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President: Mr. Indalecio LIEVANO (Colombia).

AGENDA ITEM 30

The situation in the Middle East: report of the Secretary-General (*continued*)

1. Mr. NAIK (Pakistan): This year the General Assembly is debating the situation in the Middle East against the background of developments whose impact on the course of events in the Middle East remains to be seen. Pakistan has closely followed the personal involvement of the President of the United States, Mr. Carter, in the peace-keeping efforts, which culminated in the Camp David summit meetings. The full scope and dimension of the framework accords signed in early September¹ will be unfolded in the course of time. However, a peace formula that is based on the resolutions of the United Nations and acceptable to all the parties is still not in sight. Thus the situation in the Middle East continues to remain unstable and explosive, posing a direct threat to international peace and security.

2. The question of Palestine lies at the heart of the problem of the Middle East. It is the direct outcome of the great injustice done to the Palestinian people in 1947 when they were driven out of their homes and their State was partitioned in order to provide a homeland for the European Jews. They have been condemned ever since to live as refugees, in poverty and degradation, in the neighbouring States. Those who have seen the refugee camps, the misery and the squalor of those habitations cannot help being moved by the transcendent tragedy in which they find those people locked. A new generation of Palestinians is growing up who long for an identity but have to live with an uncertain present and an unknown future. Then there are those living in continuing humiliation in the occupied territories. These people have been denied all rights which are considered fundamental, in particular, the right to national independence and national sovereignty. Therefore, till such time as the legitimate national aspirations of the Palestinian people are recognized, a durable structure of peace cannot be erected.

¹ 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.

3. The Palestinian people are as much entitled to exercise the right of self-determination in their own land as any other people. Their existence as an independent nation was provisionally recognized in the 1922 grant of the Palestine Mandate, long before there was any corresponding recognition of Israel. At the same time as the United Nations recommended the creation of Israel, it sanctioned the establishment of the Palestine State on the Palestinian soil. Nothing has occurred since 1947 in any way invalidating this title to a national State. In population, size and capacity for self-government and independence the Palestinians are as much qualified for membership in the United Nations as any of the existing Member States. The General Assembly in its various resolutions has stressed that a just and lasting peace in the Middle East cannot be achieved without a 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.

4. It is wrong for the Jewish people to deny to the Palestinians the rights they have for centuries sought for themselves. Israel's security cannot be ensured by the permanent oppression and dispersal of the Palestinian people, since anything based on the denial of just rights of other people cannot last for long.

5. The other major element in the Middle East situation is the question of Israel's withdrawal from territories occupied in 1967 in accordance with Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). Instead of vacating the occupied territories, Israel has taken, and is continuing to take, measures to incorporate them permanently by changing their demographic character and institutional structures. The matter has been considered by the Security Council and the General Assembly in past years. Paragraph 39 of the Secretary-General's report [A/33/311-S/12896] refers to the measures taken by Israel in the occupied territories which are aimed at modifying the demographic composition and geographic character of the occupied territories and at the establishment of settlements; these measures constitute an obstacle to peace.

6. Israel's reference to the occupied territories as liberated areas and to the West Bank and Gaza as Judaea and Samaria not only contravenes United Nations resolutions but is a source of disquiet to all those who are interested in peace in the Middle East. By the use of these terms Israel is trying to establish a claim over those territories on the basis of historical prescription which cannot be challenged or questioned and which forecloses all basis for a dialogue. Should the world community directly or indirectly concede Israel's claim, it would lead to a situation which would engulf the entire region in unending strife. Moreover, claims

to territories on such grounds would bring into question the legal sanctity of existing boundaries and frontiers and lead to widespread and recurring instability in all regions of the world. By inference such claims also rule out the possibility of agreeing to a peace settlement on the basis of the Security Council resolutions which call for the return of all conquered territories. It is, therefore, imperative for the United Nations to prevent Israel from taking further measures to incorporate Arab lands and to claim them by planting new settlements and expanding the existing ones in the occupied territories. A durable peace settlement requires complete Israeli withdrawal from all the Arab countries occupied in 1967, including the West Bank, Gaza and the Golan Heights, and the restoration of Arab sovereignty over the holy city of Jerusalem.

7. Another major obstacle to the attainment of a comprehensive peace in the Middle East is the persistent refusal of Israel to agree to the participation of the legitimate representatives of the Palestinian people, namely, the Palestine Liberation Organization [PLO]. The status and legitimacy of the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people has been recognized by the General Assembly and the Security Council. My delegation fully shares the general belief that, without the participation of the PLO, peace negotiations will remain partial and therefore inconclusive.

8. Though the question of the Middle East, in one form or another, has been with this Organization for over 30 years, the United Nations has failed to promote a settlement of the problem. Last year the General Assembly adopted resolution 32/20 in which, among other things, it reaffirmed that:

“... a just and lasting peace in the Middle East, in which all countries and peoples in the region can live in peace and security within recognized and secure boundaries, cannot be achieved without Israel's withdrawal from all Arab territories occupied since 5 June 1967 and the attainment by the Palestinian people of their inalienable national rights”.

The same resolution urged:

“... the parties to the conflict and all other interested parties to work towards the achievement of a comprehensive settlement covering all aspects of the problems and worked out with the participation of all parties concerned within the framework of the United Nations”.

Unfortunately these recommendations remain unimplemented.

9. Today we stand at a turning-point in the history of the Middle East. The opportunity for a lasting peace is there, provided Israel shows flexibility and foresight and responds positively to the Arab initiatives. There is a sufficiently general consensus on the main elements of a comprehensive peace settlement in the Middle East; they are, first, Israeli withdrawal from all territories occupied since 1967; secondly, recognition and vindication of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to establish a State of their own; and thirdly, the right of all the peoples and States of the region to live in peace and

security. It is only on these principles that a just and lasting peace in the Middle East can be based. My delegation feels that the time has now come for the United Nations to move beyond rhetoric and provide the necessary impetus for the negotiation of a comprehensive peace settlement based on the above principles. Otherwise the crisis which now confronts the people of the Middle East may assume dangerous proportions and turn a regional conflict into a major world conflagration.

10. Mr. BAGHLI (Algeria) (*interpretation from French*): The question of the Middle East remains a subject of grave concern for the international community, especially since the situation shows no signs of evolving towards a solution which would allow us to hope for the advent of a just and lasting peace in that region, where peoples have for years undergone severe trials. The invasion of Lebanon by Israel is fresh proof of this.

11. Need I recall that the Middle East crisis came into being first and above all because of the denial of the right of the Palestinian people to national existence and independence by Israel, which, as everyone knows, has always based its policy on aggression, expansion and occupation and still does.

12. This truth, that the tragedy of the Middle East is the tragedy of the Palestinian people, finally has been understood by all. It is because some pretend to ignore this that the situation in the Middle East has found no solution so far.

13. Since the debate began in our Organization, now three decades ago, no settlement has come to culminate the praiseworthy efforts of the international community. That the pursuit of this objective and the expenditure of so much energy have led to no positive results is due to the fact that, in our opinion, attention was focused on the consequences of the Middle East crisis rather than on its origin. In fact, the continuing aggravation of the crisis is due essentially to a deliberate will to ignore the core of the problem, which is the restoration of the national rights of the Palestinian people. To ignore such a truth is to wish to maintain tension in the region, to perpetuate a fait accompli and, in the last analysis, to prevent a just and global solution of the question.

14. Whatever attempts are made to juggle with the facts and to confuse the priorities, the evolution of the Middle East crisis reveals without any ambiguity that a global solution is needed, a solution involving, on the one hand, the restoration of the national rights of the Palestinian people, and on the other hand, the recovery of the occupied Arab territories, including Jerusalem. In these proceedings the participation of the PLO, the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, in any settlement of the Middle East conflict is a prerequisite that the international community has endorsed unanimously.

15. To take any other course, however spectacular, would be deliberately to embark on the road to deadlock. As if 30 years of deals, of bargains, of oppression and of colonization had not provided sufficient opportunity for drawing all the pertinent lessons from an experience from which there is still no escape.

16. Today, after all this experience, we face the following paradox: on the one hand, it is admitted that the Palestinian question is the core of the Middle East crisis, and even more, that it has caused it, determines its evolution and governs its outcome; on the other hand, attempts are being made to relegate the Palestinian people and their legitimate organization to the sidelines in seeking a solution to the crisis. This is the nature of the activities undertaken in various places.

17. Turning their backs to reality, some have made many attempts at achieving a so-called settlement which fundamentally ignores the restoration of the full national rights of the Palestinian people. Israel, by its policy of aggression and expansion, has become an essential element of the imperialist strategy intended to halt the impetus of the Arab revolution towards progress and unity, and to perpetuate the domination and exploitation of peoples in that crucial region of the world. It will then readily be understood why the struggle waged by the Arab peoples falls within the context of the vast liberation struggle of the third world. It is precisely in this struggle that the solidarity of all the peoples has been forged, a solidarity that has been manifested in a striking manner whenever any Arab nation confronted Israeli aggression.

18. It is because of this international solidarity and the sacrifices of the Arab peoples, and in particular those of the Palestinian people, that the existence of the latter finally has been understood to be an undeniable reality for the entire international community. Thus, any partial solution or any separate agreement is irrevocably doomed to fail.

19. Algeria, for its part, consistently supports the decisions taken by the Arab summit meetings at Algiers and Rabat, which were later endorsed by the international community through the United Nations, where, since 1974, the PLO is a Permanent Observer. No undertaking genuinely designed to promote a just and lasting solution can be viable unless the national rights of the Palestinian people are satisfied and unless the occupied Arab territories are recovered, including Jerusalem. Naturally, such an objective requires that the international community abide by its own commitments.

20. Such is the hope that inspires my delegation during this session.

21. Mr. WARSAMA (Somalia): The General Assembly is engaged once again in the task of reviewing the Middle East situation and promoting the search for a Middle East settlement. As that search continues after more than three decades of tension and conflict in the area, it is particularly necessary that the General Assembly should not lose sight of the cardinal elements of the Middle East problem and that it should reaffirm its commitment to the principles it has espoused over the years as the foundation for a just and lasting peace.

22. These principles are of course based on the legitimate aspirations of the people of the area, on established international covenants and on international law interpreted in the light of the United Nations Charter.

23. The main elements of a Middle East peace have long been identified in unambiguous terms by the international

community. The question of the rights of the Palestinian people, for example, has been described repeatedly in this and other United Nations forums, by Member States of all regional groups and political persuasions, as being at the heart of the Middle East conflict. That has been the case from the earliest stage of United Nations involvement in the Middle East question. As we know, the acceptance by Israel of the right of the displaced Palestinians to return to their homes or receive compensation, was a condition of its membership in the United Nations. When Israel reneged on that condition it ensured that conflict would be endemic in the Middle East. It could not be otherwise since Palestine was, and is, no less sacred, no less a homeland and no less a focus of national aspiration for its native Arab people after 2000 years of continuous habitation than for the Jewish immigrants who came there in the first half of this century. And who could blame the Palestinians for refusing to submit to the Zionist attempt to eliminate them as a people and for insisting that their plight remain before the conscience of the world?

24. The United Nations has never in the past accepted Zionist attempts to create faits accomplis with regard to the Palestinians, and it must not do so now. From the time it adopted resolution 194 (III) calling for the return of the Palestinian refugees, to the adoption of resolution 3236 (XXIX) of 1974, reaffirming the inalienable right of the Palestinians to nationhood in Palestine, the General Assembly has always expressed its concern over the wrong done to those people in terms of simple justice and in terms of remedies available under international law. Unfortunately, neither considerations of equity nor of international law have had the slightest effect on Israel's policies and practices. Indeed, for over three decades Israel has continued to treat the resolutions of the United Nations with defiance and contempt.

25. The second major element of the Middle East situation has grown out of the first. The conflict situation caused by the fact that the Palestinians are deprived of their rights has been used by the Israelis as an opportunity for aggression against Arab States and for carrying out the expansionist goals central to the Zionist philosophy.

26. Since 1967 the illegal seizure and occupation of Arab territory by Israel has added to the dangers of the Middle East situation. Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) are addressed to this problem; they rightly call for Israel's withdrawal from all Arab territory seized illegally in 1967 and occupied since then. The intent of resolution 242 (1967) is clear since it states or reaffirms the Charter-based principles of the right to self-determination and the non-acquisition of territory by aggression. All Arab territory in Israeli hands was acquired in that way, so the resolution obviously refers to all such territory.

27. As my Foreign Minister stated in this General Assembly:

"No provision in those resolutions can in any way be understood to mean that Israel can determine which occupied territory it will keep and which it will return. Nor can any provision be interpreted to mean that Israel has the right to impose any military, political or social conditions on any of the occupied Arab territories,

including Arab Jerusalem and the holy shrines.” [23rd meeting, para. 100.]

28. The newest element in the Middle East situation is Israel's policy of intervening in the affairs of Lebanon. The callous and inhuman acts of aggression by the Zionists against the Lebanese population have been condemned by the majority of Member States. These acts would surely have been more severely condemned by all sections of the international community if they had been perpetrated by any country other than one which has managed, against the evidence, to portray itself falsely as the victim rather than the perpetrator of aggression. It is certainly no exaggeration to say that Israel's brutal violations of Lebanon's territorial integrity and its cynical political interference have been major contributing causes to the Lebanese tragedy. At the present time Israel is hampering the efforts of the United Nations peace-keeping force in Lebanon in its task of restoring stability in southern Lebanon. That action alone should earn Israel the most severe condemnation of the international community.

29. It was one of the most successfully executed illusions of our times that the Zionists succeeded, for as long as they did, in persuading powerful sections of the international community that they were the victimized champions of democracy, of humanity and of peace and progress in the Middle East. The real picture has become clearer in recent times. It is now possible to place in truer perspective the actions of a State which has been founded on principles of racial superiority and exclusivity, and which makes third-class citizens of its own non-European and Arab populations; a State which has closely allied itself with the pariahs of the international community in southern Africa and with oppressive régimes in other countries, and which, even now, continues to intensify the scope of its illegal occupation of Arab territory in defiance of the will of the international community and of established principles of international law.

30. It is an incontestable fact that there is no other international situation, besides the situation in southern Africa, in which a Member State is in such flagrant and long-standing violation of Charter principles and United Nations resolutions as is Israel in the Middle East conflict.

31. It is regrettable, that, as in the case of southern Africa, the political, strategic and economic interests of some permanent members of the Security Council should stand in the way of the institution of enforcement measures against Israel for its stubborn adherence to policies which endanger regional and international peace and security. However, my delegation notes that some progress has been made in the task, so long engaged in by the General Assembly, of changing the perceptions of States which have the power to bring about fundamental change in the Middle East situation. The General Assembly must continue to persuade those countries to approach the Middle East and other problems in the spirit of the principles of collective security and the interdependence of States. More specifically, we believe that the General Assembly must continue to call for a comprehensive Middle East settlement in which the just and legitimate aspirations and needs of all the peoples in the area will be satisfied.

32. With regard to the future we cannot see any reason to change the view we expressed last year in this Assembly when we said:

“The Israelis cannot have both peace and expansionism. They cannot expect to enjoy tranquillity when they usurp the rights of others. The choice between peace and conflict is Israel's to make.”²

33. Mr. HARRIMAN (Nigeria): It is a painful duty for me to come back to the rostrum after only a few days to speak again on a subject similar to that which we dealt with regarding the struggle of the Palestinian people for their freedom, dignity and self-determination in the Middle East.

34. In the Middle East, despite all efforts and some new elements, real peace will continue to elude us and the world if there is no change in the near future. For a mixture of compelling reasons, the situation in that region vitally affects not only international peace and security, but also the interests of the whole world. There appears to be no respite from the mounting wave of violence, which for more than three decades has plagued the entire region. That is so mainly because Israel has not only brazenly persisted in its defiance of all United Nations resolutions adopted to solve the perennial crisis in the region but has also pursued with reckless abandon its inordinate ambition of expansion on Arab lands acquired over the years by naked force and aggression. It is hardly surprising that the continuing crisis in the area has defied all solution, and I am afraid that we shall be no nearer to solving this problem until Arab rights are fully restored with dignity and honour.

35. In the view of my delegation, the crucial question that remains today—as it has remained all these years—is whether Israel is committed to perpetuating the condition of statelessness of the Palestinians and clinging to its territorial acquisitions within Palestine and even beyond, into neighbouring Arab States. There is yet another aspect to the problem. The issue, as we see it, is whether Israel is prepared to recognize that peace is contingent upon its recognition of the national rights of the indigenous people of Palestine, to show respect for the sanctity of the religious and cultural sites belonging to the non-Jewish population and, lastly, to accept the principle of the inviolability of the territorial integrity of neighbouring Arab States as enshrined in the United Nations Charter. Those are the imponderable and immutable facts behind the perennial crisis in the Middle East, and no solution can be genuine and lasting unless it takes them into account.

36. Israel's blatant acts of land-grabbing and its ruthless pursuit of territorial expansion at the expense of its Arab neighbours have now been conceded even by Israel's backers as constituting the most formidable obstacles to peace in the Middle East. We now know for certain that the plans for territorial acquisitions were coolly conceived and carefully formulated even before the establishment of the Jewish State. Those who may harbour some doubts as to the authenticity of this long-term conspiracy to dispossess the Palestinians of their land need only peruse the writings of some great Jews of our generation. Although there is no

² See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-second Session, Plenary Meetings*, 89th meeting, para. 132.

need to refer to any particular Zionist writer, I should like merely to quote the thoughts of Joseph Weitz, who, in his diary wrote the following:

“Between ourselves it must be clear that there is no room for both peoples together in this country. . . . We shall not achieve our goal of being an independent people with the Arabs in this small country. The only solution is a Palestine, at least Western Palestine (west of the Jordan river) without Arabs. . . . And there is no other way than to transfer the Arabs from here to the neighbouring countries, to transfer all of them; not one village, not one tribe, should be left. . . . Only after this transfer will the country be able to absorb the millions of our . . . brethren. There is no other way out.”³

37. Others, including the leaders of the Jews in Israel today, have said that any Palestinian State in the area would be suicidal for Israel. I believe that Israel's sweeping victory in the June 1967 war provided the Jewish State with a long-sought opportunity for further expansion. Thus the Israeli invading forces occupied whatever was left of Palestine as well as large areas of Egyptian and Syrian territory. Occupation was followed by an explicit policy of colonization—an exercise that naturally involved the large-scale expropriation of Arab land and property. The conscious policy of establishing more and more settlements is designed to create as many facts as possible on the ground, in the hope that these so-called concrete features would influence both the nature of a final settlement and the ultimate boundaries of the so-called Greater Israel emanating from this policy of colonization. “Faits accomplis” is the name of the game, and Israel is its most forceful protagonist in modern times.

38. Deprivation is but one facet of the unending chain of the Palestinian tragedy. Since 1967 Palestinians in the occupied territories have enjoyed no political rights whatsoever. Furthermore, they have had no protection which they could invoke in the event of a serious curtailment of their rights. Under a callous preventive detention law, they have been imprisoned, deported and tortured by the thousands. Their houses and property can be and have been destroyed on so-called security grounds. Even yesterday, the press reported such acts. The Israeli military occupation authorities have remained largely insensitive to protests lodged by such bodies as Amnesty International, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

39. We know for a fact that a preponderant number of Palestinian intellectuals, students, workers and activists are at present languishing in Israeli gaols as “security risks”. What does this all mean? It means that they are being held for long periods and without trial, not for what they have done, but for what they might do in future. It is a rather bizarre and twisted form of justice which cannot be found in any civilized society, except perhaps in totalitarian States or in such places as South Africa. In terms of its level of monstrosity and callousness, the record of the occupying military Power can find a parallel only in racist South Africa.

³ Quoted in David Hirst, *The Gun and the Olive Branch: the Roots of Violence in the Middle East* (New York, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1977), p. 130.

40. Since the Palestinian question continues to remain at the core of the problem of the Middle East, my delegation, even at the risk of repetition, reiterates the view that a just and durable settlement in the Middle East must be based on the following fundamental principles which have been outlined several times already in the General Assembly. First, Israel must withdraw speedily and unconditionally from all the Arab territories occupied since June 1967, in accordance with the principle of the inadmissibility of any acquisition of territories by war or by the use of military force laid down in Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). Secondly, the Palestinian people should be enabled to exercise their inalienable right to self-determination, including the right to establish an independent State in Palestine in accordance with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. Palestinian refugees wishing to return to their homes to live in peace with their neighbours should have the right so to do; those choosing not to return should receive just and equitable compensation for their property. Thirdly, appropriate arrangements should be made, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, to guarantee the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of all States in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries. We hope that Israel will take as one of its objectives the fact that everybody should be able to live in peace in the Middle East.

41. We must insist that these principles must be taken into account in all international efforts inside or outside the framework of the United Nations in the pursuit of a lasting peace in the Middle East. At the same time, all parties to the conflict, including the PLO, should be allowed to participate in all negotiations on an equal footing, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 3375 (XXX) in order to deal with the problem in all its aspects. In the view of my delegation, this is a *conditio sine qua non* if we are to avoid achieving a distorted peace which will merely cover up the problem, thus setting the stage for a renewed conflict perhaps much worse than before.

42. The central position of the Palestine problem within the wider context of the continuing crisis in the Middle East, should in no way minimize the importance of other aspects of the problem. In Lebanon, for example, the international community is confronted with a rather tragic situation in which a nation's sovereignty has been subverted and undermined at will, and its territorial integrity unashamedly and flagrantly violated by a more powerful neighbour, in contravention of the principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter. The United Nations became more involved in Lebanon last March when the Security Council, acting in the aftermath of the Israeli invasion of southern Lebanon, dispatched a peace-keeping force to the area. That force, UNIFIL, had a mandate to confirm the withdrawal of Israeli forces, to establish in a peaceful way operations to ensure that it was not used for hostile acts of any kind, and to make the utmost effort to facilitate the restoration of the authority and sovereignty of the Government of Lebanon in the country.

43. As I said in the Security Council, UNIFIL appears to have become part of the logistic support for Israeli occupation in the Middle East, as all other peace-keeping forces in the Middle East and elsewhere appear to be,

because peace-keeping has taken the place of peace-making in the code of conduct of the United Nations. We pay tribute to the valiant men and officers of UNIFIL for having fulfilled a great part of this mandate even though they have had to operate and perform their difficult task under very trying conditions. However, we regret that through no fault of its own, UNIFIL has been prevented from fulfilling a very important aspect of its mandate, that of the restoration of Lebanese authority in southern Lebanon.

44. One reason for the failure of UNIFIL to fulfil this important aspect of its mandate is so clearly self-evident as not to need any illustration. For purposes of clarity, however, I shall say just this: although Israel eventually bowed to intense international pressure by pulling out its forces as long ago as 13 June—and we congratulate it for this—nevertheless Israel continues to maintain its presence in southern Lebanon by proxy. Its continued occupation has been maintained by a brazen network of alliances forged with Christian militias whose proven allegiance to Israel is now a matter of public knowledge. Israel has thus been enabled to perpetuate its destabilizing role in Lebanon and to subvert, with apparent impunity, the sovereignty of a State Member of this Organization, a small State which for some time now has wanted to be free and to be left alone.

45. At the heart of the matter is Israel's misguided strategy of maintaining a so-called security belt on its northern front right up to the Litani river, using the Christian forces as mere political tools of its reprehensible policies. But political analysts are equally agreed that Israel's security problems have become progressively compounded, just as its quest for territorial expansion has intensified. So in the final analysis, Israel has no greater security than before, despite the hopes of the Zionists. Instead Israel has to contend with an ever-stiffening Arab resistance and bitterness against the Jewish State, and has placed itself on a collision course with the Arabs, the final outcome of which may well prove disastrous to Israel itself.

46. It is high time that Israel's friends and supporters pause to re-examine these new elements in the Middle East tangle: they have all along upheld Israel's quest to survive; now they will need to decide whether it is still politically expedient to uphold Israel's obnoxious policies of expansion and domination, since the danger to its existence as an integral unit of the Middle East has been effectively removed by recent developments.

47. No one can pretend to ignore the negotiations currently taking place in Washington between Egypt and Israel. But they represent a forlorn hope. As we have said before, my delegation welcomes, and will continue to welcome, all reasonable and feasible initiatives in the direction of peace, anywhere in the world. We would have preferred that such initiatives be undertaken within the framework of the United Nations, since this is a method which has the broadest support, and is one likely to generate international acceptability. However, we are cognizant of the fact that Egypt continues to insist on a more realistic linkage between a possible Egyptian/Israeli peace treaty and a mandatory solution of the Palestinian problem within an agreed time-table. Our hope is that

Israel, sooner than later, will realize the wisdom of such a course and will co-operate in the evolution of a political solution to this long-standing problem.

48. For its part Nigeria will continue to support all the legitimate demands of the Palestinian people for their inalienable rights to self-determination and independence in the region within secure and recognized boundaries of their own. Tel Aviv should be under no illusion as to the determination of the entire international community to work relentlessly for the attainment of such a goal. We only hope that Israel will, in its own interest, strive for a just and lasting solution so that Arab bitterness, created by three decades of deprivation, repression and brutality, can be removed.

49. In conclusion, my delegation would like to emphasize the collective responsibility of the United Nations for finding a speedy solution to this problem if we are to avoid a dangerous escalation of the simmering tension that threatens the current "no war, no peace" situation in the region. In this regard, I cannot but agree with the frank assessment of the present situation in the region made by the Secretary-General in his report of 12 September 1978:

"To the outside observer the irony of the Middle East is that this historic region, which has given so much to our civilization and which is still a great and diverse reservoir of human talent, has also become a grave danger to the rest of the world." [See A/33/1, sect. III.]

50. In the circumstances, my delegation is of the view that the international community has a binding obligation to find some means of liberating the Middle East and, indeed, all humanity, from a nightmare that has lasted far too long.

51. Mr. KOSTOV (Bulgaria): For many successive years now, the question of the Middle East has been in the limelight among United Nations activities, as well as being a focal-point of the attention of the world's public. Notwithstanding the resolutions adopted by the Security Council and the General Assembly and the efforts exerted on the part of the United Nations to implement them, no real progress has been achieved in past years towards establishing a just and lasting peace in that region of the world. The situation in the Middle East continues to be unstable, insecure and potentially dangerous. It is likely to remain so unless and until a comprehensive settlement covering all aspects of the Middle East problem can be reached. This dangerously explosive situation in that region is further compounded by Israel's precipitous armaments drive, assisted by some of its allies and sponsors, as well as by the merciless policy of occupation which it continues to pursue in the occupied Arab territories.

52. What are the conclusions to be drawn from the continuance of the crisis in the Middle East?

53. In the view of the Bulgarian delegation, the first obvious conclusion is that the basic causes which underlie the Middle East conflict have not been removed. Israeli armed forces continue to occupy large portions of the territories of neighbouring Arab States, which Israel seized as part of its aggression in 1967. The Israeli Government continues with exceptional obduracy to carry out actions

aimed at the transformation of the demographic, economic, cultural and other features of those territories. This is an eloquent testimony to the fact that Israel has no intention of leaving those lands and that it intends them for complete annexation.

54. There is another conclusion which, in the submission of my delegation, emerges from an objective analysis of the situation in the Middle East. This is that nothing less than the achievement of an over-all and comprehensive settlement of the problem, including the very core of the Middle East problem—that is, the question of Palestine—can bring about the establishment of a just and durable peace in that region of the world. The ruling establishment of Israel continues to deny to the Arab people of Palestine the possibility of exercising their inalienable national rights. Although the right of the Palestinian Arabs to return to their homeland and to set up there a national State of their own has been repeatedly reaffirmed by the United Nations, up to now more than 3 million Palestinians have been living as refugees or suffering under occupation.

55. We are firmly convinced that the hopes which certain countries entertain that it is possible for the Middle East problems to be settled through separatist talks behind the back of the Arab nation and to the detriment of its vital interests are ill-founded. At the conference recently held in Moscow, the leaders of the Communist and Workers' Parties and Governments of Bulgaria, Hungary, the German Democratic Republic, Poland, the USSR and Czechoslovakia reaffirmed their position of principle on the question of the Middle East and resolutely condemned the conclusion of separatist Israeli-Egyptian deals under United States auspices, since they will lead to a further aggravation of the situation in that region. They expressed their opinion that:

“... such separate and anti-Arab deals run counter to the interests of attaining an all-embracing political settlement in the Middle East in accordance with the interests of all people of that area, including the Israeli people, and contradict the interests of international security and United Nations resolutions.”

56. Political gambits practised by certain Heads of State could mislead or even dupe some people. But such actions can hardly for long confuse the international community at large. The Camp David decisions have been received with profound indignation by progressive Arab public opinion. These decisions have also been condemned in numerous letters and declarations addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations by prominent Palestinians in the territories occupied by Israel. I should like to draw attention to the Ninth Arab Summit Conference held recently in Baghdad. The decisions adopted at that Conference confirmed once again that a just and lasting peace in the Middle East can be reached only within the framework of a comprehensive solution of the Middle East problem, including the question of the exercise of the inalienable rights of the people of Palestine and that conducting any separate talks whatsoever behind the back of the Arab nation and to its detriment would only have the effect of rendering ever more difficult the achievement of a just settlement of the Middle East crisis.

57. The problems of the Middle East are of particular concern to my Government and I will mention two

principal reasons for this: first, the geographical proximity to my country to that hotbed of tension, and, secondly, the fact that that hotbed of tension conceals a serious threat to international peace and security. My Government continues to stand firmly for an effective, just and comprehensive political settlement of these problems. This policy course was reaffirmed just a few days ago by Todor Zhivkov, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party and President of the Council of State of the People's Republic of Bulgaria. He stated that:

“The People's Republic of Bulgaria has repeatedly emphasized that a lasting solution to the crisis in the Middle East can be achieved solely following the path of a complete and unconditional withdrawal of the Israeli troops from all the Arab territories occupied in 1967, the realization of the legitimate national rights of the Arab people of Palestine including its right to self-determination, creation of its own independent State and return to its homeland in conformity with the relevant United Nations decisions, under guarantees for the independence, independent existence and the security of all States in the region. The achievement of this end necessitates the concerted efforts of all parties concerned, with the participation of the Palestine Liberation Organization on an equal footing as the sole legitimate representative of the Arab people of Palestine.” [See A/33/393, annex.]

58. As far as we are concerned, there can be no doubt that the principles underlying this position correspond to the fundamental interests and legitimate rights of all countries and peoples involved in the conflict. Annexation and national oppression are incompatible with peace and basic political realism, which, in turn, makes outstandingly clear the necessity of achieving a comprehensive solution to the Middle East problems.

59. I should like to conclude my statement by taking note of the fact that the position of my Government coincides with the positions of the overwhelming majority of States expounded in the course of the current discussion, as in the past.

60. We continue to be firmly convinced that the only reasonable alternative to the stalemate thus created remains the resumption of the concerted efforts of all parties concerned, within the framework of the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East, with the participation of the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Arab people of Palestine.

61. Mr. JELONEK (Federal Republic of Germany): It was only one week ago that my delegation had the honour to explain from this rostrum the position of the nine member States of the European Community with regard to the question of Palestine [66th meeting]. Much, if not all, of what we said on that occasion could be repeated today as I speak on behalf of the nine countries in the debate on the Middle East question. Both items are indeed so closely interlinked that they are inseparable.

62. In order not to be repetitive I shall concentrate on points which give rise to either hope or concern for the future.

63. In his statement on the Middle East question at last year's session of the Assembly,⁴ the Permanent Representative of Belgium, speaking on behalf of the nine members of the European Community, expressed the hope that the debate, taking place at that moment of a new peace initiative, would contribute to the establishment of peace. He then referred to a whole range of efforts that had been made to advance the course of peace negotiations.

64. The courageous initiative of the President of Egypt, Mr. El-Sadat and the positive results reached at the Camp David meetings have, in the view of the nine countries, renewed hope for a settlement of the bitter Middle East conflict. The nine members of the European Community sincerely hope that in this connexion the result of the Camp David summit meetings and the subsequent negotiations between Egypt and Israel will prove to be an important step on the path to a just, comprehensive and lasting peace settlement for the Middle East. Meanwhile, no obstacle should be placed in the way of this process, which should be kept open and should, through further development and wider participation, lead to a comprehensive settlement.

65. May I, in this connexion, commend the Secretary-General for his excellent report on the situation in the Middle East [A/33/311-S/12896], which also contains a full account of various peace efforts by many sides and parties.

66. The nine European countries have repeatedly outlined the framework which must, in their opinion, be respected for such a peace settlement to become just, comprehensive and lasting. I should again like to refer in this respect to the London Declaration on the Middle East of 29 June 1977,⁵ which is based on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). The Declaration recognizes and advocates, on the one hand, the realization of Israel's right to a safe and guaranteed existence and, on the other hand, the legitimate right of the Palestinian people to give effective expression to its national identity, which would have to take into account the need for a homeland.

67. We again outlined these principles, which must be taken as a whole, in the statement of the nine countries with regard to the question of Palestine last week. I should therefore like to refer representatives to that statement.

68. A major source of concern to the nine countries remains the situation in Lebanon. Our nine Governments have welcomed the fact that the cease-fire of 7 October seems for the most part to have been observed, and that efforts aimed at resolving Lebanon's internal differences are under way. The nine European countries believe that those efforts should be intensified. The nine Governments, in a statement of 23 October 1978, also appealed to all Lebanese, irrespective of religious or political conviction, to support President Sarkis in his efforts to preserve and

re-establish the unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Lebanon. I can only repeat that appeal from this rostrum.

69. As far as the situation in southern Lebanon is concerned, I should like to add the further appeal to all parties concerned to co-operate with UNIFIL in the fulfilment of its mandate. Noting with concern certain passages of the latest interim report on UNIFIL of 18 November 1978 by the Secretary-General,⁶ the nine European countries direct their appeal particularly to the Lebanese *de facto* forces and those who support them.

70. In view of the magnitude of the problems still unresolved, and also in view of the many complicating factors in the Middle East situation, a reasonable degree of optimism as to the immediate future may sometimes seem difficult to maintain. It is, however, evident that all the major parties concerned are seriously attempting to come to terms with reality and to work together for a solution of a conflict that has threatened world security for the past 30 years and has caused so much human suffering on all sides. In this atmosphere of growing awareness of the possibility of real peace, let me repeat that no obstacle should be placed in the way of movement towards a just, comprehensive and lasting settlement of the Middle East conflict.

71. Mr. BLUM (Israel): The nations of the Middle East stand at a turning-point in their history. For the first time in more than 30 years of conflict there is real and tangible progress towards peace. Israel and Egypt have reached an important stage in their peace negotiations. High-level consultations, discussions and meetings are currently taking place with a view to overcoming the remaining obstacles to the first Arab-Israel peace treaty. This is not the place to go into the details of those discussions, because this is not the forum in which the negotiations are taking place. Indeed, at a time when restraint, sensitivity and quiet consultations are of the utmost importance, the current proceedings of the General Assembly are particularly inappropriate. In Cairo, Jerusalem and Washington real issues are being addressed with earnestness and in good faith in a genuine attempt to reach agreement. Here at the United Nations the stale, extremist and unproductive formulas of former years are being rehashed in a form of ritualistic incantation, divorced from reality.

72. In stark contrast to the realities of the negotiating process, this Assembly has been harnessed to a systematic campaign that has learned much from the advertising industry. Here in this hall, year after year, we have been subjected to an unending tirade of invective, an endless stream of repetitive speeches and to an ever-growing accumulation of equally repetitive resolutions, passed from one international conference to another, from one committee to another, from one year to the next. All of this has its purpose: to dull the mind, to numb the participants until they obediently, and out of pure exhaustion, repeat the prescribed slogans at the prescribed time.

73. That these slogans are totally detached from reality, that they are in flagrant violation of the United Nations

⁴ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-second Session, Plenary Meetings*, 81st meeting, paras. 107-120.

⁵ Adopted by the Heads of State or Government of the European Communities on 29 June 1977 in London at the meeting of the European Council. See *European Parliament Bulletin*, No. 22/77 (15 July 1977), pp. 3-4.

⁶ See *Official Records of the Security Council, Thirty-third Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1978*, document S/12929.

Charter—which instructs the Organization to promote international peace and security, and not to obstruct it—is all irrelevant to the sloganers. And the outside world, at first outraged by this distortion of Charter ideals, is now simply bored and no longer regards the proceedings in this hall seriously. Surely, many representatives must have noticed the declining resonance of the General Assembly in recent years.

74. That said, I have no illusions that anything which I may say today will influence those who, for whatever reason, have been harnessed to the campaign of hatred carried on against Israel in recent years in this hall. My statement today is therefore directed specifically to those who are open to an objective study of the situation in the Middle East and who are prepared to listen to both sides in the conflict. I ask them first of all to notice the sharp distinction between condemnations and negotiations. It is no exaggeration to say that the proceedings in this hall in recent years constitute a negation of the negotiating process. "To negotiate" is defined by the Webster dictionary as follows: "To confer with another so as to arrive at the settlement of some matter . . . to arrange for or bring about through conference, discussion and compromise." That process presupposes a mutual recognition and respect by each side for the other. Compromise is impossible when one side refuses to recognize the existence of the other. This Assembly's recourse to condemnation therefore not only negates the very principle of negotiation and compromise but also constitutes an implicit acknowledgement and acceptance of the absolute refusal of the hard-line Arab States to recognize the existence of Israel.

75. That refusal and that rejection, as embodied in the very name "rejectionist", forms the heart and core of the Arab-Israel conflict. That rejection predated the rebirth of the State of Israel 30 years ago. It results directly from the Arab refusal to come to terms with the revival of Jewish independence and national sovereignty in the Jewish homeland and the creation of a Jewish State in the Middle East alongside the Arab States of the region. All subsequent problems, including the problem of refugees, both Jewish and Arab—and it should be recalled that about one half of Israel's Jewish population consists of Jewish refugees from Arab countries and their children—and the problem of borders are the result of the ongoing conflict, not its cause.

76. There is no better evidence of this fact than the events of the last 12 months. The moment that the President of the Arab Republic of Egypt recognized the need for a new departure in the Middle East negotiations began. There have been difficulties and snags and problems as there will inevitably be when real national interests are involved. But by any standards the progress towards peace in the last year has been remarkable. When compared with the length of time taken to negotiate a Panama Canal treaty or a German-Polish treaty, or with the fluctuating hopes for further progress in the negotiations within the context of the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks, it must be admitted that the break-throughs achieved by Israel and Egypt are remarkable by any yardstick. With patience, the few remaining difficulties can and will be solved as well.

77. Pointing equally to the core of the Middle East conflict has been the hysterical reaction of the hard-line

Arab States to Egypt's readiness to negotiate with Israel. It is not this or that provision in the Camp David agreements to which the rejectionists object but the very fact of the recognition of Israel's existence which will be endorsed by the signing of a peace treaty. Therefore, from the outset of the current peace process, the Libyan-Syrian-Iraqi axis, at the head of the Arab rejectionist camp, has not left one stone unturned in its efforts to undermine the prospects of peace. Against every phase in the peace process, this rejectionist *troika* has tried to raise barriers. Immediately after the historic talks between President El-Sadat and Prime Minister Begin in Jerusalem a year ago, they convened in Tripoli what they proclaimed as the "summit of resistance and confrontation". There they decided—and I quote from *The New York Times* of 6 December 1977:

"... to work for the elimination of the results of President Sadat's visit to the Zionist entity and his negotiations with the leaders of the Zionist enemy".⁷

Immediately after the achievement of the Camp David agreements, they hastened to Damascus and established what they called the Steadfastness Front, whose aims, as reported in *The Washington Post* of 22 September 1978, were "to set up functioning machinery for military, political and economic co-operation . . . seeking to frustrate the Camp David agreements". Paralleling the peace negotiations in Washington, they met again in Baghdad a month ago and in their concluding statement they resolved: "to invite the Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt to renounce the two agreements and not to sign the peace treaty with the enemy" [A/33/400, annex, para. 6]. And now, in this debate, the representatives of the rejectionist *troika* and their supporters have given ample voice to their belligerent intentions and their uncompromising unwillingness to negotiate and to come to terms with Israel.

78. In other words, every constructive step towards peace has been countered by a step in the opposite direction by those who still refuse to recognize reality. And, as Egypt and Israel have broken new ground and reached agreements almost unthinkable last year, the rejectionist States have remained mired in the same bellicose rhetoric in which they indulged 30 years ago, when they made no secret of their intention to eliminate Israel from the map.

79. Indeed, for those that harbour any doubts as to the roots and origin of the Arab-Israel conflict, I can only refer to the United Nations records themselves and draw attention to the striking parallels between the statements of 1947 and those issued by the Baghdad Summit Conference and circulated last week by the representative from Iraq.

80. After 31 years memories of the events following the adoption of General Assembly resolution 181 (II) of 29 November 1947 seem to have dimmed. Certain quarters, including States Members of the United Nations, wilfully ignore the fact that all the States members of the League of Arab States in 1947 categorically rejected General

⁷ See also document A/32/411.

Assembly resolution 181 (II). When that resolution was adopted, the Syrian representative stated:

“My country will never recognize such a decision. It will never agree to be responsible for it. Let the consequences be on the heads of others, not on ours.”⁸

And the representative of Iraq said: “. . . Iraq does not recognize the validity of this decision, will reserve freedom of action towards its implementation . . .”⁹ Those were not idle words but a formal declaration of intent to destroy a General Assembly resolution by the illegal use of force.

81. On 5 March 1948, on 1 April 1948 and again on 17 April 1948 the Security Council appealed for an end to the violence, but the Arab States openly defied the Council’s resolutions.

82. On 16 April 1948, before the Security Council, the representative of the Palestine Arab Higher Committee stated that:

“The representative of the Jewish Agency told us yesterday that they were not attackers, not aggressors; that the Arabs had begun the fight and that once the Arabs stopped shooting, they would stop shooting also. As a matter of fact, we do not deny this fact.”¹⁰

Again, on 23 April 1948, it stated that: “We have never concealed the fact that we began the fighting.”¹¹

83. In contrast, Israel’s Declaration of Independence of 14 May 1948 stated:

“We appeal—in the very midst of the onslaught launched against us now for months—to the Arab inhabitants of the State of Israel to preserve peace and participate in the upbuilding of the State on the basis of full and equal citizenship and due representation in all its provisional and permanent institutions.

“We extend our hand to all neighbouring States and their peoples in an offer of peace and good neighbourliness, and appeal to them to establish bonds of co-operation and mutual help with the sovereign Jewish people settled in its own land. The State of Israel is prepared to do its share in a common effort for the advancement of the entire Middle East.”

84. The violence unleashed by the Arabs from inside and outside Palestine immediately after the adoption of General Assembly resolution 181 (II) reached such proportions that in its first special report to the Security Council, dated 16 February 1948, the United Nations Commission on Palestine bluntly notified the Council that:

“Powerful Arab interests, both inside and outside Palestine, are defying the resolution of the General

⁸ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Second Session, Plenary Meetings*, 128th meeting, p. 1427.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ See *Official Records of the Security Council, Third Year*, 283rd meeting, p. 19.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 287th meeting, p. 14.

Assembly and are engaged in a deliberate effort to alter by force the settlement envisaged therein.”¹²

The Commission also stated:

“Organized efforts are being made by strong Arab elements inside and outside Palestine to prevent the implementation of the Assembly’s plan of partition and to thwart its objectives by threats and acts of violence, including armed incursions into Palestinian territory.”¹³

The Commission concluded: “This Commission now finds itself confronted with an attempt to defeat its purposes and to nullify the resolution of the General Assembly.”¹⁴

85. The reaction of individual Governments in 1948 to the overt attempt to destroy Israel was even more forthright. On 22 May 1948 the United States representative, Senator Warren Austin, told the Security Council that:

“Probably the most important and the best evidence we have on that subject is contained in the admissions of the countries whose five armies have invaded Palestine that they are carrying on a war.

“Their statements are the best evidence we have of the international character of this aggression. . . . They tell us quite frankly that their business in Palestine is political and that they are there to establish a unitary State. Of course, the statement that they are there to make peace is rather remarkable in view of the fact that they are waging war.”¹⁵

86. And the Soviet representative told the Security Council the day before, on 21 May 1948:

“The USSR delegation cannot but express surprise at the position adopted by the Arab States in the Palestine question, and particularly at the fact that those States—or some of them, at least—have resorted to such action as sending their troops into Palestine and carrying out military operations aimed at the suppression of the national liberation movement in Palestine.”¹⁶

The Soviet representative who made that statement was none other than Mr. Andrei Gromyko. The national liberation movement to which he referred was none other than Zionism, the Jewish national liberation movement.

87. It is worth noting that in its resolution 54 (1948) of 15 July 1948, the Security Council determined that the armed Arab aggression constituted a threat to international peace and security within the meaning of Article 39 of the Charter and contemplated sanctions under Chapter VII of the Charter against States members of the Arab League.

88. I have referred at some length to the United Nations records in order to recall the fact, often deliberately

¹² *Ibid.*, *Third Year, Special Supplement No. 2*, document S/676, sect. I, para. 3 (c).

¹³ *Ibid.*, para. 9 (a).

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, sect. VIII, para. 1.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, *Third Year*, 302nd meeting, p. 41.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 299th meeting, p. 7.

ignored or glossed over in the deliberations taking place here, that the Middle East conflict flows from the Arab refusal to accept the existence of a Jewish State and from the consequent attempt to destroy Israel. That was the core of the conflict then and that is what it remains today in the eyes of the rejectionist camp. The territorial situation, which many speakers in this debate seem to regard as the root-cause of all the problems, is a direct function of four wars of aggression launched by the Arab States against Israel. Indeed, representatives would do well to refer to the declaration of the Baghdad Conference itself, which states unambiguously in paragraph 3 (a):

"The conflict with the Zionist enemy goes beyond the struggle of the countries whose territories were occupied in 1967 and involves the entire Arab nation in view of the military, political, economic and cultural danger which the Zionist enemy represents to the entire Arab nation, its fundamental nationalist interests, its civilization and destiny." [See A/33/400, annex.]

89. In conjunction with the avowed aims of the Baghdad Summit Conference to eliminate the State of Israel goes the anti-historical attempt to project backwards the existence of a Palestinian Arab people.

90. In 1919 and 1920 the Arabs objected to the Palestine Mandate, partly on the grounds that they should not be separated from their brethren outside the area of the Mandate. They claimed that they were not Palestinians but part of the Syrian people and members of the Greater Arab Nation.

91. On 31 May, 1956, Ahmed Shukairy, then Syrian representative to the United Nations and later founder of the so-called PLO, told the Security Council: "It is common knowledge that Palestine is nothing but southern Syria."¹⁷

92. President Al-Assad of Syria expressed the same sentiment in March of 1974 when he said—and I quote from *The New York Times* of 9 March 1974: "Palestine is a basic part of southern Syria."

93. And last year, Zuhair Muhsin, head of the PLO's so-called Military Operations Department told the Dutch daily newspaper *Trouw*—and I quote from that paper's issue of 31 March 1977:

"There are no differences between Jordanians, Palestinians, Syrians and Lebanese. . . . We are one people. Only for political reasons do we carefully underline our Palestinian identity. For it is of national interest for the Arabs to encourage the existence of the Palestinians against zionism. Yes, the existence of a separate Palestinian identity is there only for tactical reasons. The establishment of a Palestinian State is a new expedient to continue the fight against zionism and for Arab unity."

94. In fact, the Baghdad decisions themselves, circulated last week by the Iraqi representative, refer continuously to

the "Arab-Zionist conflict", and state their concern with the effects of the Camp David agreements in the following terms:

"... on the Arab struggle against the Zionist aggression on the Arab nations.

"... All sons of the Arab nation and all Arab countries are concerned with this issue and committed to struggle for its cause and offer all material and moral sacrifices for its sake.

"...

"This fact dictates to all countries of the Arab nation the need to shoulder the responsibility of participating in this struggle with all potentials at their disposal. . . .

"... The Conference resolved that Arab States should co-ordinate efforts of those Arab States capable of effective participation . . ." [A/33/400, annex, paras. 2, 3 (a), 3 (b), 8.]

95. For the rejectionists therefore, the heart and core of the Arab-Israel conflict remains what it was in 1947: their refusal to recognize or to come to terms with the national liberation movement of the Jewish people and with the very existence of a Jewish State in the Middle East.

96. The core of the Arab-Israel conflict is—and has always been—this refusal to acknowledge the three-millennia-old bond that exists between the Jewish people and *Eretz Israel*, the Land of Israel. This bond is not only the central phenomenon of Jewish history but also one of the central phenomena of world history. Here at the United Nations constant attempts have been made over the past 30 years to obscure this inseparable bond that exists between the Jewish people and the Jewish homeland. But no amount of distortion and fabrication in this building can undo so central a fact of the political, spiritual, cultural and religious history of the world.

97. I have laboured this point because it is a crucial one. As soon as the rejectionists come to terms with the reality of a Jewish State in the Middle East, negotiations can begin towards a rapid solution of all outstanding issues, as the events of the last year have indeed shown. The question of the Palestinian Arabs, while complex and difficult, can be solved. Contrary to the claims of the propagandists and sloganeers, who have been trumpeting the slogan of an "uprooted people", the fact remains that 80 per cent of the Palestinian Arabs today live in the territory of Mandated Palestine. In fact, Jordan is itself a Palestinian Arab State, constituting as it does nearly three quarters of the territory of the former Palestine Mandate. With goodwill on both sides and with the resources available, the problem is not insoluble.

98. To the Camp David framework envisaging a self-governing authority for the Palestinian Arab inhabitants of Judaea, Samaria and the Gaza District, the so-called PLO, backed by the hard-line rejectionists, has replied with terror. Three leading Arab citizens in those areas have been assassinated by PLO terrorists in recent months. Hundreds of local Arab leaders have received threatening letters

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, *Eleventh Year*, 724th meeting, para. 44.

warning them not to co-operate in the implementation of the Camp David agreements. For the PLO and its supporters the slogan of Palestinian rights has become a code word in the aim of subverting every constructive solution of the conflict by threats and terror.

99. On the basic question before us today, the choice before the General Assembly is clear: it can regurgitate the sterile and time-worn slogans of the rejectionists who still seek a solution without Israel; or it can lend its support to the path of peace through negotiation which has yielded more in the last 12 months than have 30 years of war and conflict. Israel, the Jewish people, and the Hebrew culture and heritage have been an integral part of the history of the Middle East from the dawn of civilization; they will continue to be so in the future. Alongside the 22 Arab States, with their immense territories stretching from the Atlantic Ocean to the Persian Gulf, their vast manpower, natural resources and oil, there is also ample room for a Jewish State in the region to which historically and spiritually it belongs. If this body is to make any contribution towards a peaceful settlement in the Middle East, it must remind the Arab rejectionists of the Jewish people's inalienable right to the Land of Israel and its right to self-determination, national independence and sovereignty. If the General Assembly is unable to lend this modicum of support to the peace process, I appeal to it at least not to obstruct that process by giving encouragement to the forces of war.

100. Four wars and a history of uninterrupted provocations aimed at destroying Israel have shown that military force cannot solve the Arab-Israel conflict. Most recently, the Yom Kippur War of 1973, with its great destruction and loss of life, again showed the impossibility of achieving a solution by war. The time has long since come to abandon the bankrupt slogans of the Khartoum Conference of 1967¹⁸ which proclaimed: "No peace, no negotiations and no recognition of Israel". Those negative concepts, reaffirmed in essence at the Baghdad Summit Conference, are intimately linked; there can be no peace without recognition and negotiations.

101. Israel firmly believes that the events of the last 12 months have created a new reality in the Middle East precisely because the negotiating process, for the first time, has taken the rights and interests of both sides into account. Direct negotiations between Egypt and Israel on issues which seemed intractable have now brought us very close to the conclusion of the first Arab-Israel peace treaty. Israel has accepted the text of the treaty agreed upon in Washington and is willing, soon after the ratification of the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty, to enter into negotiations on the second agreement reached at Camp David—the framework for peace in the Middle East. We have stated before, and I take this opportunity to state again, that Israel seeks the full implementation of both Camp David agreements, in letter and in spirit. We view the peace treaty with the Arab Republic of Egypt as the first step in the search for a peace settlement covering the entire Middle East.

102. Miss KONIE (Zambia): For nearly 30 years now, the intractable problem of the Middle East has taxed the minds

of delegations here at the United Nations. Indeed, the question of the Middle East has been the subject of deliberations in several meetings of the Security Council and other organs of the United Nations. Three times in our lifetime we have witnessed wars in that region, which have had the potential of triggering yet another global holocaust. This is in addition to the continuing slaughter of innocent people, including refugees, by the forces of the aggressor. In recent months, Lebanon has also been engulfed in a fratricidal conflict whose resolution is not yet in sight. These problems, therefore, continue to pose a dangerous threat to international peace and security.

103. What has just been outlined underscores the urgent need for the United Nations to resolve the conflict. My delegation is of the view that the plight of the oppressed people in that region cannot, and should not be dragged out. The international community has a duty to find a meaningful resolution of the problem. One way of doing so is to create conditions which are conducive to a resolution of the issues by peaceful means.

104. The international community, furthermore, has a responsibility to assist the people of that region in their quest to attain their legitimate aspirations. Those legitimate aspirations, which should be self-evident to all, include the very basic right of the Palestinian people to a homeland, something to which all human beings are entitled. It is inconceivable that certain people should still be debating the issue of whether or not the Palestinians are entitled to a homeland in this era.

105. The situation in the Middle East will not be resolved unless and until the root-causes of the problem are resolved meaningfully. The prevailing situation is, first and foremost, a direct result of the intransigence of Israel. Successive régimes in Israel have remained tenaciously arrogant in their treatment of the oppressed people and in their relations with the Arab countries.

106. A decade after the 1967 war, Israel still refuses to abide by countless United Nations resolutions demanding that it withdraw from occupied Arab territories and recognize the legitimate rights of the displaced people of Palestine. Instead of succumbing to the considered collective conscience of mankind as represented in the United Nations, Israel continues to tighten its stranglehold over the occupied Arab lands by extending so-called Jewish settlements. Furthermore, the Israelis have relied on propaganda and semantics in their relentless efforts to confuse the world. This is creating an illusion which will not yield any sensible results. We appeal to them to be realistic and to adopt behaviour conducive to a durable solution.

107. My Government strongly condemns the Israeli authorities for attempting to legitimize Jewish settlements in occupied areas. We believe that the acquisition of foreign territory by forceful means is totally and wholly inadmissible. Those of us who have experienced the degradation of colonialism cannot tolerate the seizure of other people's territories by the force of arms as Israel has done. In fact, Israel has only itself to blame for its isolation in the world community. And, as if that were not bad enough, Israel is collaborating in the military, economic and intelligence spheres with the racist régimes in southern Africa, which

¹⁸Conference of Arab Heads of State or Government, held at Khartoum from 29 August to 1 September 1967.

are our adversaries. It is these policies which invite the international community to link *apartheid* and other forms of racism with zionism. Thus, Africa continues to condemn Israeli policies because of their demerits. Israel must withdraw from all occupied lands without any pre-conditions if peace is to dawn on that region.

108. The other issue which deserves special mention is the position of the PLO in the Middle East situation. It is our contention that there can be no meaningful resolution of the problem if the legitimate representatives of the oppressed people are ignored. History is filled with examples where, ultimately, the collective will of the oppressed people triumphed—contrary to the wishes of the oppressors. We are certain that history will repeat itself in this instance as well.

109. Zambia urges all those who are interested in the resolution of the problem of the Middle East to take cognizance of and involve the PLO in searching for solutions. The PLO is indeed the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. This fact has long been established, and therefore we urge those seeking a solution to the problem of the Middle East to be realistic and assent to deal with the PLO. For our part, I wish to reaffirm

Zambia's support for the legitimate aspirations of the people of Palestine under the leadership of the PLO as their authentic representative.

110. My delegation urges Israel to effect the immediate cessation of all acts of violence against the Arab people. It should be borne in mind that violence triggers counter-reactions. The very fact of occupying other people's land by force of arms is an act of violence. What compounds the issue further is that Israel commits acts of violence against the people in the occupied areas in addition to its acts of aggression against Arab countries. Israel's interference in Lebanon has only worsened the situation. What Israel should realize by now is that no amount of subversion and indiscriminate killings will cow the oppressed people in their resolve to realize their legitimate rights. The international community, including the parties to the conflict, must endeavour to find a durable solution to the vexing problem of the Middle East and thereby pave the way for peace. My delegation has always been prepared to contribute towards the search for a possible solution to the Middle East problem in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the United Nations.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.