

United Nations
**GENERAL
ASSEMBLY**

THIRTY-SECOND SESSION

Official Records

**78th
PLENARY MEETING**

Wednesday, 23 November 1977,
at 11.10 a.m.

NEW YORK

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President: Mr. Lazar MOJSOV (Yugoslavia).

AGENDA ITEM 31

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

1. The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now continue its consideration of agenda item 31. Before calling on the first speaker on my list, I should like to propose that the list of speakers in the debate on this item be closed at 6 p.m. today. As I hear no objection, it is so decided.

It was so decided.

2. The PRESIDENT: The next speaker in the debate is the representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization [PLO]. I call on him on the basis of General Assembly resolution 3237 (XXIX) of 22 November 1974.

3. Mr. TERZI (Palestine Liberation Organization): Once again this Assembly is considering a derivative question. The situation in the Middle East is a result, a ramification of the question of Palestine; for had this Assembly not recommended the partition of a country and helped bring misery upon its inhabitants, and had this Assembly not recommended the establishment of a State for the Arab inhabitants and a State for the Jewish inhabitants, the Palestinians, both Jews and Arabs, would have eventually found a way to coexist and constructively to develop and to progress. The recommendation to establish a racist expansionist *Judenstaat* opened the way to the persistent policy of the racist Zionists to conquer, usurp and expand—to usurp more and to expand still further indefinitely. This persistent policy brought about the explosive “situation in the Middle East” with all its implications, repercussions and dangers.

4. The Secretary-General's report [A/32/240-S/12417] should be read, in our opinion, jointly with the report he submitted to the Security Council on 28 February 1977 in document S/12290.¹

5. The Secretary-General tells us that he has found that the parties expressed their desire for an early resumption of the negotiating process through the convening of the Peace

¹ See *Official Records of the Security Council, Thirty-second Year, Supplement for January, February and March 1977.*

Conference on the Middle East in Geneva. He further tells us that among the parties there was no agreement on the question of the participation of the PLO and the representation of the interests and rights of the Palestinian people. The Secretary-General has observed that the obstacles in the way of reconvening the Geneva Conference were of a kind that could not be overcome by purely procedural means. We cannot agree more. The so-called obstacles are really of substance and not of procedure. Let us consider the progressive development of the formula prescribed by this Assembly to bring about a genuine and just peace to Palestine, the Middle East and the entire world.

6. On 10 November 1975, this Assembly, in its resolution 3375 (XXX), by 101 positive votes, called, *inter alia*, for the invitation of the PLO, the representative of the Palestinian people, to participate in all efforts, deliberations and conferences on the Middle East which are held under the auspices of the United Nations, on an equal footing with other parties, on the basis of resolution 3236 (XXIX). The General Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to inform the Co-Chairmen of the Peace Conference on the Middle East of resolution 3375 (XXX), and to take all necessary steps to secure the invitation of the PLO to participate in the work of the Conference as well as in all other efforts for peace.

7. The above was reaffirmed by this Assembly on 9 December 1976 in resolution 31/61.

8. It is only the enemies of peace that find pretexts and excuses to undermine the efforts of this Assembly and of the Secretary-General. This Assembly cannot accept the contention that there was no agreement on the question of the participation of the PLO. The names of those who refused to respect and comply with the decision of this Assembly must be distinctly spelled out. Maybe we can help. One of the two Co-Chairmen clearly announced that his country did not respect the decision and assumed the role of a direct party to the issue instead of being an honest broker interested only in achieving peace. The other is the Zionist racist junta. Thus, the Secretary-General's very highly appreciated efforts were undermined and obstructed by the Government of the United States and Israel.

9. The Secretary-General was virtually prevented from achieving any positive results when he sincerely tried to carry out the task assigned to him by the General Assembly. He was asked to resume contacts with all the parties to the conflict and with the Co-Chairmen of the Peace Conference on the Middle East in preparation for the early convening of the Peace Conference.

10. Yitzhak Rabin, the then leader of the Tel Aviv junta, declared on 21 March 1977 that the only meeting with the

PLO would be on the battlefield. The Secretary-General had undertaken a mission to prepare for peace and not for war. Thus the Secretary-General's mission and Rabin's, or rather Tel Aviv's, aims proved to be diametrically opposed.

11. The racist Zionists are determined to obstruct peace. They insist, at least verbally, that the basis for the Peace Conference remains Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). We all know that resolution 242 (1967) *inter alia* reiterates the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force and requests the withdrawal of Israeli troops from the territories occupied since the June 1967 aggression. But former General Dayan unashamedly told this Assembly:

“... we believe that the settlement concerning Judea and Samaria and the Gaza Strip should be based on our”—that is, the Israelis—“living together with the Palestinian Arabs in those areas, and not on a partition of the territory”.
[27th meeting, para. 191.]

He added:

“Now our view”—that is, Israel's view—“is that redivision is not the answer. Nowhere is it possible to draw a dividing line which will satisfy not only the security, but also the historical, economic and social needs of all sides.” [Ibid., para. 193.]

12. In good plain English he told this Assembly: “We are not withdrawing and this is our land, and that's it.” He even went to the trouble of re-examining the positions of the Kingdom of Jordan and the Palestinian Arabs, and his wise and highly qualified and objective scientific team of examiners came out with the most unheard-of result. He told this Assembly:

“... we have found no inclination on the part of either [Jordan or the Palestinian Arabs] for a solution based on the redivision of Judaea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip”.
[Ibid., para. 194.]

I am sure that neither Jordan nor the Palestinian Arabs chose ex-General Dayan, of all people, to be their spokesman.

13. Ex-General Dayan spoke of the model for the future coexistence and advocated that all residents should enjoy freedom of movement, etc. The term “residents”, here should not pass without comment. Is it too much for the ex-General to label those living humans residing in Jerusalem and other places under occupation as “citizens”, or has the Palestinian become the perpetual alien resident in his own place of birth, in his own land, in his own country? That is the limit, and yet in this Assembly we still hear talk about human rights. How shameful!

14. To top it all, ex-General Dayan's boss, the notorious terrorist now Prime Minister of the so-called “only democratic State in the Middle East”—and how easy is it to stick labels—told the world on Sunday, 20 November, in a world-wide televised declaration: “... we did not take strange land, we returned to our homeland.”

15. I mention all this to draw the attention of the other Co-Chairman of the Peace Conference, the United States of

America, to a condition it imposed before the PLO could be invited, in accordance with the will of this Assembly, to participate in the Peace Conference on the Middle East; the United States of America says that the PLO must first accept Security Council resolution 242 (1967).

16. We have refused any dealings on the basis of resolution 242 (1967) for reasons that we have mentioned several times. But what resolution 242 (1967) are you talking about? That resolution has been cold-bloodedly murdered by the ex-General and his boss. Resolution 242 (1967) was adopted more than 10 years ago, and the different chiefs that ruled in Tel Aviv did not, at any moment, implement resolution 242 (1967). They did not even make any move to show their intentions to comply with it. They just sat on it. The time had come, and they did murder the resolution. So please, Mr. Co-Chairman residing in Washington, do not insist that we, the Palestinians and the PLO, accept a murdered resolution. This General Assembly has given us the feasible and just formula. And I am referring to resolution 3375 (XXX). In its meeting in March 1977 the Palestine National Council adopted *inter alia* the following:

“Bearing in mind the important achievements accomplished on the Arab and international levels since the twelfth session of the Council, as reviewed in the political report submitted by the Executive Committee, the Palestine National Council decides the following:

“(A) To affirm the right of the PLO to participate in all international conferences, forums and efforts dealing with the problem of Palestine and the Arab-Zionist conflict on an independent and equal footing, for the fulfilment of our national inalienable rights, which have been recognized by the General Assembly of the United Nations since 1974, particularly in resolution 3236 (XXIX),

“(B) To declare that any settlement or agreement affecting the rights of the Palestinian people and reached in its absence is null and void.”

This is how the PLO responds and co-operates with the international community. We are fully conscious of our historic responsibility.

17. On 20 November 1977 Menachem Begin, addressing himself to his guest, the President of Egypt, and to the hundreds of thousands or maybe millions, of television viewers all around the world, invited :

“... the legitimate spokesmen of the Arabs of Israel... to come and meet with us”—that is, with Mr. Begin—“for discussions on our joint policies, on justice, on social justice, on peace, on joint mutual respect”.

If Begin refers to our brothers in the areas occupied before 1967, I am sure the world is aware of the conditions they live in and the dangers they confront, particularly in light of the infamous final solution designed by the notorious Koenig, an executive of the Tel Aviv junta. But if Begin is referring to our brothers in the areas occupied since the aggression of June 1967, let me insert the following remark. He asserts that they are part of Israel and confirms that they have grievances. One clearly reads Begin saying: those

Arabs enjoy no justice, no social justice, no peace and no respect. But that is only a passing remark.

18. At this juncture I deem it very appropriate to remind this Assembly once again of the testimony of Mr. Alfred Atherton, the Assistant Secretary of State for the Near East and South Asia, before the Subcommittees on International Organizations and on Europe and the Middle East of the House Committee on International Relations of the United States Congress. In his testimony Mr. Atherton said:

“In the West Bank and Gaza, however, the situation is different. Both of these territories were part of the British mandate of Palestine. While the legitimate existence of a sovereign Israel in part of Palestine is recognized, the question of sovereignty in the part of Palestine remaining outside of Israel, under the 1949 Armistice agreements has not been finally resolved.”

19. The PLO reiterates that the sovereignty in this remaining part of Palestine is the sovereignty of the Arab inhabitants of Palestine and their descendants.

20. Our brothers in the occupied Palestinian territories have made their position very clear. In a letter addressed to the Secretary-General, our brothers have said the following:

“One of the most important items on the agenda of the present session of the United Nations General Assembly is the question of Palestine. While the Assembly is preparing to welcome the delegations of its Member States, Israel is trying to forestall events, in disregard of international covenants, United Nations resolutions and the basic tenets of human rights, by continuing to establish new settlements, to apply Israeli laws in the occupied territory and to torture and humiliate the Arab populations, in order to annex the occupied territories in accordance with expansionist Zionist designs.

“We the undersigned, representatives of the various sectors of the people of the occupied territories and their national institutions, proclaim the following :

“1. Our attachment to the Palestine Liberation Organization as the sole legitimate representative of the Arab people of Palestine wherever they may be. We emphasize that we, the inhabitants of the occupied territories, are a part of the Arab people of Palestine, who constitute a single national entity.

“2. We confirm and reiterate the resolutions of the Rabat Arab Summit Conference, and, at the same time, denounce and reject the various attempts and strategies aimed at repudiating these resolutions.

“3. We reject any trusteeship or mandate over the Arab people of Palestine, and affirm their right to a homeland, to self-determination and to the establishment of their own independent national State.

“4. We demand complete Israeli withdrawal from all the occupied territories, the implementation of the United Nations resolutions and the guarantee of the legitimate rights of the Arab people of Palestine.

“5. We support the decisions of the Palestine Liberation Organization, including the one rejecting Security Council resolution 242, because it ignores the humane cause of the Arab people of Palestine.

“In addressing world public opinion through the United Nations, we take note of the significant change that has occurred in it as a consequence of its awareness of the expansionist aggressive aims which Israel seeks to achieve at the expense of the Arab people of Palestine. We therefore hope that the General Assembly will adopt, during its present session, firm resolutions respecting the will of the Arab people of Palestine and supporting their struggle, under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization, for the restoration of their legitimate rights.” [A/32/313, annex I.]

That letter was dated 17 September 1977 and contained 46 signatures.

21. A second letter, dated 21 September 1977, had 20 additional signatures. It read as follows :

“At this stage of stepped-up activity with a view to finding a peaceful solution to the Middle East problem and feverish Israeli activity directed toward establishing settlements in the occupied territories and a flood of statements by Israeli officials at the highest level of responsibility aimed at sowing serious doubts regarding the feasibility of pursuing peaceful solutions, we deem it our duty to proclaim and reaffirm the following:

“1. The Gaza Strip is a part of the usurped territory of Palestine, and its inhabitants, who are in integral part of the dispersed Palestinian people, are united in their rejection of the Israeli occupation and in striving to put an end to it.

“2. The recovery by the Palestinian people of their usurped rights to self-determination and to the establishment of their own independent State in their homeland of Palestine is the core of the Middle East problem and the essence of the conflict in the region.

“3. The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) is the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people entitled to speak on their behalf and bear the responsibility of defending their rights. It is imperative that it participate in all forums and conferences concerning the Palestinian issue.

“4. The claim by the Israeli Government that the occupied areas are ‘liberated’ lands and that settlement by Israelis in them is therefore permissible, in blatant defiance of United Nations resolutions and despite the opposition and protests of their Arab population, is nothing but an obstacle to the quest for a peaceful solution to the conflict that entails the danger of the outbreak of war in the region and throughout the world.

“5. Because of its continued support of Israel by providing it with financial assistance and advanced offensive weaponry despite Israel’s aggression and defiance of world public opinion, we place upon the United States of America the responsibility for Israel’s intransigent attitude.

“6. Today more than ever before it is incumbent upon the United Nations, in the person of its Secretary-General, in discharge of its responsibilities set forth in the Charter, to urge strongly and effectively that the United States of America in particular and all forces capable of influencing the conflict in general should face their responsibilities before it becomes too late to prevent the situation from deteriorating into anarchy and destruction.

“7. We hereby state that we shall do our utmost to secure what we consider our natural right, and we appeal to all peace-loving States and peoples to help us to attain this objective.” [*ibid.*, annex II.]

22. The document from which I have just quoted states that many of the signatures on the letters were illegible. I therefore now show the Assembly copies of the letters containing all the stamps and seals of the various municipalities and the signatures of those who wrote the letters.

23. I think that this says enough about the PLO's representation of the Palestinian people.

24. When the current session of the General Assembly opened, we and the entire world saw a new ray of hope. A constructive and positive step was taken in the efforts to attain peace in the Middle East. On 1 October 1977 the two Co-Chairmen of the Geneva Conference issued a joint statement. What was the reaction? Let me read it out:

“So far as the legitimate rights of the people of Palestine and the participation of the representatives of the people of Palestine in the Peace Conference are concerned, the joint USSR-USA statement contains positive indicators towards a just settlement of the Middle East conflict. The legitimate rights of the people of Palestine have already been recognized and reaffirmed by the United Nations and are those which concern the rights of the Palestinians to an independent State, repatriation and self-determination under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization, the sole legitimate representative of the people of Palestine. We see in the joint statement a contribution to international efforts aimed at obtaining a new Security Council resolution which would provide an adequate basis ensuring the attainment of the inalienable rights of the people of Palestine.”

25. But the enemies of peace reacted in quite the opposite way. I need not describe to this Assembly the pressure of all kinds exerted by these enemies of peace to prevent the present United States Administration from honouring the commitment to the attainment of peace.

26. Unfortunately, the enemies of peace have won this round, but we are sure they will not win the fight. For peace will come and peace will prevail.

27. The enemies of peace have reverted to their old method of bilateral contacts to achieve, as ex-General Dayan described it, “true, contractual and effective peace treaties” [27th meeting, para. 188] through negotiations conducted on a bilateral basis.

28. The efforts to achieve peace—a comprehensive peace, a just peace, a peace for all, including the Palestinian

people—were torpedoed, but not sunk, last weekend, 19 to 21 November. Commenting on the visit by President El-Sadat to the Knesset, Chairman Yasser Arafat said:

“President El-Sadat's decision to visit Israel and speak before the Knesset in occupied Jerusalem was a surprise to me personally, especially since what the President said in his speech before the Egyptian People's Assembly was not included in the written text. He in fact deviated from the original text when he declared his determination to visit the Knesset. This dangerous action was undertaken by President El-Sadat in isolation, and without the knowledge of any Arab leader, according to my information”.

Chairman Arafat added:

“The taking of such a serious decision on his own represents a dangerous and abrupt turning-point in the course of the Arab struggle and will undoubtedly endanger the whole Arab nation. Such a visit represents a certain and huge gain for Zionism and imperialism”.

29. The Executive Committee of the PLO issued the following statement on 18 November:

“After a meeting headed by Chairman Yasser Arafat, the PLO Executive Committee, together with all groups of the Revolution, addressed the following communiqué to the Palestinian and Arab masses and the world:

“The decision taken by President El-Sadat represents apostasy from the most sacred goals of our people and nation and a disavowal of the blood of thousands of martyrs. It squarely deals a blow to the principles of Arab solidarity, the resolutions of the Arab Summits and the achievements of the Ramadan war.

“The Arab nation will not forgive any Arab ruler for such a step, which constitutes a dangerous turning point and a denial of this nation's struggle throughout history, the axis of which was always the Palestine cause and the liberation of Jerusalem.

“In announcing its rejection of President El-Sadat's step, the Palestinian leadership calls on all the Arab masses to denounce and condemn this dangerous stand, which negatively affects the future and dignity of our nation, and calls upon the Arab States to define their respective stands.

“The Palestinian gun, the blood of thousands of martyrs, the thousands of detainees and the tens of thousands of militants struggling against Zionist occupation will form a barrage to repel capitulation and prevent a recurrence of the 1948 conspiracy. They will pave the way towards the liberation of Jerusalem and the Al Aqsa Mosque until the Palestinian flag is raised there and the Palestinian people's national aspirations and rights are achieved.”

30. In conclusion, the PLO considers that the settlement of the conflict in the Middle East can be achieved only when the relevant resolutions and the principles of the United Nations Charter are respected and implemented.

Just peace can reign only when the question of Palestine is resolved and justice restored, and the Palestinian people regain their rights.

31. Mr. BISHARA (Kuwait): The annual debate on the Middle East has a major and very important advantage: it reiterates the general framework for peace in the area and rejects the concept of total reliance on military power.

32. States have discovered through their own experience that their security is best served by mutual understanding and agreement. The absolute security of one is bound to affect the security of others. An American historian wrote:

“... the very concept of attaining perfect and everlasting security, whether through the expansion of borders or through some other traditional means, has been one of mankind's greatest and most persistent delusions. Throughout history, the unstable and unreliable balance-of-power system has never, on its own, provided permanent security for even the mightiest of empires. Moreover, history has demonstrated that the harsher the peace terms imposed on a defeated party which has the potential power to challenge the victor some day, the greater the chances of sowing the seeds for future wars. Therefore, in the final analysis, Israel's future security will depend, not on mere power or territorial size, but on the achieving of a just and lasting peace and reconciliation with her neighbours.”

33. But, apparently, Israel is not interested in an understanding with its neighbours, but rather in having peace on its terms. It follows the policy of holding on to Arab territories by virtue of military power. Because of its powerful military machine it thinks that the Arabs have no options except to negotiate with it, on its terms. It has made clear that it wants to retain the Golan Heights, some parts of Sinai, Gaza and the West Bank, which it calls “liberated territories”.

34. There is much talk about the resumption of the Geneva Conference and working papers designed to overcome procedural difficulties. But it is clear beyond any shadow of doubt that Israel is using that fanfare about Geneva as a stalking-horse. Israel is not in a hurry to talk seriously about peace because of the American aid that has strengthened Israel's armed forces to a point where they have become the masters of the Middle East. “Why, then,” wrote a Zionist writer, “... should Israel make concessions to Egypt or anyone else?” *Newsweek* reported in its issue of 9 February 1976 that a high official in Jerusalem had stated: “The watchword here is motion without movement.” That is the best description of Israel's policy. Israel talks so noisily about negotiation and peace, but it seeks the type of peace that disregards the rights of the neighbouring Arab States and at the same time satisfies all its claims.

35. Mr. Kissinger was reported to have told friends: “... when I ask Rabin to make concessions, he says he cannot because Israel is too weak. So I give him arms, and he says he does not need to make concessions because Israel is too strong.”

36. Ten years have passed since Israel's occupation of Arab territories. Jewish settlements are being built in

earnest in the West Bank, Gaza, the Golan Heights and Sinai; in fact, Gaza, West Bank and the Golan Heights have already been incorporated. The General Assembly, in voluminous resolutions, has called for the return of those territories, but Israel has treated those resolutions with utter contempt. So long as Israel enjoys the virtually blind support of the United States, there will be no peace in the Middle East.

37. We in the United Nations express international opposition to the policy of conquest by force and lay down general formulations for solutions. But the United Nations is not a super-State with an army of its own to confront disobedient States. The United Nations relies on the co-operation and goodwill of its Members. It is more than bad luck that the co-operation of some Members in the implementation of United Nations resolutions is not forthcoming.

38. Much has been said about the importance of Security Council resolutions, in particular its resolution 242 (1967). That resolution, which has been talked about so much and even dissected, provides for recognized and secure borders for all States of the area. It does not single out Israel for secure and recognized borders, but Israel has its own interpretation of that resolution. According to *The New York Times* of 21 April 1976, the former Prime Minister of Israel, General Rabin, told the inhabitants of the Jewish settlements in Arab territories: “These settlements are here to stay for a long time... We do not establish new villages only to pull them down later.” This is the problem of the Middle East. Real estate has become a substitute for peace, real estate which the United States calls an obstacle to a peaceful settlement.

39. We have always contended that the velvet-glove treatment and mild reprimands are not a real substitute for a serious confrontation with Israel. But what the General Assembly has been hearing is an attempt to “sugar-coat” occupation. Israel talks about “negotiation” when it means “annexation”. It talks about “peace” when it aims at the imposition of its terms. Thus the Middle East is subjected to a new diplomacy of veneering the ugly and hiding the unpalatable behind the attractive slogans of peace and talks. We should remember the Versailles Peace Conference, which sowed the seeds for the Second World War. A lame peace, with its imperfections, will act as a boomerang.

40. It is an irony of fate that the Zionist lobby in the United States can secure aid and an uninterrupted supply of weapons from the United States, but it is the Arabs and only the Arabs—against whom such supplies are intended to be used—who can give peace to Israel. The United States can give Israel a military advantage for a long time to come, but it cannot give it the peace which it needs. Nahum Goldmann, former President of the World Jewish Congress, has warned that:

“... if we reject what may be only a tenuous peace in order to achieve what Israel calls a ‘full peace’, we may find it more difficult in the future to get better conditions, or even any peace treaty at all... While today the Arab world... may be ready to accept a peace agreement and recognize Israel, some years from now they may feel so strong... that they would utterly refuse to accept a Jewish State in the Middle East”.

41. Former Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion said:

“... peace is more important than real estate ... As for security, militarily defensible borders, while desirable, cannot by themselves guarantee our future”.

42. A lot of high-sounding yet meaningless words have been used in the context of the Middle East conflict. In fact, the real test is Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories as the best guarantee of peace. Leading Arab statesmen in the front-line States have spoken in favour of any guarantees the world may envisage in return for total withdrawal from Arab territories. Cosmetic changes in the areas of occupation are not serious enough to bring about peace. Squatting on Arab territories on the pretext of emotional affinity is an invitation to disaster. We do not go by the grotesque revival of uncertain events at an obscure juncture in our history: that belongs to the dark ages. The edifice of peace is always built on the validity of generally accepted facts.

43. The Middle East is at a critical stage at this moment. There is a psychological change that favours peace. There is a fleeting yet priceless moment for a just peace that should not pass unused. It is up to Israel to seize it; but Israel will be mistaken if it interprets the Arabs' desire for peace as a sign of capitulation. The Arabs insist on the restitution of their occupied territories, including Jerusalem. If Israel thinks that it can have both territories and peace, its leaders must suffer from delusions. The incompatibility of peace with annexation has been unmistakably established. Peace by its nature rejects annexation and it is up to Israel to opt for one or the other. The Arabs have said clearly that they accept peace based on justice, peace without real estate, peace without expansion, peace based on a solid foundation. If that is not achieved, Israel will remain for ever an object of fear, uncertainty and obsession. It will remain for ever dependent on the United States, which will give it arms, but will never be able to grant Israel the peace which only the Arabs can grant. If this fleeting moment slips away, the Middle East will be heading for more bloodshed and more conflagrations.

44. The PRESIDENT: The next speaker is the representative of Sri Lanka, who wishes to introduce draft resolution A/32/L.38.

45. Mr. AMERASINGHE (Sri Lanka): The debate on the Middle East question takes place at one of the most crucial periods in the history of the Middle East question. This is a history that is different from the history of the Middle East itself, which admittedly goes back more than 2,000 years. This Organization is not meant to deal with 2,000-year-old problems; we are here to deal with contemporary problems, and in the present instance it is the contemporary history of the Middle East question, beginning with the termination of the Mandate for Palestine in August 1948, that concerns us.

46. A study of man's history over the centuries shows that there are moments when time seems to stand still. Such moments have proved to be turning-points in the lives of nations and in the history of the world. They can be transformed, according to the will of those immediately involved and those associated with them, into tragedy or salvation.

47. It does not require any deep insight into recent developments for us to express the hope that those developments will help, as the poet Omar Khayyám says, to “... fill the cup that clears To-day of past regrets and future Fears”. As for tomorrow, to quote that same poet, we may be ourselves “with Yesterday's sev'n thousand years.”

48. At this moment, what is most needed of us all is objectivity, restraint and patience.

49. There are those who feel that further United Nations consideration of this question at this juncture must be kept in abeyance. But would not this be an abdication of our responsibility? It would appear to us that at all times it is the duty of the United Nations to exercise unremitting vigilance and also to engage in sober and restrained discussion in the search for proper solutions.

50. We must pledge ourselves to leave no stone unturned in the search for a just and lasting solution to the Middle East question. There is no need for compromise on any principles. On the other hand, positive results cannot be achieved—and will in fact be jeopardized—if there is any show of intransigence. And here we come to the real questions of substance.

51. Is it intransigence to say that there must be withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from occupied territories?

52. Is it intransigence to say that the right of the Palestinians to determine their future must be granted them and recognized?

53. Is it intransigence to say or to imply that the annexation of Jerusalem or the unilateral change in its status, which is not endorsed by the United Nations, cannot be recognized?

54. The United Nations resolutions which have been cited provide the answers to those questions.

55. Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) have been cited as the only relevant decisions of the United Nations in regard to this matter. We agree that they provide the only sound basis for a just and lasting settlement, but they do not exist in a legal or political vacuum. One party lays undue emphasis on Security Council resolution 242 (1967), because it construes it as replacing the question of the legitimate rights of the Palestinians by a Palestinian refugee problem. The architects of Security Council resolution 242 (1967) could not have been guilty of such an act of diplomatic sleight-of-hand.

56. Security Council resolution 242 (1967) has meaning only if it is read along with the single legal instrument that provides the only juridical basis for the existence of Israel—namely, the Plan of Partition with Economic Union, adopted by the General Assembly in resolution 181 (II), entitled “Future government of Palestine”.

57. That Plan of Partition with Economic Union treated the Mandated Territory of Palestine as a single geographical and political entity. By “the future government of Pales-

tine” the Plan contemplated the political machinery by which the Mandated Territory of Palestine would be governed after the cessation of the Mandate. Within the single entity of the Palestine Mandated Territory, the Plan of Partition provided for the creation of two States: an independent Arab State and an independent Jewish State, along with a special international régime for the city of Jerusalem.

58. The boundaries of the Arab State, the Jewish State and the city of Jerusalem were clearly defined in parts II and III of the resolution. The fact that the plan of economic union was not implemented does not vitiate, either wholly or partly, the provisions regarding the creation of the two States that were envisaged, or the status of the city of Jerusalem. The resolution stands as a whole or falls as a whole.

59. The creation of the two States was linked with the proposal for economic union, but the failure to realize the economic union that was contemplated does not extinguish the legal validity of what was realized. It is only by completing what was contemplated under the partition resolution that economic co-operation could at least commence as a means of attaining economic union.

60. All future negotiations must, in our view, be directed towards an agreement founded on the principles stated in Security Council resolution 242 (1967). They are: first, withdrawal of Israel armed forces from territories occupied since 5 June 1967; secondly, termination of all states of belligerency; thirdly, respect for and acknowledgement of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every State in the area; fourthly, respect for and acknowledgement of the right of every State in the area to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force; fifthly, guaranteed freedom of navigation through international waterways in the area; sixthly, adequate guarantees for the territorial inviolability and political independence of every State in the area, to be implemented by whatever means may be found acceptable to all parties; seventhly, a just settlement of the refugee problem.

61. In regard to this last point, a just settlement of the refugee problem can only be related to and based on what General Assembly resolution 181 (II) itself determined. It is for those who are entitled, under General Assembly resolution 181 (II), to an Arab State of Palestine to decide whether or not they want such a State, or what alternative they would choose if they do not wish to have one. They have not yet been given the opportunity of taking such a decision.

62. Anyone who rejects any of these seven principles would be guilty of intransigence and of obstructing a peaceful settlement. The security of borders is an indispensable condition for peace in the area. But what must be recognized is that secure borders cannot be ensured by ramparts or treaties, or by the establishment of diplomatic relations between States that for three decades have been in bitter conflict with one another. The only certain guarantee of security is friendship, mutual trust and co-operation in all fields—economic, social, cultural and political. It is only

in that climate of friendship and mutual trust that peace and justice can triumph.

63. That climate cannot be created by the denial of justice to any single party.

64. I now wish to present to this Assembly the draft resolution on the situation on the Middle East contained in document A/32/L.38, of 22 November 1977. I do so on behalf of my own delegation and the other sponsors. We hope that this draft resolution will be seen and construed for what it is intended to be: a plea for moderation and for justice to all and not as an encouragement or endorsement of belligerency or an incitement to violence.

65. The situation is fast deteriorating, and this trend must be arrested. It is for this reason that we felt that we should present this draft resolution in this form at this moment. A comparative examination of this draft resolution with the resolution adopted last year shows that there are very few changes. The third preambular paragraph takes into account the decisions of the Fifth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Colombo from 16 to 19 August 1976, concerning the situation in the Middle East and the question of Palestine. The next two preambular paragraphs state the points that have been urged before and have appeared either in the same form or in a similar form in previous draft resolutions. The sixth preambular paragraph, which reaffirms the urgent necessity of the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the region, based on full respect for the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, as well as for its resolutions concerning the problem of the Middle East including the question of Palestine, is similar to the fourth preambular paragraph of last year's resolution 31/61. The next preambular paragraph is new as it takes note of a development that occurred after last year's resolution was adopted, namely, the joint statement on the Middle East issued on 1 October 1977 by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the USSR and the Secretary of State of the United States of America in their capacities as Co-Chairmen of the Peace Conference on the Middle East. The next preambular paragraph reaffirms that peace is indivisible, and that a just and lasting settlement of the Middle East problem must be based on a comprehensive solution, under the auspices of the United Nations, which takes into account all aspects of the Arab-Israeli conflict, in particular the attainment by the Palestinian people of all their inalienable national rights and the Israeli withdrawal from all the occupied Arab territories. This also is not anything new. The next and last preambular paragraph states that the General Assembly is convinced that the early convening of the Peace Conference on the Middle East, with the participation of all parties concerned, including the PLO, in accordance with relevant General Assembly resolutions, is essential for the realization of a just and lasting settlement in the region.

66. We now come to the operative part. Operative paragraph 1 is exactly similar to operative paragraph 2 of last year's resolution 31/61, and reads:

“*Condemns* Israel's continued occupation of Arab territories, in violation of the Charter of the United

Nations, the principles of international law and repeated resolutions of the United Nations”.

The resolutions speak for themselves, and Israel's reply also speaks for itself. It calls for nothing less than condemnation.

67. Operative paragraph 2 is, in substance, the same as operative paragraph 3 of last year's resolution. It reaffirms 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.

68. Operative paragraph 3 is perhaps the most important of all. It calls anew for the early convening of the Peace Conference on the Middle East, under the auspices of the United Nations and the co-chairmanship of the USSR and the United States of America, with the participation on an equal footing of all parties concerned, including the PLO. It is to this operative paragraph that we attach the highest importance because it is the only hope for a solution that will be fair to all.

69. I do not need to deal with the rest of the operative paragraphs in this draft resolution that we are presenting.

70. The purpose of the draft resolution is to accelerate the movement towards negotiation in order to bring peace to the Middle East and to all its peoples. That is the hope, that is the desire that is shared by the entire world. Once again I shall quote the same poet, who said:

*The Worldly Hope men set their Hearts upon
Turns ashes—or it prospers; and anon,
Like Snow upon the Desert's dusty Face,
Lighting a little hour or two—is gone.*
[Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam]

The worldly hope on which we have set our hearts will, we trust, not disappear in a fleeting hour or two but prosper to the point of producing a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

71. Mr. JAROSZEK (Poland): The abnormality of the situation in and around the Middle East has hardly ever been so evident as it is now. We have every reason to believe that, unless a solution is found, that situation can only further intensify. Today, it is especially striking against the background of the positive trends in international relations and the growing tendency to solve controversial problems by peaceful means. This is why the question that is before us should be viewed in at least a dual context, that is, first and foremost, as one of the gravest sources of world tensions which endangers international peace and security; and, secondly, as an open antithesis of the prevailing climate in present-day relations among States.

72. Although 10 years have passed since the June 1967 Israeli aggression against the Arab States, unfortunately the main stumbling-blocks to a just and comprehensive settlement have not been removed. Numerous United Nations

resolutions on all the aspects of the Middle East crisis remain a dead letter. Unchanged is the root-cause of the situation, namely, the continued occupation by Israel of the Arab lands that were taken by force and have been illegally controlled for the last decade. A similar state of affairs obtains with regard to the obstinate refusal by Israel to recognize the legitimate rights of the Arab people of Palestine.

73. World public opinion and a large number of Governments note with profound indignation that ruling circles in Israel are not, in fact, inclined to moderate their policies. On the contrary, these circles keep creating new obstacles to a just and lasting peace in the area. Only last month the General Assembly had to act as a matter of urgency on the recent illegal Israeli measures taken in the occupied territories and designed to change the legal status, geographical nature and demographic composition of those territories. It should be a serious warning to Israel that the Assembly deemed it necessary to conclude that the recent measures had no legal validity and constituted a serious obstruction of efforts aimed at achieving peace in the Middle East. The world has viewed in the same way the latest aggressive Israeli bombing raids over Lebanon, which again took a heavy death toll of the civilian population. As in many previous international crises in which peace and tranquillity have been at stake, it is not by means of faits accomplis that one may go about pursuing one's own, one-sided objectives.

74. Yet, notwithstanding Israel's obstinacy, developments in recent months have revived hope that progress on the problem of the Middle East may be possible. We have traced encouraging signs to that effect in a number of important statements made at this very rostrum during the general debate at the current session. We have welcomed the joint Soviet-American statement on the Middle East of 1 October this year, seeing in it an expression of political realism and the will to tackle even the most difficult problems in the spirit of the prevailing trends in international relations today. Despite disappointing subsequent attempts to produce other documents to weaken the significance of that statement and the mood of the moment, it remains on record that the two Co-Chairmen of the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East have declared unequivocally that they:

“... are convinced that vital interests of the peoples of this area as well as the interests of strengthening peace and international security in general urgently dictate the necessity of achieving as soon as possible a just and lasting settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. This settlement should be comprehensive, incorporating all parties concerned and all questions.”

We could not agree more.

75. It is the belief of my delegation that that important statement has opened the way both to a speedy resumption of the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East and to a comprehensive settlement of the existing conflict. One can only deplore the fact that by raising new difficulties, including those of a procedural nature, Israel is once more blocking the chances of progress. We cannot accept the use of the question of the inalienable rights of the Arab people of

Palestine as a pretext for creating a deadlock in the preparations for the resumption of the Geneva Conference. Any reasonable politician must agree that the recognition of those rights represents the beginning of and an end to any viable settlement. Hence our support for the participation in the Geneva Conference of all the interested parties to the Middle East conflict, including the PLO.

76. In addition to its efforts on the political plane with a view to making its contribution to the final settlement, Poland participates in UNEF and UNDOF in the Middle East. This month Polish soldiers are starting the fifth year their dedicated service under the United Nations flag. At the request of the Secretary-General, the Government of Poland has recently agreed to extend their participation in the Forces for another year. But, let me reiterate, the presence of United Nations Forces in the mission area must in no way perpetuate the existing state of "no war, no peace" in the Middle East and be exploited by the aggressor to consolidate the effects of its aggression. Likewise, we expect that the United Nations Forces in the Middle East will be treated by all the parties concerned in their entirety as part and parcel of one service for peace. Unfortunately, it cannot be said that this is the case with Israel's treatment of and practice of discrimination with regard to several national contingents in UNEF/UNDOF, including that of Poland. Is that not indeed yet another illustration of Israel's lack of goodwill and double standard?

77. Developments have shown that, unless utilized effectively, the passage of time does not work in favour of peace in areas of tension. We agree with Mr. Kurt Waldheim that, should the present situation in the Middle East continue "... we shall be facing a major international crisis in the not too distant future" [see A/32/1, sect. III]. By no means can the world afford to start another decade of frightful suspense and concern over the Middle East conflict. A peaceful solution of it is possible. It must be comprehensive in scope and based on three inseparable elements, which I cannot fail to restate as a consistently valid position of the Government of Poland: first, withdrawal by Israel from all territories occupied since 1967; secondly, implementation of the inalienable rights of the Arab people of Palestine, which include the right to self-determination and independent statehood; thirdly, safeguarding of the right to an independent existence and security of all States in the region, including the State of Israel, and granting of effective international guarantees of their frontiers.

78. Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and other decisions of the Council and the General Assembly provide an adequate basis for precisely such a settlement in the best interests of all the parties concerned, including Israel. The best way to bring a settlement of this kind to fruition would be the prompt resumption of the Geneva Conference. For this we need goodwill and positive action. We are sure that there will be enough concerted effort and perseverance among the entire international community to advance meaningfully the cause of lasting peace in the Middle East. Poland stands ready to continue its own contribution to the attainment of this objective.

79. Mr. FALL (Senegal) (*interpretation from French*): This General Assembly debate on the question of the

Middle East is taking place at a crucial point in the development of the Arab-Israeli conflict. For the first time in almost 30 years certain changes in the attitudes of the belligerents and in the international situation give grounds for hope that a process of peaceful settlement may now be envisaged.

80. The desire shown by the various parties to the conflict to meet and hold discussions with a view to the peaceful settlement of their disputes is a major step in a conflict which has so far been characterized by uncontrolled passions, permanent tension and military clashes which each time seriously endanger international peace and security.

81. These new developments in the situation should not, however, lead us to excessive optimism. The road to peace is long, difficult and beset with stumbling-blocks. The instinctive mistrust of the parties and their disinclination to compromise are apparently insurmountable obstacles on that road. That is why we must avoid the errors of the past, examine the problems with objectivity and take into account all the consequences which might ensue for the international community from a perpetuation of the conflict in the Middle East. We must all contribute actively to the establishment of peace by defining all the obstacles to peace and by attempting to eliminate them.

82. In the view of my delegation, the principal obstacle today consists in Israel's refusal to take account of the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people.

83. The Palestinian question is indeed at the heart of the Israeli-Arab conflict. Without a solution to the Palestinian problem, no settlement in the Middle East can be lasting. It is true that the United Nations has ignored this fact for over 20 years. Nevertheless, we must recognize that today the Palestinian cause has made great headway with the international community.

84. The United Nations has recognized that the exercise of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people is an essential prerequisite to the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. It has furthermore expressed its conviction that the participation of the Palestinian people is essential in all efforts to bring about a just settlement of the conflict in the Middle East.

85. The President of the United States of America, one of the main parties involved in the question of the Middle East, stated as much on 26 May 1977, when he said:

"... basic premises [of a settlement of the Middle East question] have been spelled out very clearly.

"In the United Nations resolutions that have been passed... and supported by our Government, and these have been binding policies of the Government, they do include the right of the Palestinians to have a homeland, to be compensated for losses that they have suffered."²

86. That statement was to be complemented by the joint Soviet-American communiqué of 1 October 1977, in which

² See *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents*, vol. 13, No. 22, p. 815.

the two parties, Co-Chairmen of the Geneva Conference, affirmed, among other things:

“... that the only right and effective way for achieving a fundamental solution to all aspects of the Middle East problem in its entirety is negotiations within the framework of the Geneva Peace Conference, specially convened for these purposes, with participation in its work of the representatives of all the parties involved in the conflict, including those of the Palestinian people...”

That statement was decisive with respect to the question of the rights of the Palestinian people. It corresponds to the consensus which has now emerged within the international community concerning the significance and the place of the Palestinian cause in the question of the Middle East.

87. Nevertheless, certain obstacles continue to exist on the road to the full recognition of those rights. In the United Nations, despite this great majority trend, the Security Council continues to be paralysed with regard to action on this important question by the misuse of the veto. Its official approach to the settlement of the Middle East problem is based on incomplete resolutions which take account of only two of the three elements of the conflict, namely, first, the withdrawal of Israel from all the Arab territories occupied since 1967, and secondly, the recognition of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of all the States of the region, as well as of their right to live within secure and recognized boundaries.

88. The central element of the conflict—I refer to the Palestinian question—is dealt with improperly in that resolution because it does not take account of political reality in the area. If the Security Council wishes to make an effective contribution to the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East, it must modify its approach to take account of the various elements of the conflict and of their respective importance. In this regard, it has been repeatedly noted that a new resolution would have to correct the imbalance of resolution 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967, and thus bring the Security Council to recognize and support the exercise of the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, which is to say, first, the right to establish an independent State in Palestine, in conformity with the principles of the Charter, and secondly, the opportunity for refugees wishing to do so to return home and to live in peace with their neighbours. Those of them who do not wish to return home should receive just compensation for their lost property.

89. The failure to recognize the rights of the Palestinian people is unquestionably at the root of many of the difficulties in the way of convening the Geneva Conference. Those difficulties will persist and could endanger the success of that Conference. The sincere desire for peace of the members of the Security Council and their concern to carry through a delicate and complex process must not allow them to forget that the Palestinian question can no longer be avoided. Similarly, it is perfectly obvious that the Geneva Conference cannot produce positive and lasting results without the effective participation of the Palestinian people, whose legitimate representative is the PLO.

90. The difficulties experienced by the Security Council in modifying its approach to the Palestinian question stem

from the negative attitude of one of the parties to the Middle East conflict—I refer to the State of Israel.

91. The State of Israel persists in taking as a basis for negotiation only Security Council resolution 242 (1967) and in opposing the participation of the PLO in the Geneva Conference. The reason for such an attitude is that Israel refuses to the Palestinians the right to self-determination and the right to choose their own representatives, a right which is indeed theirs. According to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Israel:

“There is need to negotiate with the Palestinians on equal rights for Jews and Arabs on the West Bank, on the refusal of Israel to accept Arab sovereignty over that territory and on its insistence”—that is to say, the insistence of Israel—“that its defence line runs along the Jordan.”

Those observations, taken together with many others, are contrary to the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force contained in resolution 242 (1967) which Israel nevertheless appears to regard as having Biblical authority. The intransigence and arrogant attitude of the Israeli authorities is the product of the intoxication resulting from military power. It cannot possibly lead to peace, but will surely lead the parties to demagogic bargaining with unforeseeable consequences.

92. The second obstacle today on the road to peace is the question of the Arab territories occupied by Israel. That problem, which arose in the aftermath of the war of aggression unleashed by Israel in 1967, continues to complicate the solution of the Israel-Arab conflict. Its perpetuation can only lead to a continuing state of belligerence between Israel and its Arab neighbours, which are disinclined to renounce their territory illegally occupied by Israel, and thus impedes a solution to the Palestinian question, which is at the very heart of the conflict.

93. The United Nations, which since 1947 has been involved in the Middle East conflict, reacted to the new situation which resulted from the 1967 conflict by reaffirming the fundamental principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force. The United Nations consequently recognized in Security Council resolution 242 (1967) that the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East requires, among other things, the withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from all the occupied Arab territories.

94. The Israeli Government has always put forward reasons of security in order to justify its occupation of Arab territories. It has made its withdrawal from those territories subject to two conditions: first of all, the withdrawal from the occupied territories must take place in parallel with the establishment of peace; secondly, the Government of Israel will not return to the 1967 frontiers but will keep “some vital zones”, whose extent and location fluctuate with the intransigence and fanaticism of the Israeli leaders in office.

95. Recently, the Tel Aviv authorities have added a third condition: the right of Israeli citizens to settle in the occupied territories, thereby legalizing the establishment of Jewish settlements in Arab lands.

96. These conditions set by Israel for the restitution of Arab territory are contrary to the principles of the Charter, such as respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States, and to the provisions of the fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War. Furthermore, they complicate the search for a negotiated solution, since the concomitant concept of "secure and recognized boundaries" is far from being clear or being easily reconciled with the rules of contemporary international law.

97. Are "secure and recognized boundaries" supposed to mean political and military arrangements intended to prevent any return to war, or an extension of Israeli sovereignty to Arab territories? The question must still be asked because as yet it remains unanswered. It should be noted on this point that Israel has always refused to make a clear statement on the problem of the evacuation of the Arab territories, in order to leave open its opportunities to annex occupied territories. This deliberate ambiguity on the part of the Israel authorities was the cause of the failure of the conciliation mission of the Organization of African Unity, whose purpose, among others, was to induce Israel publicly to declare its support for the principle of the non-annexation of territories by force.

98. It was similarly that ambiguity which frustrated the mission of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to the Middle East, commonly known as the Jarring mission, although that mission was requested in paragraph 3 of the famous Security Council resolution 242 (1967), a resolution which Israel makes so much of.

99. Thus the Israeli leaders since 1967 have constantly maintained a position with regard to the occupied territories which has thwarted all peace efforts, for it is clear that the Arab countries, no matter how strong their desire for compromise, will never accept any annexation of their territories by Israel. Yet Israel appears to want at one and the same time both peace and territories, which seems, to say the least, illogical. The security reasons invoked by the Israeli leaders are scarcely more pertinent. I might venture once again to quote the remarks of Mr. David Owen, United Kingdom Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, when he stated on 27 September last, from the rostrum of the General Assembly:

"In the debate about occupied territory, security issues are of central importance and of deep and genuine concern. Hitherto nations have tended to equate security solely with the possession of territories. This is no longer the only relevant security factor. Sophisticated electronic devices can now give a military security which nations had hitherto believed could only come from the physical occupation of territory." [9th meeting, para. 118.]

100. Israel's stubborn persistence in maintaining its occupation of the Arab territories by force in spite of everything was the cause of the Israel-Arab war of October 1973, which seriously jeopardized the security of the Hebrew State. But the Israeli leaders seem not to have drawn the right lesson from that experience. On the contrary, they are persisting in their intransigent and dangerous attitude.

101. The Israeli leaders have not contented themselves with adopting an ambiguous attitude to the restitution of Arab lands or putting forward claims respecting certain of those lands. They have gone further by undertaking a policy of disguised annexation. Concerned to mute the international repercussions of too blatant an expansionist policy, but wishing to seize certain parts of Arab lands, the Israeli leaders have undertaken many efforts to change the demographic, economic and cultural map of those lands. Their obvious intention is to effect changes which will make the integration of those lands in the Hebrew State irreversible.

102. This policy of annexation is a violation of the United Nations Charter, whose essential feature is the abolition of war as a means of settling disputes among States.

103. Furthermore, it shows that the official diplomatic positions of Israel as regards the peace settlement are somewhat lacking in sincerity. For the representatives of the Jewish State declare, on the one hand, that they wish to maintain territories only because they wish to exchange them for peace; yet, at the same time, they are doing everything possible to make such an exchange impossible. They affirm that their claim to annex certain Arab lands represented a negotiating position, yet at the same time they are contriving progressively to extend Israeli legislation to the occupied territories. This expansionist policy finds its most evident expression in the establishment of Israeli settlements in the occupied Arab territories and the expropriation of lands belonging to Arabs.

104. Thus, the report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories [A/32/284] — the high quality and objectivity of whose work we would like, in passing, to praise — has told us that since 1967 the Israeli Government had transferred to the occupied Arab territories some 10,000 Israeli nationals. It has created 84 settlements in those zones, which it has declared its intention of keeping under its control. It now proposes to settle millions of Jewish immigrants in the occupied territories. Its principal Mode of action today is the pillage of Arab lands.

105. Eighteen million Israeli pounds have been budgeted for the purchase of land in the occupied territories. For this purpose, the Israeli authorities do not hesitate to resort to threat and intimidation in order to induce the Arab proprietors to sell their lands. If, despite everything, the owners refuse to go along with this pillage, they are expropriated and driven from the country. The Special Committee's report points to six cases of arbitrary seizures of Arab land by Israeli authorities for the benefit of Jewish settlers.

106. Recently, this policy of colonization has been stepped up. The Israeli authorities are constantly devising new plans for the settlement of occupied Arab territories. The Government's committee on settlement affairs has taken a decision to allocate 225 million Israeli pounds to the establishment of 25 new colonies, including 17 in the occupied territories.

107. On 12 September 1977 the *Jerusalem Post Magazine* reported the construction on the Golan Heights of a

settlement to house 20,000 people. And on 11 October 1977, *The New York Times* reported that the Israeli Government has approved the establishment of 6 settlements on the West Bank of Jordan by the end of 1977.

108. This policy of colonization goes hand in hand with a denial of the right of the refugees of 1967 to return to their homes, in violation of resolution 237 (1967) of the Security Council.

109. The inhabitants of the occupied Arab lands have, of course, not remained with folded arms while this pillage was going on. An atmosphere of agitation and tension prevails today throughout the West Bank. Incidents between the Israeli occupation forces and Arab demonstrators have grown in number. There has been a brutal crack-down everywhere in the West Bank, and Israeli prisons are bursting with Arab detainees, subjected to the very worst treatment, with frequent cases of torture.

110. It goes without saying that this situation is helping to exacerbate tension in the Middle East and to endanger international peace and security. It shows that the Israeli occupation has lasted only too long and that if it continues it can only lead to further acts of violence that may jeopardize the chances of a lasting peace in the Middle East.

111. The Israeli Government, however, does not appear to have grasped the full danger of its colonial policy in the occupied territories. On the contrary, it now considers that these territories are not occupied but liberated.

112. On 10 October 1977 the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Israel said the following in his statement to the General Assembly: "No State . . . has any claim of sovereignty to what was mandatory Palestine that is better than or even equal to Israel's claims". [27th meeting, para. 195.]

113. The Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations confirmed that disquieting trend when he stated, in his turn, on 26 October 1977:

" . . . Israel cannot be considered an 'occupying Power' within the meaning of the [Geneva] Convention in any part of the former Palestine Mandate, including Judaea and Samaria". [47th meeting, para. 97.]

"The Israeli provinces of Judaea and Samaria" are the new names given to the West Bank, now occupied by the present authorities of the Tel Aviv Government.

114. That new position of the Israeli Government on the status of the occupied territories clearly unmask its intentions. It shows that the authorities of the Hebrew State quite simply intend to continue, come hell or high water, the expansionist policy to which it is now resolutely committed.

115. These developments are obviously a terrible blow to the present peace process. The Israeli Government's policy of annexation would appear to prejudge the results of future negotiations and, hence to make those negotiations meaningless inasmuch as their results appear to be decided upon in advance, thanks to the force of arms. Furthermore, for the Arabs it acts as a deterrent to engaging in negotiations that would appear to hold out no prospect of giving them the slightest satisfaction in the end.

116. Such a policy thus endangers the chances for a peaceful settlement, by leaving one of the parties no alternative but recourse to armed struggle. The second danger of Israel's policy of colonization is that it exacerbates tensions on the West Bank and could lead to the outbreak of hostilities, unquestionably reducing the chances for peace in the Middle East. Hence, it is clear that, without an end to the Israeli Government's expansionist policies, the Geneva Conference has very little chance of producing positive results.

117. The international community must not allow another armed conflagration to break out in the Middle East, since such a conflagration would have incalculably destructive effects and would jeopardize the prosperity and security of the peoples of the whole world. Such an outcome is categorically rejected by the international community. We are thus committed to assisting in setting a peaceful settlement in motion.

118. However, the obstacles on the road to Geneva, fearful as they are, are less fearful than the terrifying prospects of a failure of the negotiations. The duty of the international community, and in particular of those of its Members that our Organization has vested with special responsibilities, is to do everything possible to assist the parties—all the parties—to negotiate a just and lasting peace.

119. Everyone is agreed that it is not enough to bring the parties to the negotiating table; the negotiations must produce results. But they cannot produce results unless the questions of substance are seriously and candidly discussed by the representatives of the parties concerned, including the PLO. The PLO quite obviously cannot be absent from negotiations where the fate of the Palestinian people is to be decided.

120. The United Nations, to which the State of Israel owes its legal existence, must take the greatest possible account of this requirement; if it does not, we shall merely be adding yet another link to the long chain of missed opportunities which thus far appears to have been the characteristic feature of this painful and regrettable crisis that has been causing bloodshed in the Middle East for over 30 years.

121. Mr. HARRIMAN (Nigeria): The United Nations General Assembly is once again faced with the problem of the Middle East, and my delegation is speaking on agenda item 31, not just for the purpose of engaging in the annual ritual of the discussion of the issues relating to why peace in the Middle East has eluded us for so long, but also and mainly because this year's debate has much greater significance in regard to the forward but leaden-footed movement towards a settlement. The international community, and particularly the two super-Powers on whose shoulders lies the supreme responsibility for international peace and security, must bring pressure to bear on all the parties to this perennial conflict so that a durable and just peace may finally be forged, after more than three decades of tension, bloodshed and war.

122. One formidable hurdle in the path of a durable peace in the Middle East is the ignoble record in the form of reprehensible policies and measures pursued by the occupy-

ing Power, in flagrant violation of all known norms of civilized conduct and in brazen defiance of the resolutions of this body as well as the Security Council.

123. In one of the concluding paragraphs of its report, the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories felt compelled to describe the condition of the non-Jewish population in those areas in this way:

“The Government of Israel . . . continues to implement a policy of annexation and settlement of the occupied territories; the day-to-day situation of the civilians in these territories remains tense and daily life is marked with a pattern of incidents, demonstrations, riots and other forms of violence directly attributable to the fact of occupation. . . . Moreover, persons under detention do not enjoy the protection that is envisaged for them under applicable international law”. [A/32/284, para. 245.]

124. A significant development during this year has been the emergence of a policy followed by the occupying Power which assumes that the territories in question are not occupied territories but so-called liberated areas of Judaea and Samaria—the new names given to the West Bank. The Israelis have used this spurious premise to shore up their untenable thesis to the effect that the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 12 August 1949 does not apply to the occupied territories. The General Assembly has been consistent in its position on this issue and by overwhelmingly adopting resolution 31/106 B on 16 December 1976, it reaffirmed the fact that the Convention in question applies in totality to the occupied territories. The International Committee of the Red Cross, in all its annual reports, has repeatedly reaffirmed its traditional stand that the occupied territories constitute a classic case for the application of the 1949 Geneva Convention, particularly as those territories were acquired by Israel after a series of conflicts that are responsible for the wide dispersal of persons in the area but always away from their traditional homes.

125. Members of the present Israeli Government led by Prime Minister Begin have not even attempted to hide their insatiable thirst for Arab land. The Israeli Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Sharon, is reported to have drawn up a comprehensive plan for the establishment of new Jewish settlements in the occupied territories for the next 20 years. The settlements are to be linked by a network of highways to cover the three regions in the occupied territories. Those agricultural settlements, as they are called, are to be located on the Syrian Golan Heights, the Jordan valley and in the southern Gaza-northern Sinai area.

126. At the same time we cannot but feel greatly concerned at the fact that the Israelis, in a blatant show of force and authority, have embarked, as a prelude to the aforementioned agricultural settlements, on the large-scale expropriation and purchase of Arab lands in the occupied territories. We feel no less indignant at reports of government budgetary appropriations set aside solely for the implementation of those unpopular measures, in continued violation of Palestinian rights and in brazen disregard of the protestations of the General Assembly.

127. My delegation will mince no words and will state categorically that those acts of expropriation and purchases are invalid and have no legal effect. Inasmuch as those obnoxious measures stem from military conquest, all nations which have due regard for the rule of law and the principles of equity and justice must of necessity feel the same way.

128. Let me illustrate briefly how some of the Israeli activities in the occupied territories cannot but leave the casual observer gaping in stark disbelief. Mr. T. D. Allman, Director of Urban Research at the University of California at Berkeley, in an article in the American magazine *New Times* on his recent experience while on a two-month trip through Israel and the Arab nations, disclosed that it was customary for Israelis to watch a Palestinian farmer working on his lands and patiently observe him doubling his output before seizing, with callous precision, half of his holdings. A case in point is to be found in the Jordanian valley village of El Makruk, where an Arab farmer showed Mr. Allman the Israeli barbed wire on his land and lamented:

“‘They have taken three-quarters of what my father left me,’ he said. There is no land for my sons to till. One of them is now a day labourer for the Israelis. The other two have had to leave the country to find work.’”³

I repeat that is from an expert, the Director of Urban Research of the University of California, and we cannot doubt his integrity.

129. That is the painful scenario that has given rise to the presence of hundreds of thousands of Palestinian refugees in the neighbouring Arab States, as well as an equal number of hapless dispossessed Palestinians inside the occupied territories. The Israeli Government has tried to coat that bitter pill by arguing that the living conditions of the Palestinians inside the occupied territories have improved; but I regret to say that we reject in its totality this attempt to hoodwink the international community on the burning issues of freedom and independence which, in this modern world, constitute the basic attributes of any self-respecting people anywhere.

130. Palestinians are not the only ones embittered by Israeli policy and the arrogance with which it is often administered. Mr. Allman further reports in his article which I mentioned earlier:

“‘Last winter,’ a U.S. official stationed in the Gaza Strip reports, ‘the Israelis erected an immense set of Chanukah candles on the highest rise above the refugee camps. It was like rubbing people’s noses in the dirt.’ He adds: ‘Periodically, just to show that not even Americans can protect anyone, they pick up one of my Arab employees and torture him. The last one was a sixteen-year-old office boy. They tried stuffing his own boot down his throat.’”⁴

Again, I shall not question Mr. Allman’s integrity.

³ See T. D. Allman, “Oppressor Israel?”, *New Times*, vol. 9, No. 4 (19 August 1977), p. 24.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 24-25.

131. It is therefore not surprising that Israeli rule, like that of any alien authority in a colonial context, has met with considerable opposition, even among those Palestinians who remained behind and stood their ground throughout the rounds of fighting.

132. We are thus faced with a vicious circle that begins with legitimate demonstrations by the Palestinians against the Draconian measures of the occupying Power or the stigma of humiliation that appears to characterize its style of administration. The Israeli response, according to reliable reports, has been one of increased repression, beatings, mass arrests and trials in the notorious military courts and subsequent imprisonment. But those repressive acts have in no way forced the Palestinians to acquiesce in Israeli rule; on the contrary, they have merely provided the necessary ingredients for further renewed onslaughts by the Palestinians against the occupying Power.

133. No show of force can suppress the will of a people struggling for freedom and independence; no amount of brutality, harassment and calumny can bend their will for the attainment of their inalienable right to self-determination be it in the Palestine area or anywhere else in the world, particularly—and I must bring this in—in South Africa.

134. In its characteristic arrogance, last July the new administration in Tel Aviv proceeded, in defiance of the world community and also in defiance of the public protestations of its own supporters, such as the United States, to confer legal status on three unauthorized Jewish settlements in the West Bank. The entire world was stunned by that outrage, but the dust of indignation provoked by that action had hardly settled down when in August, just a month later, the Israeli Government announced its intention to extend to the West Bank and Gaza some of the regulations now in force in Israel. In the view of my delegation, the only logical deduction from that is that Israel has embarked upon those deliberate acts further to consolidate its reprehensible policies of occupation and pave the way for subsequent annexation.

135. All these considerations prompted the General Assembly, at the request of the Arab Republic of Egypt, to include an additional item in the agenda of its current thirty-second session entitled “Recent illegal Israeli measures in the occupied Arab territories designed to change the legal status, geographical nature and demographic composition of those territories in contravention of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, of Israel’s international obligations... and obstruction of efforts aimed at achieving a just and lasting peace in the Middle East” [item 126]. The overwhelming condemnation expressed by this body, in resolution 32/5 which it adopted on the subject, of the Israeli measures in the occupied territories is a candid manifestation of the strength of the indignation felt at Israel’s persistent policy of retaining its stranglehold over the Arab lands. As I recall the pattern of voting, even Israel’s traditional Western backers decided to censure the Israeli administration for its ignoble record in the Arab occupied territories. The United States abstained in the vote but the United States representative made it clear that the United States abstention stemmed from the fact that, as Co-Chairman of the Geneva

Conference, the United States Government should play a role that appears to be neutral. The abstention was recorded without prejudice to American disapproval of Israeli policies in the occupied territories. Undoubtedly, Israel’s American backers have become disenchanted by the excesses of the Israeli Government. A Jewish lawyer by the name of Felicia Langer, in her testimony on Israeli practices in the occupied territories, once succinctly expressed her assessment of those practices in this vein:

“It seems to me there is no limit to the power of the usurper and his capacity to find justification for seizing Arab property: the rule being—‘What is mine is mine and what is yours is also mine.’”

This, in a nutshell, sums up the indignation of the world community at Israeli measures in the occupied territories. I only hope that Tel Aviv will henceforth see the writing on the wall and make appropriate deductions before it is too late.

136. Last year my delegation made the following remarks:

“... all sides [in the Israeli conflict], by calling for the reconvening of the Geneva peace talks, have, I believe, accepted the end of a state of belligerency. This was also inherent in their support of resolution 242 (1967). This position by the Arabs, in spite of continued occupation of Arab lands and the present fate of the homeless Palestinians, is yet another concession by the Arabs. “... the Arabs have come a long way to a *de facto* recognition of Israel judging from the perspectives of the recent history of the Middle East. In addition, they have during the past two years called for a peace conference. This conference has been commented upon by Israel, but its comments are still very hazy. There is a vicious circle of Israel wishing to be recognized by the PLO, while Israel will not even agree to recognize the participation of the PLO [in Geneva].”⁵

137. One would have thought that in spite of all the heated political statements and positions with regard to the PLO and the Peace Conference, that Conference, with PLO participation, “would in fact amount to recognition of Israel as an international person in such negotiations”.⁶ I quote this because recent events have once again raised the prospects for peace to a level hitherto unprecedented in the history of the Middle East. To very many President Anwar El-Sadat is a man born out of due time; to others he may be the only man who understands. Whatever the situation, my Government believes that any step forward in the direction of peace in the Middle East is a welcome one. President Anwar El-Sadat could hardly have made a better gesture for peace than his courageous trip to Jerusalem last weekend in the most genuine demonstration of Arab sincerity on this all-important question of finding a durable peace in the Middle East. The obstacles to an early reconvening of the Geneva peace talks centre on the Palestinians and the manner of the representation of their interests at Geneva.

138. In this connexion, my delegation hopes that Israel will respond positively to the hand of peace stretched out

⁵ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-first Session, Plenary Meetings*, 94th meeting, paras. 119-200.

⁶ *Ibid.*, para. 200.

by Egypt. Talks can thus be resumed in Geneva with, to quote resolution 338 (1973), negotiations "between the parties concerned", including the PLO as the authentic voice of the Palestinian people, in a spirit of equity and compromise. The momentum for peace generated by recent events should at least be maintained. It is tragic to contemplate the alternative to peace. Israel has been offered peace with honour: peace in the sense that, even if Arab nations feel bitter as to the manner of its creation, the Israeli State has now been accepted as a Middle East political reality; and honour for the Arabs who can then regain their territories in dignity. Tel Aviv should now proceed to reciprocate this gesture by withdrawing from all Arab territories and by accepting a Palestinian State. A

Middle East peace treaty that is internationally guaranteed is a far better proposition than fulfilment of the current Israeli desire to install so-called defensible borders on Arab lands seized by naked force and aggression. My delegation would like to see progress in this direction so that, in the end, all communities and States in the new Middle East can henceforth devote their attention and energies to peace, rather than dissipate such energies in another round of fighting in which there can be no victor and which will only bring untold misery and incalculable tragedy to all the States in that region.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.