Arab territories and Palestine and refuses to apply any of the decisions adopted by this Organization on the question of the Middle East and Palestine. Worse still, taking advantage of the impotence of the Security Council with respect to agreeing on the positive measures recommended by the General Assembly on the basis of the recommendations of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, Israel has stepped up its acts of brutal repression and aggression against the Palestinian people, with a view to liquidating forever the militant spirit of that people in its struggle to achieve the exercise of their right to self-determination and national sovereignty.

47. To achieve their sinister aims, the aggressive, expansionist Israeli forces have not hesitated even to commit barbarous crimes against the peaceful people of Lebanon; last March they invaded and occupied the southern part of Lebanon's territory, trampling under foot the principles of the United Nations Charter and the fundamental rules of international law. By this wholly wanton act of aggression against Lebanon, Israel has once again revealed its true features as an aggressor and expansionist country; it has revealed its true danger not only to peace and security in the Middle East, but also to peace and security throughout the world.

48. Thus, each passing year provides fresh irrefutable proof of the aggressive and expansionist nature of Israel, which, in its intransigence and constant defiance of the United Nations, is matched only by South Africa, which for all those reasons has long been excluded from the work of this Organization. Indeed, might not the time have come for Israel—which, it is worth recalling, even more than South Africa owes its very birth to the United Nations—to follow the same path?

49. The events of the past year have confirmed more emphatically than ever that the question of Palestine is at the very heart of the Middle East conflict. They have also confirmed the urgent need for the international community to find an effective, just and equitable solution of the problem of Palestine if a lasting peace in the Middle East is desired.

50. In this context, one can only keenly deplore the attempts that, however one may wish to describe them, are designed to bring about a partial settlement of the problem. These attempts to conclude separate deals, far from making possible a lasting peace in the region, will only complicate the already tense situation prevailing there; they are conducive to the intrigues of imperialism and will undoubtedly serve the interests of Israel's expansionist aims.

51. Faced with these false and dangerous attempts, which have already led to certain compromises the scope of which is well known, my delegation reiterates its unswerving

support for the cause of the Palestinian people under the leadership of the PLO and fully subscribes to the conclusions of the recent Arab Summit Conference in Baghdad, which in our opinion provide a solid basis for concerted action on the part of the Arab countries to achieve final victory. Those conclusions condemn the stratagems of Israel and its imperialist protectors, which are striving to deny the PLO its character as the sole authentic and legitimate representative of the whole Palestinian people, as well as their cunning manoeuvres aimed at shattering Arab unity, and deplore the weakness of those who have joined forces with them in those sinister manoeuvres. My delegation is profoundly convinced that after 30 years of unbroken struggle, which has entailed great sacrifice and suffering, the Arab peoples will not allow themselves to be hoodwinked; they will prove capable of strengthening their cohesive force so as to thwart all the manoeuvres and intrigues of imperialism and its agents.

52. A just, equitable and lasting peace in the Middle East cannot be established without taking into account the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people as set out in resolution 3236 (XXIX) and the other relevant resolutions of the General Assembly. The taking into account of these rights certainly implies the active and effective participation of the PLO on an equal footing in all negotiations dealing with the settlement of the question of the Middle East and of Palestine, which should be conducted under the auspices of the United Nations within the framework of the appropriate machinery set up for the purpose, that is, the Geneva Conference. Any other approach would only further delay a solution of the problem and prolong needlessly the sufferings of the Palestinian people.

53. For more than 30 years that people has suffered hardship and humiliation of a kind no other people has ever known. Indeed, apart from the fact that they have been unjustly denied the exercise of their inalienable national rights, they have been savagely persecuted and evicted from their homeland, notwithstanding the express recommendations emanating from the decision to partition Palestine. The responsibility for these inhuman acts obviously lies with Israel, which, throughout the past 30 years, has followed a well-orchestrated programme of propaganda punctuated by premeditated and repeated wars of aggression designed to reduce the Palestinian people to the status of a second-class people in order to dominate them and subjugate them for ever. The responsibility also lies with the imperialist Powers which have constantly and unconditionally supported Israel in order to transform Palestine into a strongpoint for the extension of their influence and domination throughout the Middle East. The internal autonomy advocated in the Camp David agreement for the West Bank of the Jordan and the Gaza Strip bears eloquent testimony to this point.

54. Anxious to redress the grave injustice committed against Palestine and its people, the General Assembly, under the irresistible pressure of the forces of freedom and justice, adopted in 1974 resolution 3236 (XXIX), in which it reaffirms the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to self-determination and national independence and sovereignty and the right to return to their homes and property. In order to facilitate the implementation of that solution, the General Assembly, in

its resolution 3376 (XXX) the following year, set up the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and entrusted it with the task of studying and formulating a programme of implementation. That Committee, headed by Mr. Médoune Fall, the representative of Senegal—to whom my delegation wishes to reiterate its profound tribute for his hard work and lucid judgement—after a thorough study of the question of Palestine, presented to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session its first report,⁴ which contained a series of recommendations capable of giving effect immediately to the exercise of the rights of the Palestinian people. Those recommendations, which were endorsed by an overwhelming majority of members of the Assembly, were also approved by other eminent international political bodies, including the Conference of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Non-Aligned Countries in Belgrade in July 1978, the meeting of the Council of Ministers of the OAU in Khartoum in July 1978, and the Ninth Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers in Dakar in April 1978.

55. My delegation deplores the fact that those recommendations—which, as we have just pointed out, enjoy very wide and solid support—have not been implemented in any way because of the recalcitrance and intransigence of Israel and the highly negative attitude of its imperialist protectors. We are compelled to point out once again that it is high time for Israel, together with those which support it unconditionally, to face the facts and prove to the world that they are working through deeds as well as words for a true peace in the Middle East.

56. In any case, the international community cannot and must not continue to tolerate Israeli manoeuvres. In organizing international demonstrations to mark today, 29 November, as International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, the international community has decided to redouble its pressure on Israel so as to make it collaborate sincerely in the quest for a just and lasting solution of the Middle East conflict.

57. The delegation of the Lao People's Democratic Republic for its part is prepared to give firm support to any vigorous action aimed at achieving this objective and to bring about the triumph of the cause of the Palestinian people.

58. Mr. AL-MUBARAK (United Arab Emirates) (*interpretation from Arabic*): At the outset I wish to commend the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. This report is objective and impartial and reflects a full awareness of the responsibilities on the part of the members of that Committee, its Chairman, Mr. Fall, and its Rapporteur, Mr. Gauci, who made constant efforts to defend the rights of the Palestinian people.

59. Thirty years—which is approximately the age of this Organization—have elapsed, and still there has been no positive evolution in the Palestinian problem. No solution has been found that would put an end to 30 years of the killings, the oppression, the tortures, the displacements and

⁴ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-first Session, Supplement No. 35*.

all the other destruction carried out by Israel against the Palestinians and the other Arab people. During these 30 years Israel has waged fierce wars to realize its aggressive and expansionist policy which has enabled it to occupy an area 10 times as great as it had in 1947. Consequently, the number of the displaced Palestinians who are deprived of their land and possessions has now exceeded 3 million.

60. Numerous resolutions have been adopted demanding that Israel withdraw from the Arab territories occupied since 1967 and demanding that the legitimate right of the Palestinian people be recognized in regard to the creation of their own State in their own homeland and also their right to self-determination. The whole world is unanimous on the need to put an end to the injustice and to the tribulations of the Palestinian people, but Israel arrogantly and intransigently opposes the will of these people, treading underfoot all moral values, all human feelings, all rules and all laws. From this rostrum [26th meeting] the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Israel a while ago declared, speaking of the West Bank, that Samaria and Judaea are the very heart of his country. If Israel were permitted to do so, it would unleash a new war, and we would really no longer know where the heart of that country is. This proves the expansionist aspirations of Israel, which would certainly not be limited to Palestine alone.

61. - It is a flagrant and unprecedented act of defiance, when the same person states that Jerusalem is the eternal and only capital of Israel, whether or not others recognize it. Who are these others? They are in fact all the countries of the world, which have decided that Israel must withdraw from the occupied Arab territories.

62. On several occasions my delegation has affirmed that the question of Palestine is at the very heart of the problem of the Middle East and that it is impossible to find a settlement of the Israeli-Arab conflict without a comprehensive settlement of the Palestine question. The solution of this grave problem must be based on the following principles: first, the withdrawal of Israel from all the Arab lands occupied, including Jerusalem, and, secondly, the recognition of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including their rights to return to their country, self-determination, the establishment of an independent State and the full restoration of their sovereignty over their national territory. We are also convinced of the need for the participation of the PLO, which we consider to be the only legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, in any attempt to resolve this problem.

63. The Arab Summit Conference held in Baghdad has affirmed its rejection of the Camp David agreements, which disregard the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to self-determination, as provided for in the resolutions of the United Nations, and which divide the Palestinians into separate groups. They also ignore the question of the Arab city of Jerusalem and fail to ask Israel to abolish all the settlements it has created in occupied Arab territories; furthermore, they ignore the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. These agreements, moreover, contain no provision to the effect that Israel must withdraw from all the occupied Arab lands.

64. Finally, the armed struggle of the Palestinian people to recover their usurped rights is recognized as legitimate, as such rights have also been recognized as appertaining to other peoples that have been struggling or are now struggling to exercise their right to self-determination and independence and to liberate themselves from imperialism and foreign occupation. This right has been recognized by history. It has been recognized by international law and by numerous resolutions of the United Nations.

65. We wish to appeal to all the countries of the world to be firm and forceful in their support for justice and the just cause of the Palestinian people so as to enable them to exercise their legitimate rights. We also firmly believe that the United Nations must review the development of this problem in a very serious manner and adopt new and effective measures which would put into practice the numerous relevant resolutions aimed at establishing a just and lasting peace in that region. That is why we support the resolution that was adopted by the Conference of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Non-Aligned Countries, which contains a provision to the effect that a special session of the General Assembly should be convened to study the question of Palestine [see A/33/206, p. 133]. We wish also to appeal to the Security Council to revise its policy and to deal objectively with this problem so as to exercise its responsibilities with regard to the maintenance of international peace and security by adopting effective measures as provided for in the Charter in order to compel Israel to withdraw from all the occupied Arab territories and to recognize the inalienable legitimate rights of the Palestinian people.

66. Mr. ZAITON (Malaysia): The tragic plight of the Palestinian people has engaged the attention of this Assembly for almost three decades. During that period, the Palestinian people have gone through and are still going through the traumatic experience of statelessness, suffering and tribulation. They have for too long been denied their right to return to their homeland and to attain self-determination and independence. It is indeed unfortunate that this situation should be allowed to continue without a just solution being found which would restore to the Palestinian people their inalienable rights. Such a situation, indeed, is a constant reminder to us that war and peace in the Middle East hang on a thin thread and that, unless an urgent solution is found, the situation could trigger off another conflagration, bringing in its wake a threat to the very fabric of international peace and security.

67. The United Nations has long accepted its responsibility for seeking a just solution to the problem. That responsibility is already reflected in several resolutions, particularly General Assembly resolution 3376 (XXX), adopted on 10 November 1975, which established the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian people. That decision, in the view of my delegation, was indeed a step in the right direction. For the first time a mechanism was established under the aegis of the United Nations to define the rights of the Palestinian people, to create greater public awareness of their tragic plight and to promote the attainment of their rights by peaceful means within the framework of United Nations efforts to find a just and lasting solution to the problem. The Committee, in discharging its responsibilities, is fulfill-

ing a mandate sanctioned by this Assembly. It is inconceivable to my delegation, therefore, that this Committee should be the subject of criticism when it offers to the Palestinian people the best, if not the only, avenue by which they can hope to regain that inalienable right by peaceful means. The United Nations bears a primary responsibility for the problem of Palestine and it has a moral obligation to respond positively to the pleas of the Palestinian people and to help them in their just cause.

68. The Committee must therefore continue its work in order to contribute to a better and wider understanding of the problem and to the early implementation of its recommendations.

69. It is recognized by the international community that a solution to the whole Middle East problem hinges very much on a settlement of the Palestinian question. Undoubtedly it is the core of the whole problem. There can never be a just and lasting solution if the Palestinian people are not allowed to return to their homes and property and to exercise their right to self-determination and independence. Israel's intransigence and its refusal to withdraw from all occupied Arab territories constitute the main stumbling-block. Recent measures taken by Israel to consolidate its control of the occupied territories and to build new settlements are clearly provocative acts which can only make the solution of the problem more difficult. Certainly they cannot be condoned; nor can the acquisition of territory by force or by expansionism and annexation be accepted. It is incumbent upon Israel to co-operate by withdrawing from all occupied Arab territories. The reality of the situation is such that Israel must recognize that no solution will be viable if the Palestinian people are denied their inalienable rights. Annexation and occupation can never quell the indomitable spirit of people who, having undergone 30 years of misery and suffering, are determined to continue their struggle until they attain their just rights.

70. Today we commemorate the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. On this important occasion allow me to reiterate our firm and steadfast support for the Palestinian people in their struggle to attain their inalienable national rights.

71. Mr. HARRIMAN (Nigeria): From the Balfour Declaration in 1917 to the peak of the Palestinian nationalist revolt of 1936-1939 in Palestine, and from the Arab-Israeli war of 1948 to the fourth war in October 1973, one fact sticks out and remains immutable: the conflict in the Middle East has been, and will always be until the day it is settled, a struggle by the Arab people for their national rights of statehood, independence, self-determination, freedom and dignity.

72. These rights have been recognized, in principle, since the turn of the century—and this was especially the case at the Paris Peace Conference of 1919 following the end of the First World War—as being the inalienable rights of any and every people inhabiting the face of the globe.

73. My delegation is profoundly struck by the very hard fact that the struggle in Palestine has spanned over 60 years, yet the issue remains frustratingly unresolved. One could go through a long list of previous attempts to solve this

problem and still find it shockingly true that the White Papers and Peel Commissions of the Mandate era failed as totally and completely as did the mission of Count Folke Bernadotte. The problem has stubbornly resisted any solution in spite of a preponderant quantum of United Nations resolutions, a welter of American mediation efforts and four devastating wars.

74. During all these years the most crucial and persistent of stumbling-blocks in the search for peace in the Middle East, in the view of my delegation, has been the insistence since 1917 by one people in Palestine that it wished to be independent only at the cost of denying another people its independence. We are confronted equally by the nagging problem posed to the international community by the very same people, who wish to have a State in Palestine only at the cost of keeping the Arab Palestinians stateless, and by the fact that the same people wish to be free and sovereign only at the cost of subjugating their Palestinian neighbours.

75. Israel's insistence on these impossible and historically untenable conditions has never wavered. Consequently from the outset two opposed and opposing forces have been pitted against each other in perpetual and fierce confrontation, and a chasm has been created between them that is very distinct to this day. So long as this dichotomy exists between Israel and the dispossessed Palestinian Arabs, creating occupiers and occupied, and so long as the Palestinian Arabs are denied the right to explore freely their sense of statehood, we will have, by the compelling laws of nature, politics, and history, two forces in constant conflict. This, in a nutshell, has been the sad, but explosive fact of life in Palestine since 1948, and very starkly and glaringly since 1967.

76. Israelis may endeavour to overshadow this by constantly justifying their current reprehensible policies of occupation by invoking Israel's so-called security needs. Indeed, they have harped on such slogans as "biblical Israel" as part of an ongoing emotional build-up calculated to sustain the sympathy of their Western friends aroused first by the degradations and atrocities they suffered under the Nazis. And they may keep the world occupied with side issues relating to "recognition", United Nations peace-keeping forces, security guarantees, and so on. But the basic facts at the core of the conflict speak for themselves as eloquently today as they have done all these years. The two main issues in the Arab-Israeli dispute—that is to say, the national issue of Palestinian rights and the regional issue of the presence of foreign settler occupation forces on Arab lands—remain unsolved and unresolved because of Israeli intransigence and military arrogance.

77. The question of Palestine had from the very inception of the United Nations been discussed within the wider context of the situation in the Middle East. If the General Assembly, in its wisdom, decided to discuss this issue as a separate item in 1974, to grant the PLO observer status within the United Nations, and to create, within one year, a Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, it was in recognition of the central position of the Palestinian question in the continuing crisis in the Middle East.

78. Though the United Nations agreed to admit Israel to this international body as a Member State, it made its

admission contingent on Israel's compliance with the United Nations resolution of that year calling for the repatriation of Palestinian refugees expelled from their homes. Israel then signed the Lausanne Protocol,⁵ pledging to adhere to the United Nations request. We now know, of course, that Israel reneged on its pledge, as it subsequently was to renege on other pledges signed by it as a State Member of this Organization. What Israel does not realize—or, if it does realize it, it is implacably insensitive to it in its wider implications—is the fact that by its persistent defiance of United Nations resolutions it is indirectly casting doubt on the legality of its own admission and its claims to any statehood of its own.

79. It is not my intention to go into the substance of the policies of persecution and repression which have come to characterize the Israeli military administration in the occupied Arab lands. But one aspect of such reprehensible policies is already fast compounding the bitterness of the Palestinians against the Israeli occupation forces—and rightly so. This is the callous, systematic eviction of Palestinians from their homes and land, which cuts them off from their sources of livelihood and, by one stroke, transforms them into refugees in their own homeland.

80. The confiscation of Arab land and property dates back to the earliest days of the foundation of the Jewish State. Under the so-called Absentee Property Law, all lands and properties belonging to Palestinians who were fleeing the area of conflict in the first Arab-Israeli war and who temporarily sought refuge in the surrounding countries were seized and taken over by the usurping State. This blatant land grab was not confined to "absentees" but, by virtue of a hastily introduced series of laws, even to "present absentees". This category included Palestinians who were very much present in the country, and did not leave in 1948, but who happened to be absent from their towns, villages and farms on a certain date.

81. The recent declarations and actions of the Government of Israel have, unfortunately, not mitigated the expansionist impression created by Israel. In this connexion, the statements made by Moshe Dayan, the Israeli Foreign Minister, here in the General Assembly during the current session [26th meeting] and another made by Prime Minister Begin last month to the effect that Israel has an omnipresent right to settle anywhere in the occupied territories are cases in point.

82. The confiscation of the Arab property deserted by Palestinians fleeing from the cross-fire during the Middle East wars has gone on apace, just as Israel's brazen refusal to dismantle existing settlements has stiffened. The occupation of vast areas of the West Bank and Gaza—since renamed Judaea and Samaria—in flagrant violation of all known norms of legal and constitutional propriety, has further strengthened our conviction of the existence of an Israeli grand design of expansion into all possible Arab territory. The strategy is to create as many faits accomplis as possible to pave the way for an acquiescence by the international community in such blatant acquisition of territory by force and aggression in our day.

83. The cumulative effect of these illegal activities in the occupied territories is the aggravation of the continuing hardship of the Arab population. We have yet to see one single Palestinian Arab in these territories who has not been touched by Israeli expansionist policies or whose life has not been adversely affected by Israeli military occupation.

84. But, then, the unjust seizure of their lands and the socio-economic disaster unleashed on the Arabs by such acts on the part of the occupation forces and authorities are but one facet of the unfolding Palestinian tragedy. Arabs have been subjected to arbitrary arrests and held for long periods without charge by the occupation authorities. As mere suspects, they have been tortured during interrogation and have suffered even worse physical disabilities after their incarceration. The plight of the Palestinian Arab is one that would have touched even a heart made of stone. It is therefore incomprehensible that Jews who were themselves victims of the greatest pogrom of recent times, unleashed by the Nazi racist extremism, should now be seen as the tough conquerors and occupation authorities in part of the Middle East.

85. My delegation welcomes all initiatives in the direction of peace; but, whatever we do, we should be clear in our minds as to the nature of the final objective and goals we set for ourselves in our search for a solution of the Palestinian problem.

86. For the purpose of clarity my delegation would like to reiterate some of the fundamental principles relating to the question of Palestine, as adopted by the General Assembly at its thirty-first session. Among the most important of those principles we should like to recall the following. First, the question of Palestine is at the heart of the Middle East problem and, consequently, no solution in the Middle East can be envisaged which does not fully take into account the interests of all the Palestinian people. Secondly, the full implementation of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to return to their homes and property and to achieve self-determination, national independence and sovereignty will contribute decisively to a comprehensive and final settlement of the Middle East crisis. Thirdly, the participation of the PLO, the representative of the Palestinian people, on an equal footing with other parties, on the basis of General Assembly resolutions 3236 (XXIX) and 3375 (XXX), is indispensable in all efforts, deliberations and conferences on the Middle East which are held under the auspices of the United Nations. And, fourthly, the acquisition of territory by force is inadmissible and, consequently, Israel is obliged completely and speedily to evacuate any territory so acquired.

87. The United Nations has an abiding responsibility to ensure that any solution of the Palestinian question takes those fundamental issues into account, if it is to avoid a distorted peace which will merely achieve a limited respite today only to pave the way for a more serious conflagration tomorrow.

88. In this connexion, the Security Council, as mankind's custodian of international peace and security, should as a matter of urgency demand the immediate implementation of its resolution 237 (1967) and that such implementation should not be related to any other condition. The resources

⁵ *Ibid.*, Fourth Session, Ad Hoc Political Committee, Annex, vol. II, document A/927, annex B.

of the International Committee of the Red Cross and/or those of UNRWA may be mobilized to assist in the solution of any logistical problems involved in the resettlement of those returning to their homes. Those agencies could also assist, in co-operation with the host countries and the PLO, in the identification of displaced Palestinians. However, Palestinians who choose not to return to their homes should be paid just and equitable compensation, as provided for in resolution 194 (III). And in order to set the stage for genuine reconciliation between the parties to the current conflict, Israel must be advised, in its own interest, that it must abide scrupulously by the provisions of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949, and to declare, pending its speedy withdrawal from those occupied territories, its recognition of the applicability of that Convention.

89. For our part, Nigeria will continue to support the legitimate demands of the Palestinians for the exercise of their inalienable rights to self-determination and independence within secure and recognized borders of their own, like those of other States in the region. Israel should realize that its own security is directly linked to the security and the inviolability of the territorial integrity of its neighbours. Above all, it must co-operate in the creation of a homeland for the Palestinian Arabs, since that is the only way the legacy of bitterness left by the unorthodox manner of its own creation can be effectively removed.

90. My Government is aware of ongoing negotiations in Washington. We have observed with satisfaction that Egypt, which could very easily have achieved a bilateral peace treaty with Israel, continues to be preoccupied with a more realistic linkage between the particular and the general regarding the crucial aspects of an over-all settlement in the Middle East. It is our hope that Israel will not lose the opportunity that is provided for the achievement of a comprehensive peace in the Middle East—and that of course must be one that gets to the core of the problem, that is, self-determination and a homeland for the Palestinians under the leadership of the PLO.

91. Mr. THUNBORG (Sweden): There are, in our view, two essential elements that must be included and guaranteed in a comprehensive and viable settlement of the Middle East conflict: one is Israel's right of existence; the other is the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination.

92. The Palestinian problem is central to the whole Middle East conflict. It is not possible to envisage a lasting peace in the West Bank and Gaza or a total settlement in the region—in particular in Lebanon—as long as the Palestinian question remains unsolved. Furthermore, the Palestinian problem remains the crucial difficulty in the ongoing peace negotiations between Israel and Egypt. We sincerely hope that those negotiations will soon result in a treaty which would constitute a first step leading to a comprehensive and lasting solution of the Middle East question in all its aspects.

93. We have long expressed the view that the basis for such a solution must be Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), and that the principles established in those two resolutions must be supplemented with

a recognition of the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people and of their right to determine their own future, including their right to express their national identity within the framework of a State of their own living in peace with Israel. Essential elements of a solution would be the recognition by the Palestinian people of Israel's right to existence, as well as Israel's recognition of the right of the Palestinian Arabs to self-determination.

94. The Palestinian Arabs must be given the opportunity of participating in agreements which affect their future and the undertakings which they are to fulfil. In our view, the PLO is the most representative spokesman of the Palestinian Arabs. This does not mean that we accept without reservation all the political aims and methods of that organization. We want strongly to emphasize that a settlement of the Middle East conflict must be achieved through peaceful means and not through violence. We hope that all parties involved in the conflict will show restraint and statesmanship.

95. There are many stumbling-blocks on the road towards a real peace. One of the most serious is the Israeli settlements policy in the occupied territories, a policy which has been declared illegal by the United Nations on several occasions. Yesterday, in one of the committees, my delegation voted for a draft resolution condemning that policy. We urge Israel to reconsider its settlements policy, which undoubtedly constitutes one of the gravest obstacles to a comprehensive solution.

96. Sweden is well aware of the historical background to the situation of the Jewish people and to the creation of the State of Israel. We are also aware that the problem of the Palestinian people can be solved only through recognition of their right to self-determination and their right to live in a State of their own in peace, side by side with Israel. Those are the crucial elements in the achievement of a comprehensive settlement in the Middle East, a settlement that would end the sufferings of the peoples of that region and create solid conditions for peace and stability. That would be an important contribution to peace in the world as a whole.

97. Mr. SAHLOUL (Sudan) (*interpretation from Arabic*): There are very few examples in modern history of suffering such as that of the heroic Palestinian people not only in their struggles against trials and tribulations but also their rebuff of attempts to suppress the identity of people who aspire to dignity and honour.

98. For 30 years, the Palestinian people have been expelled from their country; their territory has been expropriated and their children are being pursued by the same forces that caused the tragedy. For 30 years, the General Assembly has been witnessing the tribulations of those people, the victims of the oppression of the Zionist entity. Year after year those tribulations have become more cruel and bitter as Israel has continued its expansionist aims, seeking to consolidate its racist entity.

99. The United Nations has also witnessed an escalation of Israeli practices which violate the basic human rights of the Palestinian people to such an extent that such practices have been condemned by the entire international commu-

nity. Israeli calculations have proved false; the Israelis reckoned that they could annihilate the Palestinian people, but the Palestinian struggle has kept pace with the escalation of Israeli practices and that brave struggle has the support of all peace-loving peoples of the world, which reject all forms of racist colonialism.

100. After having witnessed the development of this question for the past three decades world public opinion is now convinced that the Palestinian people, despite the sufferings imposed on them by the authorities of the Zionist entity, will realize their aspirations to dignity and honour under the leadership of the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

101. Speaking of the Middle East problem as a world political problem representing a danger to international peace and security must lead us to consider the problem as truly and essentially a problem of the Palestinian people. If we ignore the real substance of the problem we make it more complicated and run the risk of making it more difficult to find a solution. The problem of the Middle East, which emerged on the international scene in 1948 as a delicate and thorny problem, has been complicated by the forces responsible for the problem in the first place, whereas the essential problem, the Palestinian problem, is much simpler, given the proper international will and efforts to restore the rule of law, in accordance with the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter.

102. If the question of the Palestinian people is viewed objectively and clearly, the situation can be summed up as follows: a peace-loving people have been evicted from their national territory to be replaced by foreigners settling in Palestine in conformity with an international imperialist plan to settle a body of foreigners in the Arab nation. Today we witness in all the Arab region an explosive situation which is a threat to international peace and security because of the intransigence of Israel and its rejection of the United Nations resolutions which take into account the aspirations of the Palestinian people to return to their territory recover their homeland, form their own State and exercise their legitimate right to sovereignty and dignity. The international community has witnessed many acts of arrogance on the part of Israel, which has refused to comply with the international will. This policy is the direct outcome of the racist ideology upon which its unbounded aspirations are founded. Israel declares to the world that it cannot allow the Palestinians to return to their homeland because the clock cannot be turned back 30 years. Israel conveniently forgets that it has put the clock back 13 centuries in order to realize its mistaken racist ideals.

Mr. Liévano (Colombia) took the Chair.

103. When dealing with the problem of Palestine, one does not speak only of the people displaced as a result of the events of 1948, 1967 and 1973—and here we are talking about the entire people seeking to exercise their right to self-determination and sovereignty over their own land, like all other people—have crystallized their political thinking, objectives and aspirations and have chosen their own leaders within the framework of the political policy incorporated in a charter of national action created by the Palestine National Council, which represents the will of the

expelled people. Everyone realizes that the Palestinian people have all the attributes of a modern State, with leaders and a people. The international community must now exert its will upon Israel so that it realizes its obligations and makes it possible for the Palestinian people to return to their territory and create their own State under the leadership of the PLO. The recognition of the PLO's status in this respect is the direct result of the struggle which the people have waged under their wise and experienced leadership against Zionist tyranny. The international community must give further moral and material support to the PLO, which is leading the national struggle. It is regrettable to note that some delegations here adopt negative positions on various relevant General Assembly resolutions which emphasize the need for material and other support for the Palestinian people, including support in education and medical services, for example. This passive attitude is contrary to the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, which support the rights of the Palestinians. Is there yet another understanding of the rights of the Palestinians, which we have failed to recognize and which impels those States to adopt an attitude of opposition?

104. In considering the problem of Palestine, the problem of the displacement of a people as well as the consequences that have ensued therefrom for all the peoples of the region—in a word, the problem of the Middle East—we must take account of the essential facts of world policy today and the reasons for which the State of Israel was founded—political, strategic and economic reasons—particularly in the light of the economic developments which have taken place over the last two decades, including the despoliation of the region's resources and the exploitation of its natural wealth, through the destruction of the people's unity and solidarity, and the imposition upon them of political solutions.

105. Following closely the evolution of the political situation in the region, one becomes convinced that Israel and those who support it do not want a solution of this problem; and it is not in Israel's supreme interest to find an equitable over-all solution which will apply to the whole region. To say that Israel is the national home of the Jews is nothing more than a political device aimed at preventing public opinion from uncovering the real motives for its existence. The best proof of that is that the international community which created Israel, has adopted more than 300 resolutions recognizing the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, but those resolutions have met with indifference and neglect on the part of the Zionist entity and its supporters.

106. In all forums Israel pretends that it wants peace and says that it wishes to coexist in peace with the peoples of the region. But that is absolutely false, for Israel fears peace and wishes to perpetuate a state of war in order to continue to drain off the resources of the Jews of the United States and Europe in order to strengthen its military arsenal and its economy. Israel does not want to be deprived of the milch cow that feeds it. Moreover, the intransigence of Israel, which rejects the creation of a Palestinian State on occupied Palestinian territory, can be justified by its policy, its designs and its concept of the future of the region. Israel wishes to play a role consonant with its racist aberrations. It wishes to be the economic centre of the countries of the

region and the main source of technology and financial expertise. That is why the creation of a Palestinian State, by raising up a dangerous rival, might isolate it and prevent it from playing its role.

107. Since Israel's creation, campaigns of disinformation have been organized in the desperate effort to justify its violations of the United Nations Charter and of international laws and customs. But the reasons given are fallacious and without foundation because the real question is the problem of a displaced people who wish to return to their homes and who are supported by all countries which love peace and liberty. Israel should defer to the will of the international community instead of resorting to disinformation manoeuvres, particularly from this rostrum, before this international body, which is a grouping of countries that have fought and have shed their blood to achieve their aspirations. They have had to overcome all forms of oppression and tyranny but eventually they won the victory over imperialism. In so doing they acquired enough experience to be able to distinguish between truth and falsehood and to reject any aberrations or any fallacious justifications.

108. Mr. PAPOULIAS (Greece): The Greek delegation has on many occasions expressed its position on the question of Palestine in the General Assembly and in other forums. In this connexion I wish to refer to the statement made at the current session of the General Assembly by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Greece on 27 September 1978. He said:

“The position of Greece on the problem of the Middle East... derives from the immutable principles of the Charter. As we have repeatedly said in this Assembly, Greece is opposed to the acquisition of territory by force. It is in favour of a negotiated settlement of the problem of the Middle East based on the resolutions of this Assembly and of the Security Council.

“Those resolutions provide for the withdrawal of Israeli troops from the Arab territories which have been occupied since 1967, respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of all States in the region and recognition of the legitimate rights of the Arab people of Palestine, including their aspiration to a national home.

“The Camp David meetings and the agreements reached there may be a step in the right direction, in so far as they seek to apply the principles that I have just mentioned. But we must not lose sight of the fact that our aim is a comprehensive solution, a settlement which, in order to secure the agreement of all concerned, must be seen as just and equitable by all the parties concerned, including the Arab people of Palestine. From this point of view there is still a long and arduous road ahead of us.” [*11th meeting, paras. 273-275.*]

109. I should like to stress that all the above principles for the solution of the question of Palestine and the exercise of its people's right to self-determination are principles enshrined in the Charter and are strictly adhered to by my country. Greece has consistently supported repeated United Nations resolutions on the Palestine question, which are based on those fundamental principles, among them General Assembly resolution 32/40. The provisions of the

principal resolutions call for the return of the Palestinians to their homes and property from which they have been uprooted, while they oppose any measures altering the demographic composition or the geographical nature of the occupied Arab territories.

110. It should be remembered that, through a consensus statement by its President, on 11 November 1976,⁶ the Security Council deplored such measures.

111. Those, briefly, are the principles that have guided us in our position on the question of Palestine and, more generally, on the question of the Middle East. The same principles will continue to guide us in the present debate.

112. Mr. TROYANOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (*interpretation from Russian*): First of all I should like to extend a sincere welcome to the delegation of the PLO, which has come here especially to take part in this discussion, headed by Mr. Farouq Qaddoumi, whose constructive and substantial statement before the Assembly serves as an important contribution to the consideration of the acute international problem that is the question of Palestine.

113. The solution of the problem of Palestine is of particular significance not only for the Arab people of Palestine but also for the fate of peace and security in the Middle East and in the whole world. The entire course of events in the Middle East quite clearly confirms that a truly just and lasting peace in that region can be established only through an over-all settlement. The exercise by the Arab people of Palestine of their legitimate rights, including the right to self-determination and to the establishment of their own State, is an integral component part of such an over-all settlement.

114. These fundamental rights of the Arab people of Palestine have been recognized by the overwhelming majority of the countries of the world. The need to guarantee the Palestinian people the full exercise of their rights has been frequently confirmed at numerous representative international gatherings.

115. The United Nations has taken a clear position on recognition of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, national independence and participation on an equal footing in international relations. It is important to emphasize that from the very beginning of the consideration of the question of Palestine the United Nations has proceeded from the premise of unequivocal recognition of the right of the Arab people of Palestine to self-determination and to the establishment of its own State in keeping with the United Nations Charter. In the recent past this has been given even fuller expression in the decisions of the General Assembly at its twenty-ninth, thirtieth, thirty-first and thirty-second sessions and in the decisions of the Security Council and other United Nations organs.

116. In resolution 3236 (XXIX), for example, the General Assembly reaffirmed the inalienable rights of the Arab

⁶ See *Official Records of the Security Council, Thirty-first Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1976*, document S/12233.

people of Palestine, including the right to self-determination without external interference and the right to national independence and sovereignty. It reaffirmed also the inalienable right of the Palestinians to return to their homes and property. In that resolution, too, the General Assembly emphatically stated that the Palestinian people is a principal party in the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

117. In resolution 3375 (XXX) the General Assembly clearly and directly stated the need for the participation of the PLO, the representative of the Arab People of Palestine, in all efforts, deliberations and conferences on the Middle East, on an equal footing with other parties.

118. In this respect it should be emphasized that the PLO has also been recognized by the United Nations Security Council as a directly interested party in the Middle East. It has frequently taken part in the Council's discussions of the Middle East problem.

119. In resolution 31/20, the General Assembly reaffirmed that

"... a just and lasting peace in the Middle East cannot be established without the achievement, *inter alia*, of a just solution of the problem of Palestine on the basis of the attainment of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including the right of return and the right to national independence and sovereignty in Palestine, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations".

120. In resolution 32/20, the General Assembly called for the participation of the PLO in the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East, on an equal footing with all other parties concerned.

121. The discussion of the Palestine question at the United Nations and the decisions our Organization has adopted are evidence that virtually all the States Members of the United Nations, with the sole exception of Israel and the forces supporting it, recognize the inalienable rights of the Arab people of Palestine, including their right to establish their own State.

122. Notwithstanding this position taken by the international community and clearly expressed in the foregoing United Nations decisions, a just solution has still not been found to the Palestine problem. The long-suffering Arab people of Palestine finds itself, as in the past, in the situation of an exiled people, denied the opportunity to exercise their inalienable rights and denied a national home. The entire responsibility for this state of affairs rests with the Government of Israel and those who connive at its expansionist policy.

123. Tel Aviv's policy towards the Arab people of Palestine, 3 million-strong, is designed to ensure that these talented people, rich in national traditions, remain expelled, dispersed and denied their own national homeland. It is designed to ensure that in time that the Palestinian people will cease to have any national existence at all.

124. Instead of fulfilling the decisions of the United Nations on the recognition of the national rights of the

Palestinian Arabs to self-determination and to independent statehood, the Israeli authorities have deliberately been conducting, in conditions of military occupation, a policy of annexation and colonization of the Arab territories it has seized.

125. Having advanced an official doctrine concerning the "right of the Jews to settle freely within the historic boundaries of greater Israel", the Israeli authorities have been carrying out a policy of colonial expansion by the establishment of militarized settlements on Arab lands. The Israelization of Arab territories is accompanied by mass repression against the indigenous Arab population and by gross violations of that population's human rights.

126. Driven by chauvinistic dogmatists of militant Zionism, the Israeli Government openly scorns the resolutions of the United Nations on the Palestine question and quite directly claims sovereignty not over a mere part of Palestinian territory, but, now, over the whole of that territory. In that respect, what else could be meant by the plan adopted in December 1977 by the Israeli Knesset for the so-called "administrative autonomy" of the West Bank of the Jordan River and the Gaza Strip? This plan was included as the basis of the Camp David agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. One can only regard as an act of defiance of the international community the argument advanced by the Israeli leaders concerning the "inapplicability" of Security Council resolution 242 (1967) to the territory of the West Bank of the Jordan and the Gaza Strip.

127. Challenging the decisions of the United Nations in which the PLO is recognized as the representative of the Arab Palestinian people, Tel Aviv not only refuses to recognize the PLO but has embarked upon a policy of the virtual destruction of that organization of the Palestinian Arabs. That is precisely the purpose pursued by the large-scale aggression against Lebanon in March this year, which left thousands of victims among the Palestinians and Lebanese, mainly in the civilian population.

128. Can anyone seriously state that such a policy by the Israeli Government is designed to bring about a just solution to the Palestinian problem and help to find a peaceful settlement to the Middle East conflict? That policy is designed to consolidate the fruits of aggression, to trample under foot the legitimate rights of the neighbouring Arab peoples, and first and foremost the Palestinian people. This is expansionism, which has nothing in common with an aspiration to a just and lasting peace in the region.

129. Unfortunately, in the Arab world, too, not everyone cherishes the Arab lands. Some are inclined to neglect the legitimate rights of the Arabs, and particularly the Palestinian Arabs, and to move towards capitulation to the aggressor and its protectors.

130. Recent events have shown ever more convincingly that separate deals concerning the Middle East are designed to undermine the national liberation struggle of the Arab peoples and to consolidate the occupation by Israel of the ancestral Arab, including Palestinian, lands. They are designed to deny the Arab people of Palestine their legitimate rights, including the right to self-determination,

to establish their State and to return to their homes, in keeping with United Nations decisions on the subject. That is the true meaning of the separate deals concluded at Camp David behind the backs of the Arab peoples and in contradiction with their interests; it is the true meaning of the separate agreements prepared in Washington between Egypt and Israel in connexion with the Sinai peninsula.

131. The danger of separate deals for the interests of the Arab people of Palestine is particularly great. These deals are designed to impart a semblance of legality to the Israeli occupation of Arab lands, the perpetuation in Arab lands of the presence of Israeli armed forces, and the annexation of these lands under the guise of the formation of extra-territorial Israeli settlements.

132. It is no mere coincidence that, encouraged by the separate deals, Tel Aviv has very much hardened its position and quite demonstrably proceeded to adopt measures to accelerate the annexation of the Arab territories it seized, particularly the Palestinian lands, the West Bank including east Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip. After the conclusion of the Camp David agreements, the Israeli Government announced that east Jerusalem would never be returned to the Arabs. It quite openly declared its decision to expand existing Israeli settlements in the occupied Arab territories.

133. The policy of separate deals makes the attainment of a Middle East settlement more difficult and leads to a further complication of the situation in the Middle East. It encourages the aggressor to attempt to consolidate the results of its aggression. Partial, separate solutions are advantageous only to the aggressor and the forces that support it.

134. The Arab countries and peoples well understand the true impact of the separate negotiations and arrangements worked out in them. The Ninth Arab Summit Conference, recently held at Baghdad, resolutely rejected the Camp David agreements and opposed the policy of separate deals. The participants in the meeting confirmed that the PLO is the sole legitimate representative of the Arab people of Palestine [see A/33/400, annex].

135. The leaders of Communist and Workers' Parties and the Governments of the Soviet Union and of a number of other socialist States, having discussed at the recent Moscow meeting the situation that has developed in the Middle East, resolutely condemned the policy of separate deals and declared their support for the decisions of the Baghdad meeting of Heads of State or Government of Arab countries. They consider that those decisions will play an important and positive role in the struggle to bring about an effective and just settlement of the Middle East problem in the cause of peace in the Middle East and throughout the world.

136. The Palestinian people, including that part of it that is in the occupied territories, notwithstanding the campaign of the Government of Israel and its henchmen and the repressive measures of the Israeli occupation authorities, has resolutely rejected the Camp David agreements and expressed full support for and confidence in the PLO as their sole legitimate representative. Even the American press has been constrained to recognize this.

137. We should point out that the PLO has pursued a constructive political course designed to restore the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people in keeping with the fundamental decisions of the United Nations. This consistent policy has won for the PLO well-deserved authority in the international sphere. The PLO has been taking an active part in the work of the United Nations. It is a full-fledged member of the non-aligned movement and a member of the Co-ordinating Bureau of Non-Aligned Countries. The PLO has its representatives in many countries of the world. It enjoys broad international recognition and support as the sole legitimate representative of the Arab people of Palestine.

138. The valiant and just struggle of the Palestinian people for its national rights enjoys the support of the countries of the socialist community and all peace-loving and democratic forces.

139. The Soviet Union consistently pursues a policy based on principle designed to bring about a comprehensive Middle East settlement, an integral component part of which is the guaranteeing of the legitimate national rights of the Arab people of Palestine, including its right to self-determination and the formation of its own independent State. Speaking in the general debate at this session of the General Assembly, Comrade A. A. Gromyko, a member of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the USSR, stated:

"Only a solution that would guarantee the right to independence and security of all States and peoples in the Middle East, including the Arab people of Palestine, who are fully entitled to a national home, a State of their own, can lay the foundation for a lasting peace in that part of the world." [8th meeting, para. 60.]

140. The achievement of an authentic settlement in the Middle East is possible only if the policy of separate deals is abandoned and there is a return to the principle of collective efforts on the part of all parties concerned. A reliable path to the solution of the problem of the Middle East is that of negotiations within the framework of the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East especially set up for this purpose, with the participation of all parties directly involved, including the PLO. The Soviet Union firmly advocates that no decision concerning the Arab people of Palestine should be taken without the participation of the Palestinians or against their will. Naturally, the Soviet Union continues, as in the past, to support the convening of the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East in conditions that would make it impossible for it to be converted into a shield to cover up all sorts of separate deals detrimental to the attainment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

141. In connexion with the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People being observed today by this Organization and by progressive people everywhere, the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, L. I. Brezhnev, has sent a message of welcome to the

Chairman of the Executive Committee of the PLO, Yasser Arafat. In this message, *inter alia*, he says:

"The celebration of this day throughout the world is a patent manifestation of solidarity with the just struggle that is being waged by the Arab people of Palestine for the realization of their inalienable national rights, including their indisputable right to establish their own State. Thanks to its steadfastness, courage and firmness of principle in this difficult struggle, the Palestine Liberation Organization has won all-Arab world and international recognition as the sole lawful representative of the Palestinian people, and become one of the advance guards of the Arab national liberation movement.

"The just cause of the Palestinians enjoys the unswerving support of the countries of the socialist community and of the progressive and democratic forces of the whole world. The Soviet Union will continue in future firmly to support the Palestinian people in their struggle for the realization of their legitimate national rights. We shall not swerve from our policy of principle, aimed at the achievement of a comprehensive settlement and the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East." [See A/33/406, annex.]

142. The Soviet Union has always proceeded from the premise that the guaranteeing of the legitimate national rights of the Arab people of Palestine, including their right to self-determination, the establishment of their own State and the return to their homes, in keeping with the United Nations decisions, must be an integral component part of a comprehensive settlement in the Middle East. In this regard, the Soviet Union supports the basic conclusions and recommendations contained in the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People now before the General Assembly.

143. Mr. BOUH (Djibouti) (*interpretation from French*): Mr. President, since this is the first time that we have spoken in a debate at this session of the General Assembly, I want to congratulate you on behalf of my Government on your election to preside over the thirty-third session and to wish you every success in carrying out your task.

144. I also want to thank sincerely the outgoing President, Mr. Lazar Mojsov, for the exemplary manner in which he discharged his duties as President.

145. I also want to pay a tribute to the Secretary-General, Mr. Kurt Waldheim, who has made enormous efforts to find solutions to so many conflicts which have not yet been resolved.

146. The question of Palestine, with which we are now dealing, has appeared on the agenda of the General Assembly for 30 years consecutively but has not achieved a just and lasting solution. The Republic of Djibouti approves the conclusions and recommendations of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, and in this regard we wish to pay a tribute to Mr. Médoune Fall, the Permanent Representative of Senegal, who directed the work of the Committee with objectivity and vision.

147. The people of Djibouti, which has waged a courageous struggle to recover their inalienable rights to self-determination and independence and have just celebrated the first anniversary of their independence, on 27 June, firmly support the just cause that is defended by the Palestinian people, and we are vigorously opposed to the policies of the Zionist entity in Israel, which, with the complicity of international imperialism, has unjustly usurped Arab Palestine.

148. That harmful policy must be opposed, so that the Palestinian people may recover their inalienable rights, which are recognized by the international community, in their national territory.

149. The people of Djibouti, who have waged a struggle for their freedom and national sovereignty, support the oppressed Palestinian people, who have courageously pursued a struggle against the Zionist State for three decades now in order to recover their legitimate rights.

150. The question of Palestine is at the very heart of the problem of the Middle East, and consequently any solution that does not take into consideration the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, who are the party most concerned, will certainly fail.

151. The Palestinian people, who were evicted from their country by the Zionist State and who have lost all their property—I mean their land, their homeland and their geographical and cultural background—have become a nation of refugees must be associated with any settlement designed to remedy the unjust situation which has been imposed upon them.

152. The barbaric policies of the Zionist State are an intolerable defiance of the international community.

153. This is why we feel that it is urgent to take adequate measures to put an end to this inhuman policy, which is the cause of the suffering now being endured by the Palestinian people.

154. The Zionist State, which has steadily refused to recognize the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and which is opposed to the implementation of the relevant resolutions of the United Nations, is responsible for the explosive situation prevailing in that region.

155. The policy of fait accompli which has been imposed on the Arab people by the Zionist entity has been resolutely condemned by the international community, which has adopted the appropriate resolutions in this regard. General Assembly resolutions 3236 (XXIX) and 3237 (XXIX) recognize in a very clear manner the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, who are entitled to return to their homes and establish a State of their choice in Palestine.

156. The international community, in adopting these resolutions, acknowledged the extent of the danger implicit in the situation in which the Palestinian people have lived for 30 years and wished to repair the incalculable physical, moral and material losses suffered by the Palestinians during these three decades.

157. Now that the international community has acknowledged the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and recognized the PLO as their only legitimate representative in the United Nations, the provisions of the relevant resolutions must be speedily and effectively implemented in fact by taking the necessary measures against the Zionist and racist State, so that the Palestinian people can fully enjoy their inalienable rights to self-determination and independence.

158. The speedy restoration of these recognized rights would allow these people, who have suffered so much from racist and colonialist exploitation, to recover from their wounds caused by 30 years of war and to establish the democratic institutions that will serve their most urgent needs.

159. Respect for and the implementation of these principles, which have been proclaimed in the Charter of the United Nations, would without doubt make an effective contribution to the restoration of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

160. The PLO, which has been recognized as the spokesman for the Palestinian people by the OAU, the non-aligned countries and the United Nations, should participate on a footing of equality with all the parties concerned, on the basis of resolutions 3236 (XXIX) and 3375 (XXX), in every effort or attempt likely to achieve positive results, taking fully into account the rights of the Palestinian people.

161. The Israeli Government continues to practise a policy of colonizing and annexing the occupied territories. The recent unequivocal statements by the Prime Minister and other members of the Israeli Government show again that the policy of outright annexation of the occupied territories has already begun and its application is now being accelerated.

162. This nefarious policy is contrary to the principle of the non-acquisition of territory by force, and the Republic of Djibouti, subscribing to the fundamental principles of the Charter of the United Nations, condemns this policy of forced colonization on the part of the Jewish State, which is deliberately violating the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict,⁷ as well as the Geneva Conventions of 1949 relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War⁸ and relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War⁹. The Palestinian people struggling against zionism can count on the unconditional support of our people.

163. Mr. EL-CHOUFI (Syrian Arab Republic) (*interpretation from Arabic*): First I wish to thank the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People for its report. Next I should like to take a little of the time of the Assembly to describe the real situation in that part of the world with its attendant calamities.

164. The problem of Palestine is a problem of a well-known conventional colonization on which has been

superimposed a policy of implantation and colonization such as has been hardly known anywhere else in the world, except possibly in South Africa and Southern Rhodesia.

165. We hope that the fact that the international community has since 1974 attached more and more importance to the question of Palestine and the fact that it is being regarded as a political problem will be an auspicious development heralding a better future for the Palestinian people and even a peaceful future for the Middle East and the rest of the world.

166. We are quite convinced that this growing interest on the part of the international community in the Palestinian cause has matched the increase in membership of the United Nations and the emergence of newly independent States. The problem of Palestine is the problem of a people who have languished under the yoke of foreign colonialism. The solution to the problem can be achieved only if, as in the case of other countries which have attained their independence, the Palestinian people are allowed to recover their full independent status. The United Nations has taken a constant interest in this problem but unfortunately to this day the United Nations has proved incapable of bringing about a genuine solution involving the liberation of the Palestinian people. We are well aware of the reasons for this failure because we know that a great Power, the United States, supports Zionist aggression, allows Israel to arm itself and attaches no importance to the numerous resolutions adopted by the United Nations on the subject.

167. Notwithstanding this, we are convinced that the best contribution so far made by the United Nations on the Palestinian problem is its condemnation of the Zionist doctrine and its equation of that doctrine with fascism and nazism. We know that many countries, particularly countries with a colonialist past, refuse such public condemnation but, to those countries we would say that the United Nations, by condemning the Zionist doctrine, has truly gone to the very core of the problem and identified it. We note that these countries, Governments and peoples and the intellectuals and mass media seem unaware of the real danger of the Zionist doctrine, so we appeal to them to take another look at that doctrine and seek to understand it because we feel that a true objective review of the Zionist question will make it possible for them to adopt an objective approach. If those countries were to approach the matter from an objective point of view they would see the aggressive nature of the Zionist doctrine as we see it. When those countries find sufficient courage to denounce this injustice we hope that they will be able to convince the Israelis that their future and their acceptance in the region depend on their rejection of the Zionist racist and aggressive policies and doctrines.

168. The world which, 30 years ago, witnessed the threat of nazism paid a high price to free itself from the consequences of that doctrine, and the creation of the United Nations was to some extent a kind of recognition of the elimination of the vestiges of those consequences. Do we want zionism to assume the same proportions as nazism? Can we afford to wait until Begin and his clique accumulate in their hands the same destructive power that Hitler accumulated before we act to put an end to this threat?

⁷ See United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 249 (No. 3511), p. 240.

⁸ *Ibid.*, vol. 75 (No. 972), p. 135.

⁹ *Ibid.*, vol. 75 (No. 973), p. 287.

169. In the Syrian Arab Republic we support any attempt to bring about a just and comprehensive peace. We are convinced that until Israel renounces its Zionist doctrine it will be difficult, if not impossible, for Israel to meet the Arabs half way and provide for a just and honourable solution which would guarantee the security, the future and the independence of all. Peace for this reason must be total peace. Any attempts to resolve the problem partially are doomed to failure and will not lead to peace. Rather it is probable, if not inevitable, that they will make the problem much more complex than it is already.

170. For that reason we oppose the Camp David agreements. We remain convinced that peace in our region must be just and total, otherwise it will not be peace at all. If that is to happen objective steps must be taken on the basis of United Nations resolutions which guarantee the security of all and make this Organization, the United Nations, the proper, indeed the sole, forum for peace negotiations.

171. We in the Syrian Arab Republic are not at all impressed by the allegations of Israel or its allies or convinced of their desire for security because we know that the concept of security is a world concept. In our region we are convinced that security is the right of all the inhabitants of the region. We are prepared, therefore, to accept all international guarantees of security under United Nations auspices because we are convinced also that just as those guarantees would be valid for our enemy so they would be valid for us. We place our full confidence in the United Nations since the United Nations is the sole organ accepted by all.

172. For that reason a solution can be acceptable only if it is based upon justice and the principle of the evacuation by Israel of all the occupied Arab territories and only if that peace is based on the possibility of the Palestinian people's exercise of their inalienable national rights.

173. We call upon the whole world, and first and foremost the friends of Israel, to be vigilant and to understand fully what lies within the Zionist doctrine so that they will realize the threat to international peace and security inherent in the absence of a solution to the Palestinian problem.

174. We feel that the importance attached by the international community to the Palestinian question and Arab rights will influence the friends of Israel, particularly the United States, to try and help Israel to abandon its Zionist, racist doctrine and live in peace with the Arabs in general and the Palestinian Arab people in particular.

175. Mr. SUWONDO (Indonesia): My delegation would like to take this opportunity to make a brief statement in order to reiterate Indonesia's position on the question of Palestine. This position is well known, of course, but in view of recent developments we consider it appropriate to state it again.

176. Indonesia has always supported the struggle waged by the Palestinian people over a number of years to regain their rights. Further, we have always maintained that the question of Palestine is at the heart of the Middle East conflict. Pursuant to that policy, Indonesia has been

consistent in its support for the cause of the Palestinians and has pointed out that the solution to that conflict cannot be separated from the elimination of the injustices inflicted upon them. Therefore one of the essential requirements for the success of efforts towards a peaceful solution is recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people as embodied in the various United Nations resolutions.

177. In the aftermath of the various wars Palestinians have been uprooted from their homes. Hundreds of thousands have been living for the last 30 years as refugees under unimaginably harsh conditions. In our view, no solution can be reached unless the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people are recognized, including the right to return to their homeland and to establish their own State, as called for in the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. It is in this context that we consider the participation of the PLO, as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, necessary in the efforts to arrive at a peaceful solution.

178. It is obvious from Israel's policies with regard to the Palestinians that it is not yet prepared to accord full recognition to their legitimate rights. In fact, as the Chairman of the Committee, Ambassador Médoune Fall pointed out in his statement on 27 November, "Israel not only enjoys its rights but even goes beyond them, whereas the people of Palestine are constantly frustrated in their attempts to gain what belongs to them by right" [59th meeting, para. 48]. Policies of annexation and settlement in illegally occupied territories are not only incompatible with the recommendations of the Committee but also constitute a serious obstacle to the realization of the legitimate rights of the Palestinians. They also contravene the principle of the non-admissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, as well as the right to self-determination. Therefore it is the return of all occupied territories that will ensure the exercise of the rights of all States in the region. Withdrawal from those territories is an essential prerequisite for lasting peace, as is also stated in the relevant resolutions of the United Nations.

179. My delegation does not consider it necessary to elaborate on the report of the Committee: the Chairman and the Rapporteur of the Committee and other speakers who have preceded me have already done so more eloquently than I can expect to do myself. Allow me, however, to reiterate what in the view of my delegation constitutes the essential thrust of the report as an appeal to the Security Council. It appeals to the Council, the body entrusted with the task of maintaining international peace and security, not to fail in that trust but to discharge the responsibility incumbent upon it to make serious efforts and take concrete steps towards an over-all settlement of the Palestinian problem. My delegation believes that the report of the Committee could prove useful in the endeavours of the Council in the search for and implementation of such a settlement.

180. The report serves also as a warning. Those who would see the facts clearly as they are must recognize that time is running out and that a peaceful and comprehensive solution to the Palestinian problem must be found soon. In view of the urgency of the situation, as indicated in paragraph 18 of

the report [A/33/35 and Corr.1/Rev.1], my delegation would like to appeal to the Council not to let this opportunity pass but to take such decisions as will make possible the initiation of a new era in the Middle East, an era marked by genuine and lasting peace in the area. The dangers of a failure to adopt realistic and constructive measures as recommended by the Committee must be obvious to all. The growing opposition of the Palestinian population to occupation, and their rejection of any solution which does not give explicit recognition to their legitimate right to self-determination, must serve as a warning to us all.

181. The deep solidarity of the people of Indonesia with the Arab peoples in general and the Palestinian people in particular, and also the fact that Indonesia is a member of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, make it incumbent upon my delegation to participate in the present deliberations. In fact, Indonesia's solidarity with the Arab people in the common struggle for the restitution of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and the restoration of freedom and justice to the Middle East is a matter of great importance to us. That solidarity and our unflinching support for the demand for freedom and justice in Palestine are based, not upon hostility towards any other human entity, but on the principles of the equality and dignity of all men and of the struggle against oppression and injustice.

182. Mr. HA VAN LAU (Viet Nam) (*interpretation from French*): I wish to begin my statement by welcoming the delegation of the PLO, led by Mr. Farouq Qaddoumi, and extending to it our warmest congratulations on the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. The observance of this Day here at the United Nations and throughout the world, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 32/40 B, shows once again that all of progressive mankind is on the side of the heroic Palestinians who are struggling against Israeli occupation and the violation of the most sacred human rights of an entire people: the right to independent statehood, the right of return to their homeland and the right to live there in peace and freedom.

183. My delegation pays a tribute to the Chairman and members of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People for their efforts to discharge the task entrusted to them by the General Assembly and for the substantial report which is now before us. We also want to congratulate the Secretary-General for having established the Special Unit on Palestinian Rights. That Unit has begun to discharge the task entrusted to it, that is, to provide objective information on the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

184. With regard to the Palestinian problem, the present year has been characterized by very important events. On the one hand, the struggle of the brave Palestinian people under the leadership of the PLO against the aggression and prolonged occupation of Israel is receiving ever broadening internal and external support. Many sectors of the population in the occupied regions—students, workers, intellectuals, the Islamic and Christian clergy, mayors, municipal and village councillors and others—have signed petitions rejecting the Camp David agreements, because those agree-

ments deny the rights of the Arab people of Palestine, ignore the role of the PLO, which is their sole legitimate representative, and make no mention at all of their right to return, to self-determination and to the creation of a free and independent State on their own land; and also because these agreements do not demand that Israel withdraw from Arab Jerusalem, the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and the rest of the Arab territories. The signatories of the petitions have also rejected the plan for autonomy, as proposed by Israel, because that plan "opens the way to indefinite occupation and prolonged entrenchment". On the other hand, they have reaffirmed their support for and loyalty to the only authentic representative of the Palestinian people, the PLO. The Ministerial Meeting of the Co-ordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Countries, held in Havana in May, the Belgrade Conference of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Non-Aligned Countries, the Khartoum Conference of the OAU and many other international conferences, and many socialist and other countries have strongly reaffirmed their solidarity with and support of the Palestinian cause; they have condemned and deplored the new manoeuvres of Israel and its partners in respect of the Palestinian question.

185. On the other hand, as we all know, Israel, supported by the Government of the United States of America, obstinately refuses to abide by the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly. Scorning General Assembly resolution 32/5, Israel has intensified its plans for the creation of settlements in occupied Palestinian or Arab territories, thus modifying their legal status, geographical character and demographic composition.

186. At the beginning of this year Israel perpetrated a new armed aggression in the south of Lebanon, thus violating the sovereignty and territorial integrity of that Arab State, destroying camps of Palestinian refugees, massacring children, women and old people. Jointly with its partners, Israel has accelerated the implementation of its plan for a separate peace, with the unavowed objective of weakening the front for support of the Palestinian cause and of aggravating dissension among the Arab States. But the recent Baghdad Summit Conference reaffirmed the Arab States' rejection of the Camp David agreements and their consequences and has shown the isolation of those who are trying to make an illusory separate deal to the detriment of the vital interests of the Arab nation and the Palestinian people.

187. The Israeli policy of refusal to withdraw from the occupied Palestinian and Arab territories, the policy of continued aggression against neighbouring States and its blatant disregard of the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people is not only a defiance of this Organization but is also a flagrant violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and a threat to peace and international security.

188. During the three last decades the United Nations has spared no efforts to find a just and lasting solution of the problem of the Middle East, at the heart of which lies the problem of the Palestinian Arabs. Unfortunately, all the initiatives of the General Assembly have met with the intransigent stance of Israel, backed by the complicity of certain States Members of the United Nations.

189. Faced with the explosive situation that now prevails in the Middle East, the General Assembly must reaffirm its position with regard to the problem of the Middle East and Palestine, must request the Security Council to take a speedy and positive decision on the recommendations of the Committee which the General Assembly has endorsed and which the Security Council has had before it for two years. It is the duty of the international community to give its full support to the principles of a negotiated just and lasting solution of the Palestinian question and that of the Middle East in conformity with the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian and Arab peoples victims of Israeli aggression, on the following basis: the withdrawal of Israel from all the Arab territories it has occupied illegally since 5 June 1967, including the City of Jerusalem; the restoration of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including their right of return, to self-determination and to the creation of an independent State; and the recognition of the right of the PLO, the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, to participate on an equal footing with the other parties in all international conferences, in particular the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East, and in all forums and efforts concerned with the Palestinian problem and the Arab-Israeli conflict.

190. The position of the Government of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam and of the Vietnamese people with regard to the problem of Palestine is based on the principle of active support for the peoples struggling for their independence and freedom. That position was reaffirmed by our Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs in his statement in the general debate at this session of the General Assembly as follows:

"The Palestinian people and other Arab peoples in the Middle East are continuing their struggle against the Israeli occupation, which is backed by imperialism. We reaffirm our strong support for the struggle of the Palestinian Arab people, under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization, to win back their fundamental national rights, including the right to establish a separate, independent and sovereign State. We support the Arab peoples in the Middle East who are endeavouring to recover completely their territories occupied by Israeli aggressors. We welcome any efforts aimed at bringing about peace and an end to war in the Middle East. However, in order to have genuine peace, the sources of war must be eliminated. A durable peace in that region requires that the aggression be totally eradicated and implies the restoration of the fundamental national rights of the Palestinian people and total sovereignty of the Arab countries over their occupied territories. A solution in which only the aggressor has his say, and even the right of veto, while the victim of the aggression, the Palestinian people, whose legitimate representative is the Palestine Liberation Organization, is prevented from making its important voice heard can only encourage aggression and damage the cause of peace in that region. Unfortunately, that is the essence of the Camp David peace agreements." [21st meeting, para. 88.]

191. Mr. YANKOV (Bulgaria): The question of Palestine and the manifold aspects of that question have always and rightly, been in the limelight among United Nations activities. So it is only right that the current session of the General Assembly should be no exception in this respect.

192. The United Nations has adopted over the years a number of decisions, some of which are replete with fundamental provisions reaffirming the close link and mutual interrelationship between the Middle East issue, taken in its entirety, and the question of the realization of the national rights of the Palestinian people. I should like at this juncture to point, *inter alia*, to such important actions taken by the United Nations as the recognition of the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of Palestine, the granting to that organization of the status of permanent observer to the United Nations and the decision to proclaim 29 November—that is, today—as the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.

193. In this connexion, General Assembly resolution 32/40 A is quite indicative of the significance of the Palestinian problem. In paragraph 3 of that resolution it is emphasized that, in considering in the Security Council the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, all States members of the Council which participated in the discussion reaffirmed that:

"... a just and lasting peace in the Middle East could not be established without the achievement, in particular, of a just solution of the problem of Palestine on the basis of the attainment of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people".

194. It is in these unequivocal terms that the United Nations has decisively and unambiguously declared itself in favour of the restoration of the legitimate rights of the Arab people of Palestine, including their right to return to their homeland and to create their own national State there. Thus, the question of Palestine has extended its dimensions from a refugee issue, as it was alleged to be by some people at one point, to the problem of the full realization by the Palestinian people of their rights, including their right to a State of their own.

195. As events have continued to unfold during the last several years, it has become outstandingly clear that the question of the rights of the Arab people of Palestine lies at the very core of the Middle East problem and that no just and lasting peace is feasible unless the security, independence and territorial integrity of all countries and peoples in that region are guaranteed and unless the legitimate right of the Arab people of Palestine to have a State of their own and a homeland of their own are realized.

196. This stark truth is clearly understood today by any unprejudiced statesman or politician who follows the situation in the Middle East.

197. The world has been watching with concern for more than 11 years now the upheavals in the Middle East, where political and military confrontation create a serious threat to international peace and security. For three decades now we have witnessed the violation of the human rights of an entire nation. Three million Palestinian Arabs are deprived of the right and possibility of enjoying a national homeland of their own, living in their motherland and having a home on their national soil.

198. As a result of Israeli aggression over 300,000 Palestinians have been driven from their native places and

compelled to lead miserable lives as refugees. Throughout the time that has elapsed since that happened, the world has witnessed bitter suffering and deprivation beyond belief. But at the same time those have been years of heroic struggle for recognition of the right to existence of the Palestinian people—years of resistance to the Israeli policies of terrorism which have been elevated to the rank of State policy aiming at the mass annihilation of the Palestinian people.

199. Disregarding the many United Nations decisions, Israel, not without the support of some of its allies and sponsors, which include certain permanent members of the Security Council, has arrogantly refused to withdraw its troops from the occupied Arab territories and to recognize the national rights of the Arab people of Palestine. What is more, the Israeli Government is carrying out with exceptional persistence actions seeking to change the demographic, economic, cultural and other features of those territories. This is convincing proof that Israel has no intention of leaving those lands, and therefore carries on its attempts to annex them completely.

200. The Bulgarian delegation has emphasized more than once at this very rostrum an odd paradox: Israel is exerting all kinds of efforts in order to obtain *de jure* recognition from the Arab countries in order to legitimize its existence in their eyes too; and yet that same Israel denies that same right to the 3 million people of Palestine.

201. All this makes imperatively necessary the attainment of a comprehensive and all-embracing solution of the Middle East problem, including its core, the Palestinian question, with a view to establishing a just and lasting peace in this exceptionally sensitive and explosive area of the world. It is precisely on account of this that we are deeply convinced that the hopes certain countries are entertaining of seeing the Middle East issue settled on the basis of separate talks between the leaders of Israel and Egypt are ill founded. It is not necessary to be endowed with the power of prophecy to come to the conclusion that those who nurture such illusions concerning the achievement of lasting results following the road of partial settlement of the Middle East problem at the expense and to the detriment of the Palestinian people will experience a bitter disappointment.

202. Attempts have been made to confuse the whole issue in order to justify separatist deals through different procedural devices. There was an excessive over-dramatization of various modalities, including the so-called verbal linkage between the Egypt-Israel settlement and the Palestinian issue, whether as part of the preamble of a separate treaty or by some other means. Indeed, this is only a tactical means of concealing the real motives behind the separate deal and the selling-out of the genuine interests of the Arab people of Palestine.

203. The deeply concealed scheme of the separate negotiations is to isolate the Palestinians as a nation, to foil the realization of their inalienable rights and to weaken the unity and solidarity of the Arab people. Israel's actions in this respect can hardly leave any room for doubt.

204. As the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian people points out,

the clarification provided by Israel's Foreign Minister about the future of the occupied Arab territory—namely that “the plan for autonomy in the occupied territories would be permanent and not a transitional phase to a separate Palestinian homeland” [A/33/35 and Corr.1/Rev.1, para. 22] shows that Israel has no intention of complying with the relevant United Nations resolutions or of allowing the realization of the right to self-determination of the Palestinians. It is also all too obvious that the Israeli Government's position concerning the future of the territories occupied in 1967 has as its target the avoidance by Israel of its responsibilities and duties stemming from the United Nations Charter.

205. Particularly indicative is the fact that the Arab inhabitants of the occupied territories have been outraged by the so-called Israeli “self-rule plan.” Letters and declarations addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and signed by prominent Palestinians in the occupied territories reveal most faithfully the attitude of the Palestinian people vis-à-vis the plans for so-called self-rule and autonomy in the occupied lands. For instance, the declaration contained in appendix IV to the annex to document A/33/380, signed by 180 persons, half of whom are members of city and village municipalities, in clear terms states that:

“1. Our Palestinian Arab people, inside and outside the occupied land, is one unit historically, through their struggling and by destiny;

“2. Our people assert that the sole legitimate representative is the Palestine Liberation Organization, and they refuse any trusteeship or alternative of whatever kind or form;

“3. The self-rule plan is refused in form and content, as we consider it a legitimizing of occupation and the continuation of the oppression of the people and the preventing of the people from exercising self-determination;

“4. If we look towards a just, lasting and continuous peace in the region, we see it only through our people's exercise of their right to self-determination and national independence, after the complete withdrawal from the occupied territory and the establishment of an independent Palestinian State”.

206. The just struggle of the Palestinian people for national self-determination enjoys wide support throughout the world. Not only has this support remained undiminished in past years but it continues to gather strength. The inalienable right of the people of Palestine to national self-determination has received complete endorsement from the Council of Ministers of the OAU, which met last July in Khartoum; the Conference of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Non-Aligned Countries, which met last July in Belgrade; and the Ninth Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, held in Dakar in April last. The World Conference to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, held in Geneva in August 1978, also expressed its complete solidarity with the struggle of the Palestinian people and the hope that a people's Palestine would in the near future have the opportunity to realize their lawful right to self-determination.

207. I should also like to draw attention to the Conference of the "Steadfastness Front" held recently in Baghdad, the Ninth Arab Summit Conference. The decisions adopted at that Conference [see A/33/400, annex] confirmed once again that a just and lasting solution to the Palestinian issue can be reached only within the framework of a comprehensive solution of the Middle East problem and that conducting any separate talks whatever behind the back of the Arab nation and to the detriment of its interests would only have the effect of rendering ever more difficult the finding of a just settlement of the Middle East crisis.

208. A few days ago, on 23 November 1978, the States Parties to the Warsaw Treaty in an important statement [see A/33/392-S/12939] once again reiterated their position of principle with respect to the Palestinian question, namely the withdrawal of Israel from all the Arab territories occupied in 1967, the realization of the inalienable right of the Arab people of Palestine to self-determination, including its right to independence and independent development, and the establishment of international guarantees of the inviolability of the frontiers of all the States in the Middle East. That statement has condemned separate deals under the auspices of the United States as leading only to further dangerous complications and running counter to the interests of a just and lasting comprehensive solution of the Middle East problem.

209. It has become a matter of pressing necessity speedily to resolve the Middle East problem, including that of the rights of the Palestinian people. This requires the United Nations, and the Security Council in particular, to undertake immediate actions for the implementation of the resolutions so far adopted on this issue.

210. In this connexion I should like to express my delegation's full support for the recommendations of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People which were approved by the General Assembly at its thirty-first session, and for the recommendations contained in paragraph 58 of the Committee's current report dealing with underlying principles for solution of the Palestinian question.

211. The People's Republic of Bulgaria has repeatedly made known its position of principle regarding the Middle East issue. At the current session of the General Assembly my Foreign Minister, Mr. Petar Mladenov, stated, *inter alia*:

"The Government of the People's Republic of Bulgaria is convinced that the establishment of a lasting peace in the Middle East requires above all a complete withdrawal of Israeli troops from all Arab territories occupied in 1967, the implementation and guaranteeing of the legitimate rights of the Arab people of Palestine, including their right to self-determination and the creation of their own State, and the guaranteeing of the independent existence of all States in the area." [15th meeting, para. 130.]

212. The People's Republic of Bulgaria holds in high esteem its traditional links of friendship and co-operation with the Arab peoples struggling to do away with the after effects of the Israeli aggression and to establish a just and

lasting peace in the Middle East. Faithful to its international duty, my country regards solidarity with the peoples fighting against foreign occupation and for self-determination and national independence as an irrevocable principle of its foreign policy. My country pursues the same policy line vis-à-vis the Palestinian question also.

213. An unequivocal confirmation of this can be found in the message addressed by the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party and President of the State Council, Todor Zhivkov, to Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the PLO, on the occasion of the commemoration of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. In that message, he said:

"... the People's Republic of Bulgaria shall continue in the future as well to lend its active support to the just and valiant struggle of the heroic Arab people of Palestine against imperialism, Zionism and reaction, for the realization of its inalienable right to live in freedom, independence and peace." [See A/33/393, annex.]

214. Mr. ABDEL MEGUID (Egypt) (*interpretation from Arabic*): The Palestinian question, to which the United Nations attaches great importance, is indeed a principal factor in the efforts to establish a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. There is an international conviction of the principle that Egypt has constantly stressed: that the question of Palestine is the very core of the situation—and a lasting peace in the region depends on its equitable solution. Like all other peoples of the world who have regained their independence, the Palestinian people have the right to independence and self-determination: that is beyond dispute.

215. Almost three years ago, President Anwar El-Sadat spoke from this rostrum¹⁰ to the peoples of the world, represented by the members of the General Assembly, about important international problems, and particularly the Palestinian question, which is for Egypt a fundamental matter because it involves justice and the rights, fate and future of an entire people. President El-Sadat was categorical in setting forth Egypt's attitude. He said that there could be no peace in the region without a political solution of the Palestinian question, i.e. the fate of the Palestinian people—a people that cannot be kept in the position of refugees and must have restored to it its national entity so that it can participate in the development of our international society and in its progress.

216. It is only fitting that the United Nations should have accorded such importance to the question of Palestine. It is fitting that this debate should coincide with the celebration of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. This is a day when the people of Egypt and Egyptian institutions are participating with other peoples of the world in the expression of solidarity with the cause of the Palestinian people. The commemoration of this day by the United Nations is evidence of the importance that the Organization attaches to the question of Palestine, which for 30 years has been at the very core of the Organization's

¹⁰ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirtieth Session, Plenary Meetings*, 2388th meeting.

work. It is incumbent upon the United Nations to protect the peoples of the world and make it possible for them to regain their rights. This is particularly true of the Palestinian people.

217. I should like to read an extract from the message addressed by President El-Sadat to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, as a demonstration of the solidarity of the Egyptian people and its support for the struggle of the Palestinian people. President El-Sadat stated:

"The brotherly Palestinian people has been subjected during its glorious history to attempts to destroy its national identity, sometimes to the extent of denying its very existence and trying to destroy this existence physically and morally. All these attempts, in addition to being alien to the basic elements of legality and justice, were the main reason for the unparalleled human tragedy which our area faced. This also led to a long period of tensions, wars and destruction suffered by the people of the area, where enormous human and material resources were squandered instead of being channelled towards development, welfare and prosperity.

"During this long period, Egypt, supported by all the Arab countries and peace-loving States and nations inside and outside the United Nations, led the call for the necessity of the restoration to the Palestinian people of its national rights in order to achieve the just and durable peace which could secure for all peoples of the area the right to live in peace in their countries without fearing any threats or aggression." [See A/33/401, annex.]

218. On the basis of those considerations, Egypt has established its policies and efforts in the past. On that basis Egypt took the historic initiative, through President Anwar El-Sadat, on 19 November of last year—the initiative which indeed constituted the apotheosis of the many initiatives undertaken by Egypt over the years. The international community has been a witness to all these efforts and initiatives. Egypt went to war with all the necessary courage. Now Egypt has embarked upon the battle of peace and the battle to ensure the restoration of the rights of the Palestinian people. Every expert who seriously evaluates facts knows that the battle for peace is even more painful than the battle of war. Nothing is easier than to launch a war. But the battle for peace, with all the historical responsibilities it involves, is even more delicate and more difficult. It requires the same aptitudes and the same strength as the battle of war. Egypt has proved in both battles that it is fully convinced of its responsibilities and is prepared to act on those responsibilities. Egypt's conviction of the truth of its principles and its respect for those noble objectives has enabled Egypt to confront Israel in political and military clashes. One of the most recent military confrontations took place in October, during Ramadan. It proved unequivocally that the establishment of peace in the Middle East must be based on legitimate foundations, on equity and international law, as well as on the recognition of the rights of the Palestinians. It proved that the heart of the problem is precisely the question of Palestine and that the restoration of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people is the sound basis for the establishment of a total

and lasting peace. Israel had made many efforts to return to a policy of procrastination until the day when President El-Sadat's initiative made it possible to unfreeze the situation and turn the efforts towards the achievement of just and lasting peace in the region.

219. Egypt has striven tirelessly to make it possible for the Arabs to recover their rights and to put an end to the Israeli occupation of the Arab territories. The entire international community has been paying careful attention to the agreements reached at Camp David. As was pointed out by President El-Sadat, we have reached a framework that will make possible an Israeli evacuation of the Sinai. This will open up the way for the Palestinian people to recover their rights and sovereignty over their national territory. During the negotiations in Washington, Egypt tried to translate this framework into actual concrete steps or phases in order to prepare for the fulfilment of Arab hopes, and particularly the hopes of the Palestinian people. The Camp David documents stipulated precisely that peace in the Middle East must be based on respect for the principles of the United Nations Charter, the provisions of international law and international legality.

220. Egypt's goal is an over-all solution of the problem that will certainly take into account rights of the Palestinian people and bring about the evacuation of all territories occupied by Israel since 1967, including Arab Jerusalem, which is regarded as an integral part of the West Bank. Egypt recognizes no policy or measure undertaken by Israel in that Holy City. I believe that this attitude on the part of Egypt is supported by the General Assembly and the Security Council and reflects an unequivocal fact. This attitude has always been the policy of Egypt and will continue to be so in future. Egypt's position is the following. Israel cannot claim any sovereignty over the West Bank or Gaza, because sovereignty belongs to those living in those territories, that is, the Palestinian people. By virtue of this fact, the Camp David documents made clear the need for the participation of all parties involved in the conflict before a settlement of the question of Palestine in all its dimensions can be arrived at and in order that the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people may be restored.

221. I shall not go into details in discussing the excellent report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People or on Mr. Fall's statement on it, but I should like to say how greatly we appreciate the part played by Mr. Fall and all the other members of his Committee in protecting the rights of the Palestinian people. It is for the United Nations, as I have said, to discharge its historical responsibility in this respect. The report has taken up the practical and objective aspects of the question and contains certain proposals which could act as a catalyst to produce an evolution in the situation and lead to a just solution, in the region.

222. Egypt is deeply convinced that international circumstances and the substantial changes brought about by the October war provide the international community with a unique opportunity to achieve a just and lasting peace in the Middle East, one that would make it possible to safeguard the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. It is the responsibility of the United Nations to seize this opportunity. The United Nations must not let this oppor-

tunity slip by; it must not allow a freezing of the situation. Any attempt to freeze the situation would be rejected by us. Experience has shown that attempts to freeze the situation could cover up great latent dangers, not just for the people of the region but for international peace and security.

223. It has been established that the perpetuation of this state of affairs in the region constitutes a threat to peace, because neither peoples nor States will accept living constantly under Israeli occupation and in the context of a refusal to recognize the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people. It is more necessary than ever before for the international community to act urgently to break the deadlock. It is for the States Members of this Organization to encourage any just solution and to resist any obstructive attitude.

224. In conclusion, I should like to address those who have been attacking Egypt, the people of Egypt and the President of Egypt. Happily, they form only a small group in the international community, because Egypt's efforts do not derive from a selfish or regional interest at all. The problem is not an Egyptian-Israeli one; it is an Arab-Israeli

problem. Egypt's efforts are aimed at defending a just cause. Egypt will pursue its efforts in discharging its full historical responsibility without being deterred by such attacks or such barbs that are directed at it by those who are exploiting the Palestinian question in order to serve their own interests. I hope that those who attack Egypt may realize—before it is too late—that it has, in fact, always supported and will always support the Palestinian people. The events of recent years should surely make this point clear to them.

225. The Egyptian people remain confident of their abilities and will continue to shoulder their responsibilities. Strengthened by their belief in God and in themselves, they are convinced of the justice of the Arab cause and are determined to realize a just, comprehensive and lasting peace, which will safeguard the rights of the peoples of the region, and first and foremost those of the Palestinian people. We will rejoice on the day that the Palestinian people regain their freedom in their own homeland and can set in motion their own creative forces to contribute to the progress and prosperity of mankind.

The meeting rose at 7.10 p.m.