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President: Mr. Hamilton Shirley AMERASINGHE
(Sri Lanka).

*In the absence of the President, Mr. Dessande (Chad),
Vice-President, took the Chair.*

AGENDA ITEM 27

Question of Palestine (*continued*):

- (a) Report of the Committee on the Exercise of the
 Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People;
- (b) Report of the Secretary-General

1. Mr. GHEORGHE (Romania) (*interpretation from French*): The events which have taken place in the Middle East during the past few years have demonstrated in a peremptory fashion that the solution of the Palestinian problem constitutes one of the central elements in the establishment of a just and lasting peace in this part of the world.

2. The adoption at the thirtieth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations of resolution 3376 (XXX) of 10 November 1975 constitutes recognition at the United Nations level of this completely objective reality. To be sure, the Palestinian question has been invoked in the most diverse forms in our Organization in the context of discussions relating to the Middle East. However, it was in the course of the last session that it was recognized for the first time that this essential factor has a particularly important role to play in the settlement by peaceful means of the conflict of the Middle East. We consider that through the establishment of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, and through the work done by that Committee, and also through the debates that have taken place on this subject in the Security Council, the United Nations has made an outstanding contribution in an area of great concern to the international community, which seeks to find a negotiated solution to the problem.

3. The position of Romania with respect to the Palestinian problem is well known. For example, my country was among those which took the initiative of calling for the inclusion of this item in the agenda of the twenty-ninth

session of the General Assembly.¹ It should be recalled also that Romania was one of the first States to recognize the Palestine Liberation Organization [PLO] as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. The Romanian Government has been actively in favour of a just solution to the problem, one which should be based upon the recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, including the establishment of an independent Palestinian State.

4. In expressing the essential features of the position of my country on the subject of the problems of the Middle East, President Nicolae Ceausescu emphasized that:

“We are profoundly disturbed by the fact that the situation in the Middle East has still not been solved. Romania has constantly been in favour of a political solution of the Middle East conflict, for the withdrawal of Israel from Arab territories occupied as a result of the 1967 war, for the solution of the Palestinian problem, including the establishment of an independent Palestinian State, and for a just and lasting peace, capable of ensuring the integrity and sovereignty of all the States of the region.”

5. In its capacity as a member of the Committee, Romania was a party to the consensus reached on its report. It contributed in an active fashion to the preparation of the recommendations that are now submitted to the General Assembly for its consideration. Similarly, the Romanian delegation has had an opportunity of submitting its considerations on the report when that report was discussed in the Security Council last June.² As a member of the Security Council, Romania, at the same time, had the opportunity of restating on numerous occasions its position concerning the premises and the modalities making it possible to bring about a just and lasting peace in the Middle East and the highly important role which the solution of the Palestinian problem would play in that context.

6. That is why I do not at present intend to restate the point of view that we have already expressed during the debates devoted to this problem in the various forums of the United Nations. The purpose of my intervention is to formulate a few comments concerning the tenor and substance of the recommendations examined by the General Assembly and concerning the decisive importance of the implementation of these recommendations for the peaceful settlement of the situation in the Middle East.

¹ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-ninth Session, Annexes*, agenda item 108, document A/9742 and Add.1-4.

² See *Official Records of the Security Council, Thirty-first Year, 1924th, 1928th and 1933rd-1938th meetings*.

7. First of all, it should be pointed out that the recommendations made in the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People [see A/31/35] were formulated following deliberations and negotiations which were both intense and delicate. They were elaborated in a spirit of objectivity, impartiality and equity. Particular attention was given to the maintenance of all the recommendations without making any concessions whatsoever, in the strict framework of resolutions and other decisions of the United Nations.

8. Thus, for instance, the proposal concerning the return of displaced Palestinians as a result of the 1967 war [*ibid.*, para. 68] is based upon Security Council resolution 237 (1967), unanimously adopted in 1967. The recommendation concerning the return of Palestinians displaced before 1967 [*ibid.*, para. 69] is likewise completely in accord with the other resolutions which the United Nations has on a number of occasions reaffirmed during more than a quarter of a century.

9. The proposal involving the complete evacuation by the Israeli forces of territories occupied in 1967 [*ibid.*, para. 72 (a)] is completely in conformity with decisions of the Security Council and the General Assembly, which themselves were based upon the universally recognized principle in international contemporary law proclaiming the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force.

10. As to the validity of the proposals calling for the scrupulous respect by Israel of the fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, this was confirmed by the consensus achieved last week in the Security Council.³ Secondly, it will be recalled that during the Security Council's meetings last June devoted to the exercise of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, according to some opinions, the Committee had dealt only with two of the three central elements that could provide a basis for a just and lasting settlement in the Middle East. According to these views, while the report contained a set of coherent and precise measures aimed at a solution of the Palestine problem, it did not devote the same attention to the right of all the States of the region to secure and recognized boundaries.

11. These affirmations in our opinion call for two comments. On the one hand, I should like to point out that the mandate given to the Committee by the General Assembly was not to formulate a programme aimed at bringing about a settlement of the situation in the Middle East as a whole. The principles and the machinery necessary for bringing about such a settlement have been set out by the pertinent resolutions of the Security Council and by the setting up of the Peace Conference on the Middle East.

12. The Committee was given the task of examining the ways and means of establishing the conditions required to enable the Palestinian people to exercise its inalienable rights, including the legitimate right of establishing its own State. That was the mandate of the Committee, which attempted and indeed succeeded, we believe, in submitting proposals of undeniable value in this respect.

13. Our second comment relates to the fact that, although it was given a limited mandate, the Committee did not examine the Palestinian problem independently of the context of the general situation in the Middle East, of which it is an integral part. Paragraph 51 of the report indeed speaks of a double interdependence. The point is that on the one hand the Palestinian question is of vital importance for the peaceful settlement of the Middle East crisis and that, on the other hand, the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people can only be exercised within the framework of a political settlement involving the withdrawal of Israeli troops from territories occupied in June 1967 and the establishment of a just and lasting peace.

14. It was by taking due account precisely of this divalent relationship between the Palestinian problem and that of the Middle East that the Committee affirmed that the participation of the PLO on an equal footing with other parties is indispensable as part of the efforts, deliberations and conferences dealing with the Middle East undertaken under the auspices of the United Nations.

15. In this context I should like to express to the Secretary-General the appreciation of the Romanian delegation for the sustained efforts which he has been making in order to secure the early resumption of the Geneva Conference with the participation of the PLO under the conditions set out by the General Assembly in its resolution 3375 (XXX).

16. The considerations contained in the report presented by the Secretary-General pursuant to that resolution [A/31/271], and especially the positive experience with regard to the participation of the PLO in the meetings of the Security Council devoted to questions relating to the Palestinian problem, have strengthened our conviction that the Geneva Conference could resume its work with the participation of the PLO in the early future.

17. Thirdly, I should like to stress the special importance of the recommendation contained in the report of the Committee with respect to increasing and strengthening the role of the United Nations and its subsidiary bodies in the efforts aimed at solving the Palestinian question by political means [A/31/35, para. 64]. This recommendation is fully in keeping with the widespread conviction that our Organization, and particularly the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Secretary-General ought to play a more important role in the process of establishing a just and lasting peace in this part of the world. The United Nations can, in particular, contribute in a more substantial fashion to the resumption and the speeding up of peace negotiations, the execution of peace-keeping operations and the effective guaranteeing of peace arrangements which will be negotiated under its auspices by the parties concerned, including the PLO, as, indeed, is recommended in paragraph 55 of the report.

18. It is evident that the chief merit of the proposals and recommendations contained in the report of the Committee will reside in their implementation, which we see coming about through a process, because these proposals cannot all be applied at a single stroke. This process presupposes sustained and persevering efforts in which the Assembly's present work is an important step. From this point of view

³ *Ibid.*, *Thirty-first Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1976*, document S/12233.

we realize that the future activity of the Committee must receive greater support from Member States, including the Western countries.

19. We express the conviction that, as a result of these debates and the adoption of recommendations of the Committee, the General Assembly will make its own contribution to the formulation of a programme whose expression in tangible reality may result in an equitable solution of the Palestinian problem and therefore will contribute to the peaceful settlement of the situation in the Middle East. For its part Romania is ready to support, now and in the future, any constructive effort undertaken for this purpose and is ready to make its contribution to the solution of all the problems relating to the Middle East.

20. Mr. FARD (Iran): First, I should like to join others in paying a tribute to Ambassador Fall of Senegal for his lucid presentation of the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People [66th meeting], which is now before the General Assembly.

21. The question of Palestine has weighed upon the world's conscience for some 30 years now. During that long period, an entire nation—the people of Palestine—has been subjected to gross injustice and unmitigated human suffering. They have been expelled from their homes, deprived of their inalienable human rights and property and forced to live a precarious existence—many hundreds of thousands as refugees. This tragic situation, which was arbitrarily imposed upon the people of Palestine and for whose creation they bear no responsibility, cannot and must not continue to be tolerated by the international community.

22. For over three decades, the people of Palestine have striven to realize self-determination, one of the basic rights sanctified in the theory and practice of international relations during the twentieth century. And yet, despite all their exertions and the righteousness of their cause, they remain an uprooted people whose most fundamental claims go unfulfilled.

23. The United Nations has only recently reoriented its perception vis-à-vis this question and come round to acknowledging that the core and substance of the problem of the Middle East lies in the Palestinian issue. By thus addressing itself specifically to the Palestinian question, which is at the heart of the Middle East problem, the United Nations has succeeded in redressing an imbalance of long-standing duration in its approach to the over-all problem. An overhaul of the unavailing approaches pursued in the past was long overdue, for no objective assessment of the situation could ignore the fact that the question of Palestine and the protracted conflict in the Middle East are so closely intertwined as to be, in fact, inseparable.

24. Hence, we fully subscribe to the view that the issue of Palestine is the root-cause of the turbulent situation in the Middle East and that the essence of that issue is the restoration of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. We continue, therefore, to adhere to this essential reality that there can be no just and lasting peace in the Middle East without the withdrawal of the Israeli forces from the occupied territories and without the realization of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people.

25. Motivated by these considerations, the Iranian Foreign Minister, during the general debate at the current session of the General Assembly, stated:

“Whatever the modalities and the specifics of the eventual settlement, one thing remains abundantly clear: no one can harbour the illusion that a lasting peace will return to the area until such time as Israel withdraws from the Arab territories occupied by force.” [14th meeting, para. 61.]

He further stated:

“It is evident, furthermore, that any proposed solution of the Middle East problem should fully take into account the legitimate rights and aspirations of the Palestinian people.” [Ibid., para. 63.]

26. Palestine is an undeniable reality, and this fundamental truth can neither be side-stepped nor wished away. The immense burden of three bloody wars and untold human misery are witness to the fact that peace cannot be imposed in the region by sheer force of arms. The transparent failure of each attempt to do so has more definitively proved the invalidity of any such illusion under which some might have laboured. Moreover, a perpetuation of this unjust and unviable situation will continue to pose a threat not only to the peace and security of the area but to that of the world at large.

27. Given the grave dimensions of the problem, it is worth mentioning that at long last there is now a clearer understanding and a greater awareness, within this forum and outside, of the underlying reality concerning the exercise of the rights to which the Palestinians are entitled. To assert this is not to overlook the complexities involved or to deny the arduous task that lies ahead. However, the groundwork which has been done and the initiatives which have been taken should embolden the international community to work ardently and more determinedly towards the desired goal.

28. For our part, we continue to believe that a just and lasting peace in the Middle East should be worked out on the basis of relevant United Nations resolutions, Israeli withdrawal from occupied Arab territories and the preservation of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to create an independent State.

29. The Palestinian people have endeavoured to achieve national dignity and the right of self-determination. The United Nations can do no less than see to it that they succeed in the realization of those fundamental goals, while safeguarding the security and independence of all States in the area.

30. Mr. TÜRKMEN (Turkey): The United Nations, since its very first days, has been closely connected with the destiny of the Palestinian people. But after almost three decades and despite numerous resolutions dealing with the Palestinian problem or the broader Middle East conflict, the question of the implementation of the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people has not been resolved. The Palestinian Arabs have been the direct victims of the consequences of the partition of Palestine, of several

wars and crises in the area. The majority of them have been uprooted from their homes during and after the 1948 and 1967 wars and have since been living as refugees in suffering and distress. The Palestinian issue is, therefore, still an open wound in the body of the Middle East, an incessant source of sufferings and wrongs, a serious and constant threat to the peace, security and stability of the region and to world peace in general.

31. Turkey's position on the question of Palestine and the rights of the Palestinian people is deeply rooted in history. Under the sovereignty of the Ottoman Empire, the overwhelming majority of the population of Palestine was Arab, and Palestine enjoyed self-government and local autonomy. The Ottoman governments never acceded to demands for a change in the demographic composition of Palestine. In 1947, Turkey voted against resolution 181 (II), calling for the partition of Palestine. Thereafter, as a country situated in the area, Turkey has been closely associated with the discussion of the question in the United Nations. It became a member of the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine, which was created by resolution 194 (III) in 1948.

32. Being situated in the area, Turkey has, of course, a great stake in the peace and tranquillity of the Middle East. We have close ties with the Arab peoples, reflecting not only the common culture forged by the centuries-long relationship, religion and history which bind us together, but an expanding network of interests and an ever-growing feeling of friendship. We have, on the other hand, always adopted a balanced and realistic approach to the conflict of the Middle East and endeavoured, whenever possible, to play a constructive role. It is on the basis of these considerations that we became a member of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.

33. The recent developments in the occupied Arab territories and especially on the West Bank proved once more how easily the situation could become explosive unless a just and lasting solution is found to the problem.

34. We should not consider these incidents in isolation as they are very intimately connected with the entire set of issues relating to the Middle East conflict, including the Palestinian question. Only recently, the Security Council, in a statement by the President of the Council,⁴ expressed its grave anxiety and concern over the present situation in the occupied Arab territories. It strongly deplored the unilateral measures taken by Israel in these territories and stressed that such measures constitute an obstacle to peace.

35. There can be no durable peace in the Middle East without justice, and no justice without the full recognition of the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people.

36. Turkey has always maintained that the Palestinian question constitutes the core of the problem of the Middle East and that no solution of this problem can be effective and permanent unless the Palestinian people are allowed to exercise their inalienable rights, including the right to self-determination and nationhood, so that they may live in

dignity and build their own future without any outside interference. It is out of this conviction that we have supported General Assembly resolutions reaffirming the inalienable rights of the Palestinians in Palestine—their rights to self-determination, national independence and sovereignty—and requesting that the PLO should be invited to participate on an equal footing with the other parties in all deliberations and conferences on the Middle East under the auspices of the United Nations.

37. Another fundamental element of the settlement of the Middle East problem is the evacuation by Israel of all the Arab territories it has occupied since June 1967. We believe that only an end to the occupation would provide the surest guarantee for the restoration not only of the national rights of the Palestinians but of the basic human rights of the population of the occupied territories. Any solution should also provide for the respect for and acknowledgement of 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.

38. We believe that peace, coexistence and understanding with the Arab countries will contribute more effectively to the security and well-being of the people of Israel than the retention of the territories it has occupied since the 1967 war. On the other hand, the participation of the Palestinians in any future multilateral negotiation has inevitably become a prerequisite for a meaningful and constructive search for an over-all settlement. It is in the interest of all the parties to promote and to facilitate the process of negotiation, and we welcome the initiatives for a resumption of the Geneva Conference. It is also our impression that a tendency among Arab countries for a more coherent and realistic approach to the problem is emerging.

39. The report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, together with the recommendations presented so ably to the General Assembly by the Chairman of the Committee, Ambassador Fall of Senegal, and by its Rapporteur, Mr. Gauci of Malta, is the product of a broad consensus in the Committee, whose members represent countries from various regions of the world. The principles that were taken into account during the preparation of the report are widely recognized by the international community as a basis for the creation of the necessary conditions for a just and lasting peace in the area. The basic considerations and guidelines formulated in the recommendations urge the return of the refugees in two phases and lay down the prerequisites for the exercise of the rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination, national independence and sovereignty. It should be pointed out that the report of the Committee, dealing with the core of the problem of the Middle East, contains many elements which can usefully be taken into consideration by the General Assembly in its endeavours towards a settlement of this complicated issue. The report also deals pertinently with the question of negotiations. It stresses the need to reconvene the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East with the participation of all the parties concerned, including the PLO, and expresses the hope that all parties will show statesmanship and a genuine willingness to negotiate. It is our earnest hope that the Assembly will value the report as a significant contribution to the quest for a peaceful solution to the Middle East question within the framework of the United Nations.

⁴ *Ibid.*

40. In conclusion, I should like to emphasize that no effort is small or insignificant for the settlement of the Palestinian problem. No effort should be spared to contribute to the realization of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and the achievement of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East which will safeguard the legitimate rights of all sides.

41. Mr. ABE (Japan): This is the second time this year that our delegation has taken part in the discussion of the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People; the first time was in the Security Council last June, as a member of the Council, and now we are discussing it again at this plenary meeting of the General Assembly. My delegation strongly hopes that our debate here will produce constructive results.

42. It may be recalled that during the Security Council deliberations of last June a draft resolution was presented to the Council but was not adopted.⁵ The Japanese delegation cast a favourable vote on it because it felt that, although the draft resolution seemed to lack due consideration for the over-all settlement of the Middle East conflict, it was appropriate for the Council to affirm by a resolution, supplementing Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

43. Today the General Assembly is discussing the same report. We appreciate the earnest and tireless efforts made by the Committee, headed by Ambassador Fall of Senegal, to whom we wish to pay a high tribute. Although the report contains some recommendations which can hardly be implemented and which we cannot support, it made a significant contribution in defining the three fundamental principles on which a just and durable settlement in the Middle East must be based. They are listed in paragraph 52 of the report and are described as follows:

“(a) Israel should withdraw from all the Arab territories occupied since 1967, in accordance with the principle of the inadmissibility of any acquisition of territories by the use of military force and the relevant resolutions of the Security Council;

“(b) The Palestinian people should be enabled to exercise its inalienable right to national 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 and to live in peace with their neighbours should have the right to do so, and those choosing not to return should receive compensation for their properties;

“(c) Appropriate arrangements should be made to guarantee, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of all the States in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries.”

⁵ *Ibid.*, Supplement for April, May and June 1976, document S/12119.

44. It is the view of my delegation that, since these three principles are inseparable and constitute the basis of a just and durable solution, all three of them should have been incorporated in the recommendation section of the report. Indeed, prior to the submission of the report, the Committee had requested the States Members of the United Nations to express their views on this question, and the Japanese Government co-operated with the Committee by reiterating its views, which were contained in the statement by the Chief Cabinet Secretary of the Japanese Government on 22 November 1973. They are as follows: first, the inadmissibility of the acquisition and occupation of any territories by the use of force; secondly, the withdrawal of Israeli forces from all the territories occupied in the 1967 war; thirdly, respect for the integrity and security of the territories of all countries in the area and the need of guarantees to that end; and fourthly, recognition of, and respect for, the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations in bringing about a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

45. When the two sets of statements are compared, each describing the fundamental principles that I have just mentioned, we feel satisfaction over the fact that there is very little difference between them. Is it too optimistic to suggest that some wider consensus on the principles to be applied in the solution of the Middle East question can now emerge among the majority of the Member States? Of course, by the very nature of the declaration of principles, there remain many details to be looked into. But we think that these details are indeed the points to be discussed and settled in the future negotiations. As we all know, Rome was not built in a day. Negotiations on a question of such importance as the Middle East, with an intricate United Nations background stretching over nearly 30 years, will clearly require long and strenuous efforts, restraints, patience and compromise.

46. This is precisely the reason why my delegation entertains apprehensions regarding the part of the report which recommends a programme of implementation. These recommendations are certainly a product of conscientious work. They might eventually prove to be practical suggestions, depending upon future circumstances. But it is to be feared that these recommendations may prejudice the delicate process of peace negotiations. Last June in the Security Council the Japanese delegation reserved its opinion on these recommendations. Our opinion remains unchanged.

47. Having said this, my delegation ventures to urge Israel to pay particular attention to the positive elements of the principles as expressed in the report. Considering the long past record of antagonism, mistrust and war, it is understandable that the parties in dispute are extremely sceptical of any initiative taken by the other side, but we believe that it is high time for them to proceed as early as possible to a practical approach which can lead to the rapid achievement of peace in the area.

48. Mr. HUMAIDAN (United Arab Emirates) (*interpretation from Arabic*): It was a historical event when the General Assembly at its twenty-ninth session adopted resolution 3236 (XXIX) of 22 November 1974, which reaffirms the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people in

Palestine, including the right to self-determination without external interference and the right to national independence and sovereignty, as well as the inalienable right of the Palestinians to return to their homes and property from which they have been displaced and uprooted by Israel.

49. It was therefore only natural, even logical, that, after having recognized those rights, the General Assembly should move on to a second phase and undertake other positive steps to enable the Palestinian people to exercise those rights. It is for this reason that we believe that resolution 3376 (XXX) of 10 November 1975 establishing the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People consisting of 20 Member States appointed by the Assembly is in fact a carrying out in practice of that resolution and clearly shows that the General Assembly is not satisfied merely to recognize those rights and is determined to elaborate a practical and equitable programme of action for enabling the Palestinian people to recover and exercise their rights.

50. In this connexion, my delegation could not fail to express its appreciation and gratitude to the General Assembly for the efforts it has made. The credit belongs, first of all, to the struggle of the Palestinian people and to their determination to recover their rights as well as to the will of the third-world countries, the support of the socialist countries, and the developing consciousness on the part of some Western countries of the legitimacy of the Palestinian cause.

51. My delegation considers that it is in this way that the General Assembly is trying to remedy the wrongs it has committed against the Palestinian people in the past by letting their homeland be divided and permitting the Zionist intruders to impose their domination on them and to expel them from their homes. This positive attitude on the part of the General Assembly represents, in my delegation's opinion, a return to the purposes and principles of the Charter and is in keeping with the aspirations of peoples who love peace and justice.

52. My delegation has followed with keen interest the discussions in the Committee and has also considered objectively and with great attention its report. My delegation has already expressed its gratitude and appreciation to the members of the Committee and to its Chairman, Mr. Fall, when the Security Council considered the Committee's report last June. I feel in duty bound to reiterate these feelings in view of the unremitting efforts which the Committee has made and the objectivity which it has shown in carrying out its task.

53. During those meetings of the Security Council my delegation also expressed its views on the report and I shall not repeat here what I have stated earlier. I shall confine myself to remarks on certain specific facts.

54. The just cause of the Palestinian people and the right of the Palestinians to self-determination, to return to their homeland and to enjoy national independence and sovereignty have been recognized by all with the exception of the usurping State of Israel and a small number of countries supporting it. These rights stem from the natural right of all peoples to self-determination and independence and are

based on the Charter of the United Nations, international covenants, international law and the resolutions of various United Nations bodies. It is therefore not surprising that the Palestinian people should claim its rights like other peoples. What some others demand, by contrast, is that an exception should be made in the case of that people and that they should be prevented from exercising their rights.

55. The armed struggle of the Palestinian people to recover their usurped rights is a right that has been recognized to the Palestinian people as to all other peoples which have already waged their struggle, or are currently doing so, to free themselves from the yoke of foreign occupation and imperialism and to exercise their right to self-determination and independence. That right is recognized by history, by international law and by countless United Nations resolutions. Therefore, it is not surprising that the people of Palestine should have resorted to armed struggle against the Zionist usurper in view of Israel's obduracy. The surprising thing is that some should not recognize the legitimacy of the Palestinian people's struggle. The fact that the Palestinian people should have resorted to an armed struggle does not mean they regard that struggle as an end in itself but rather that they consider it a means that the Palestinian people have been compelled to use as a result of the obstinacy of the Zionists and the refusal of Israel to recognize the rights of that people and the indifference of the international community, which has long disregarded their rights.

56. Yet on repeated occasions, through their leaders and even from this high rostrum, the people of Palestine have declared their readiness to make peace their aim rather than to resort to weapons if they were assured that the necessary goodwill enabling them to exercise their rights existed. As a people and a Government, the United Arab Emirates proudly recognizes the merits of this very positive initiative and is amazed that it continues to be ignored and denied by some.

57. The development of the situation in Palestine and in the Arab region has shown how wrong were those who believed that the Palestine people and the Arab peoples would resign themselves to seeing Palestine divided and its people expelled and deprived of their rights. Events have also shown that the perpetuation of the Palestine problem without a just and equitable solution is the cause of tension in the Arab region and may, due to its repercussions and developments, become a threat to world peace and security. In the circumstances, it is surprising that some continue to practise the policy of the ostrich and to become aware of the danger only when the situation has become explosive.

58. The Committee has taken note of all these facts relating to the rights of the Palestinian people, their struggle, their desire for peace and the danger threatening the region and the entire world unless a just and lasting solution is found. The proof of this is the recommendations of the Committee, which propose the return of Palestinian refugees to their homeland, Palestine, in two stages. In the first stage the Palestinians made refugees in 1967 would be authorized to return to the territories under Israeli military occupation since 1967. In the second stage the Palestinians made refugees between 1948 and 1967 would be repatriated. These recommendations also recognize the right of

the Palestinians to self-determination, national independence and sovereignty in Palestine.

59. My country, an Arab country, cannot but enter reservations concerning some of the Committee's recommendations, but the United Arab Emirates considers that as a whole the programme of the Committee concerning the return of the refugees and the need for the withdrawal of the Israeli forces from the Arab territories under occupation are in keeping with the provisions of the Charter and the numerous resolutions of the United Nations.

60. We regret to see that the Security Council did not react favourably to the Committee's recommendations. We cannot but be surprised at the position taken by some States in the Security Council in view of their primary responsibility for the division of Palestine and the expulsion of its Arab inhabitants. Added to our astonishment is the fact that it is these States that have the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. They know perfectly well that the indefinite prolongation of the Palestinian problem without a just and equitable solution providing for the recovery of the rights of the Palestinian people is a threat to international peace and security and may lead to a new war.

61. As I have already stated, the General Assembly recognized the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and adopted a resolution entrusting the Committee with the task of elaborating a programme for the implementation of those rights.

62. Therefore the General Assembly at its current session should adopt the recommendations of the Committee. We thus invite Member States to approve those recommendations.

63. My delegation believes that the Committee should continue its work so that it could follow up closely the implementation of its recommendations, in respect to which we hope that the Security Council will reconsider its position.

64. My delegation wishes to express again the hope that at the next session we shall have before us a report on measures which have been taken and the stages completed with a view to the implementation of the programme elaborated by the Committee.

65. Mr. JAMAL (Qatar) (*interpretation from Arabic*): At the outset of this statement, I should like to express on behalf of my delegation our profound gratitude to the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, Mr. Fall of Senegal. I should likewise wish to thank the other members of the Committee for the unremitting efforts made by them to submit a valid report to the Security Council as well as to the General Assembly and for the objective approach followed by them in the presentation of this report.

66. Once again we are discussing the Palestine question and the efforts made by the international Organization and the international community to fulfil the obligations assumed many years back. Last year, as far as the question of Palestine and the people of Palestine are concerned, saw

a new constructive change in the history of the United Nations and of the international community. In past years the General Assembly adopted many important resolutions, the most recent of which was resolution 3376 (XXX), according to which the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People was established. That Committee submitted its report to the General Assembly in document A/31/35, accompanied by the comments of the Committee, its recommendations with respect to the means which should make it possible for the Arab people of Palestine to exercise their legitimate and inalienable national rights.

67. Taking into account the conclusions of the Security Council following upon the examination of the work programme proposed by the Committee, we are well aware that the draft resolutions submitted in the Security Council by Pakistan, Panama, Tanzania and Guyana, contained in document S/12119, was not adopted because of the veto cast by one of the permanent members of the Security Council, although the draft resolution added nothing more than the previous resolutions of the General Assembly, and by way of example I might mention operative paragraph 2, in which the Security Council:

"Affirms the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination, including the right to return and the right to national independence and sovereignty in Palestine, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations."

68. Paragraph 4 of resolution 3376 (XXX) provides for the possibility of submitting recommendations to the General Assembly on a programme of implementation designed to enable the Arab people of Palestine to exercise their rights as mentioned in paragraphs 1 and 2 of resolution 3236 (XXIX). Paragraph 1 of resolution 3236 (XXIX) reaffirms the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people in Palestine, including the right to self-determination without external interference, the right to national independence and sovereignty. Paragraph 2 of the same resolution reaffirms also the inalienable right of the Palestinians to return to their homes and property from which they have been displaced and uprooted, and the same operative part recommends the restoration of these rights without any conditions.

69. Once again, we wonder what the situation of the Palestinian people is in relation to the recommendations concerning the inalienable rights of the people of Palestine. Indeed, that people has been persecuted; it continues to live far from its homeland and properties; it continues to live in tents in camps; it is exposed to extremely harsh weather conditions and to the harsh treatment of the Israeli aggressor. Part of that people is still living under military occupation, a prey to injustice, oppression, blows, torture, individual and collective repression and expulsion, while Jewish settlements are being set up on its territory.

70. It is natural for the Israeli junta in power to refuse to grant to the Palestinian people its rights, including its right to self-determination in its territory, where the State of Israel is now located, because the Israeli State, which was created under aberrant conditions, is the culmination of a Zionist plot against the Palestinian people and its homeland

dating back to the end of the nineteenth century in Europe. Israel has continued its aggressions until, in 1948, it occupied three quarters of Palestine. Another aggression was launched in 1956 with the complicity of its allies—the United Kingdom and France—for the purpose of occupying Gaza and the Sinai, but was thwarted. However, still another aggression, in 1967, enabled it to occupy what was left of Palestine as well as huge tracts of the territory of Arab Members of this international Organization amounting to three times the territories it occupied in 1948. The Israeli leaders are following a criminal policy not only vis-à-vis the Palestinians but also vis-à-vis the Arab peoples.

71. Professor Joshua Libovitch, a professor of science at the Hebrew University at Jerusalem, wrote in *Haaretz* on 30 November 1973:

“What was the mistake we made over the past 10 years? The mistake was not committed during these past 10 years, but over the past 25 years, ever since the signing of the Rhodes Convention. The guideline of our policy has been and remains that a “no war, no peace” situation with a potential for war was the best for us and that we should maintain this *status quo* by all means possible . . . it is possible in such a situation that wars, generally of short duration, will break out from time to time but their results will be guaranteed in advance, because the gap between us and the Arabs is constantly growing and in this way we shall be going on from one occupation to another. Justifying the predictions of its promoters, this criminal and odious policy has lasted for 25 years and has led us to the crisis in which we find ourselves today although the hypotheses underlying this policy have been refuted . . . Throughout the whole 25 years we have not tried to bring about peace and all the declarations made in this regard are only deliberate lies.”

72. It is thus that the Zionist movement started to put its plans in Palestine into practice, gaining, with every success achieved through the support of the imperialists, greater confidence in its ability to score even greater successes. Its repeated aggressions, in 1948, 1956 and 1967, and in particular the last victorious aggression in 1967, have strengthened the superiority complex of the Zionist movement to the point where it totally scorns the Arab countries and their potential, thus losing all touch with the modern world. The arrogance of the Zionists manifests itself in various aspects of life—in politics, in ethics, in the fields of economics and of war—causing them to reject the resolutions of the United Nations—the very Organization which gave birth to that State in 1947.

73. All the information confirms the fact that the Zionist project in Palestine was to carry out a colonialist plan to establish a colony of settlement designed to protect its interests in the Arab region. The Balfour Declaration, of unhappy memory, and the support at that time of the British Government for the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine was but the expression of the reconciliation between the interests of Zionism and those of colonialism in the face of Arab liberation movement.

74. Max Nordau, the Zionist leader and comrade of Herzl, was extremely frank when in 1919 he addressed a cere-

mony in London celebrating the Balfour Declaration which was attended by Lloyd George and Lord Balfour. He said:

“We know what you expect from us. We shall have to be the guards of the Suez Canal. We shall have to be the sentinels of your way to India via the Near East. We are ready to fulfill this difficult military service, but it is essential to allow us to become a power in order to enable us to do our task.”⁶

75. The Zionist leaders began to put their ideology into practice in Palestine after the British occupation and the Mandate by virtue of the Balfour Declaration, of unhappy memory. Their policy was based on three principles: the occupation of the land; the control of the labour market and the building of the Jewish homeland by expelling the Palestine Arab people. The plan followed was comparable to British colonization. This is what Yigal Allon, the current Israeli Minister of Foreign Affairs and one of the leaders of the Zionist military organization Palmach, stated in his book *The Making of Israel's Army*: “The choice of the location of the settlements, for instance, was influenced not only by considerations of economic viability but also and even chiefly by the needs of local defence, overall settlement strategy (which aimed at ensuring a Jewish political presence in all parts of the country . . .).”⁷

76. I do not wish to go into greater detail in proving the purposes and objectives of the Zionist movement and of Israel in particular, or the inhuman means that it used to drive the Palestinian people from its lands and to flee to other areas, to oppress them and indeed to eliminate them altogether. As a result of the intensified struggle of the Palestinian people and that of the Arab peoples at its political and military levels the United Nations and the international community have begun to recognize the rights of the Palestinian people. General Assembly resolution 2535 (XXIV) affirmed the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. It has labelled the Israeli occupation of Arab territories “colonization” and the struggle of the Arab people “a fight against colonialism”. It has affirmed the legitimacy of the struggle of peoples under foreign, colonial yoke and recognized the right of those peoples to self-determination and to the recovery of their rights by every means possible.

77. The world today is going through a particularly precarious phase which may become extremely dangerous if the United Nations and the international community should remain indifferent to this tragedy, which is the very heart of the Middle East problem. If from the very outset the United Nations had lived up to its responsibilities in accordance with the purposes and principles of its Charter and the provisions of international law, there would have been no persecution or colonial domination of the Palestinian and other Arab peoples.

78. But it is not too late, especially since the United Nations has now embarked upon the just course by recognizing the rights of the Palestinian people and of their

⁶ Max Nordau to his People: *A Summons and a Challenge* (New York, Scopus Publishing Company, Inc., 1941), p. 57.

⁷ Yigal Allon, *The Making of Israel's Army* (London, Vallentine, Mitchell & Co. Ltd., 1970), p. 7.

fight through the adoption of a number of resolutions, including resolution 3236 (XXIX), which once again affirms the "inalienable right of the Palestinians to return to their homes and property from which they have been displaced and uprooted" as well as their right to national independence and sovereignty and their right to self-determination.

79. With respect to the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People [A/31/35], I would not wish to repeat what was stated by the Chairman of that Committee, when he introduced this detailed report, or what was said by previous speakers in the debate.

80. In the suggestions and recommendations submitted to the General Assembly in this report, the Committee adopted fundamental principles for solving the Palestinian problem and hence the so-called "problem of the Middle East." In part two of the report, the Committee mentions the fact that the question of Palestine is at the heart of the Middle East problem and that, consequently, no solution in the Middle East can be envisaged which does not take fully into account the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people, reaffirms the legitimate and inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to return to their homes and property and to achieve self-determination, national independence and sovereignty, and expresses the conviction that the full implementation of these rights will contribute decisively to a comprehensive and final settlement of the Middle East crisis. The Committee also considers that the participation of the PLO, the representative of the Palestinian people, on an equal footing with other parties, on the basis of General Assembly resolutions 3236 (XXIX) and 3375 (XXX), is indispensable in all efforts, deliberations and conferences on the Middle East which are held under the auspices of the United Nations. The Committee also recalls the fundamental principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force and stresses the consequent obligation for complete and speedy evacuation of any territory so occupied. The Committee has worked out an over-all work programme which would make it possible for the Palestinian people to recover their rights and property and guarantee their return to their homeland in Palestine.

81. My delegation considers that since the adoption of resolution 3236 (XXIX) and resolution 3376 (XXX), on the basis of which the Committee was established, no progress has been made towards achieving a just solution of the tragedy of the Palestinian people. We believe that the solution of the problem does not lie in the adoption of a series of resolutions by the General Assembly, the Security Council and the specialized agencies, but in the implementation of these resolutions. We appeal to the international community and to all Governments which love peace and justice to intensify their efforts and to carry out their responsibilities, because we are convinced of the justice of the cause of the Palestinians and we have faith in the United Nations and its noble purposes, because it is the first guarantee of the rights of peoples.

82. Here I should like to offer my thanks to the Secretary-General, Mr. Kurt Waldheim, for the highly important and valuable report in document A/31/271, and for his tireless efforts in the service of the noble goals which he has set himself.

83. In conclusion, I should like to affirm here that the efficacy of the United Nations is measured by its capacity to deal with the obstinacy of Israel, which refuses to recognize the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination, national independence and sovereignty and to let them exercise those rights. In this intervention, I have described the elements of the terrible Israeli system, which ranges from discrimination to dual loyalty, from emigration to conquest and from expansionism to racial oppression. It has been proved that history is always on the side of peoples fighting for a just cause. Colonialism dominated more than three quarters of the planet at the beginning of this century; but today, it has crumbled and dominates only in a few regions of the world because peace and independence are the goals of all the peoples of the world, who are struggling to live in a world in which peace, justice and prosperity for all prevail.

84. Mr. LUKUMBUZYA (United Republic of Tanzania): The question of Palestine is as old and as persistent as the whole question of the Middle East. In fact, it is the root-cause of the Middle East problem. This being the case, a permanent solution to the Middle East problem is dependent on a just and a durable solution of the Palestinian question.

85. The General Assembly has before it the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People [A/31/35]. It is very clear from this report that the international community is in duty bound to ensure that Palestinian national rights are restored, for it is grossly unjust and cruel to uproot masses of peoples from their ancestral homes and forcibly take possession of their land and property. This is what has been happening to the Palestinian people ever since 1947, when the State of Israel came into being, and the irony of all this is that Israel has been responsible for the untold suffering experienced by the Palestinian people.

86. As far as Tanzania is concerned, our support for the just struggle of the Arab people in the Middle East and in Palestine for their rights and for justice is motivated by our commitment to justice everywhere on earth; it is not motivated by any expectation of material gain from those we support, as one representative has implied. Thus, even when we have had some bilateral problems with certain States, we have never vacillated in our support for the struggle against injustice. Our support for the people of Palestine is motivated by the same considerations.

87. The people of Palestine have had untold injustices and inhuman policies visited upon them by the State of Israel. For nearly 30 years thousands of Palestinians have been deprived of their homes and homelands and forced to live in destitution as refugees. Their homes have been destroyed or appropriated, their places of worship desecrated, their basic human rights trampled underfoot by the Israeli authorities. Indeed, the report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/31/235/Add.2 is the latest catalogue of infamous atrocities to which the Palestinians have been subjected by the Israeli authorities, and these atrocities have been going on ever since the creation of the State of Israel in 1947.

88. The State of Israel was created in order to give a home to the persecuted millions of Jews who ran away from the

horrifying atrocities committed against their kind by Nazi Germany. Hence, even my country, which was not a party to the creation of that State, considers that fact, the creation of the State of Israel, as a humane act. We therefore accept the existence of Israel as a reality whose origins are understandable. But it is as much a reality today that we have a people, the Palestinians, who are denied a homeland. We have a people today who are crying out for help to have a home of their own. They are crying out to the international community to show compassion to them as it did to the Jews in 1947. It is a cry that the international community cannot ignore, either morally or logically, for if it was morally right in 1947 to give a home to the homeless Jews, surely it is equally morally right today that the Palestinians should be given a home. Double standards are very dangerous in international relations.

89. Our support of the struggle of the Palestinian people stems also from our realization that if these people continue to live as refugees, the whole Middle East problem will continue to pose a serious threat to international peace and security. The spectre of war will continue to haunt the international community. The solution of Middle East problems lies in the exercise by the Palestinians of their right to a homeland. We believe that Israel, like the rest of us, is interested in peace. We believe, further, that Israel recognizes the dangers inherent in its refusal to recognize the rights of the Palestinians. May we therefore take this opportunity once again to urge Israel to accept the reality of the existence of the Palestinians, and respect their legitimate rights and ambitions for a homeland? We urge Israel to show the international community its commitment to peace by working for it. We recognize the anxiety which the Jewish people harbour, and we understand fully the origins of this anxiety, but we are painfully aware of the sufferings of the Palestinians. We also understand their frustrations, and so long as this suffering continues, we will do everything to support these people in their just struggle for their rights.

90. We remain convinced that the international community, in particular the United Nations, has done everything possible in the search for a solution to this problem. Nevertheless, we once again urge the Members of this Organization to use whatever influence they have on Israel to convince it of the futility of its intransigence. Nothing could be more appropriate than to adopt during this thirty-first session of the General Assembly a resolution which will leave Israel in no doubt as to the side on which the United Nations stands.

91. In this issue Tanzania has chosen to be on the side of justice. We have no reason to believe that other delegations will choose to be on the side of injustice and refuse to support the just struggle of the Palestinian people.

92. Mr. RAHAL (Algeria) (*interpretation from French*): The question of Palestine, as we know only too well, has marked the entire life of our Organization since its very inception. Nothing is more impressive than the number of debates devoted to it at every level. Nothing is more awesome than the mass of decisions and resolutions which year after year have proposed partial or global solutions, expressing more or less felicitously the concerns of the international community and its difficult quest for balance

between the brutality of accomplished facts, which outrage its conscience, and respect for the intangible principles that should guide its action.

93. This, then, is not a new or an unfamiliar question to Members of our Organization, and we shall not once again recall its origins and development. And yet it is its history that will record the responsibilities which made the Palestinian people lose their homeland, leave their country and be despoiled of their possessions. Likewise, only in its history can we find the bases for a realistic and objective analysis of the problem of Palestine and chart a course leading to a lasting if not a definitive settlement. In any event, we could not side with those whose realism is to be found, selectively, at a distance of 2,000 or 3,000 years back in the past, or in the recent period of the last 30 years, thus omitting that portion of history which in fact witnessed the formation of modern Palestine and the constitution of the present Palestinian people.

94. This perhaps explains why for a long time the factor which we regard as fundamental and which is represented by the Palestinian people has been neglected in the consideration of the Middle East situation. Fortunately, that phase is now behind us and everyone is convinced that the Palestinian problem is at the very heart of the Middle East crisis. But in fact it is its origin that inspires its evolution and governs its outcome.

95. However incredible this may seem, it has taken a long time for some to accept the obvious, especially those who since many years determined the positions and decisions of our institutions and who obstinately insisted in considering as the only important element in the crisis the right to the existence in Palestine of a Zionist entity and the settlement of the conflict between Israel and the neighbouring Arab States. The Palestinians who, in their own estimation, have lost their personality and even their identity as a people, appear to be no more than refugees who could at most benefit from international generosity.

96. It was only painfully and after a long time that everyone finally accepted the basic truth that the real tragedy of the Middle East was the tragedy of the Palestinian people, and that no true settlement of the Middle East crises could be envisaged unless the solution broached first and foremost the Palestinian problem. This idea may not be to the liking of everyone, but it is precisely because some sought deliberately to ignore it that the Middle East situation remained unsolved to date and that it became increasingly complex, extending its threat over the entire region and even beyond it, while introducing an element of permanent tension in international relations.

97. The tragic situation in Lebanon during the whole of this past year is a most regrettable but enlightening illustration of this fact. The continued existence and expansion of instability and insecurity in the region should at least incite the international community as a whole to cast a new glance at the realities of the problem, and in so doing it must set aside the passions and the slogans which have in the long run actually replaced reality itself.

98. Therefore, we cannot but congratulate ourselves at the manifest evolution which for some years now has charac-

terized the treatment given to the Middle East question in the General Assembly and even in the Security Council. At its twenty-ninth session the General Assembly recognized in its resolution 3236 (XXIX) that the Palestinian people is a principal party in the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. In that same resolution, it reaffirmed the national rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination, national independence and sovereignty as well as the individual right of the Palestinians to return to their homes and to recover their property. The thirtieth session supplemented these decisions by creating the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, which has just submitted its report to the General Assembly.

99. Incidentally, I wish here to pay a well-deserved tribute to that Committee which has accomplished a difficult and complex task within the time-limit set for it. I should like more especially to convey our gratitude to its Chairman, Mr. Médoune Fall of Senegal, who brought to the discharge of that task the dedication and profound faith we know in him, as well as his qualities as an accomplished diplomat, which were in fact the best guarantee of the Committee's success. The report submitted to us today bears witness to the seriousness of the efforts of the members of the Committee and their resolute will to define the first elements of a practical and feasible solution capable of opening the door to a definitive settlement of the Palestinian problem.

100. It is easy to see that the report in question has remained faithful to the resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council dealing with different aspects of the Palestinian problem. It is clear, in fact, that it is not through lack of decisions or more or less ingenious suggestions that it has not been possible thus far to begin to settle the problem. The Committee, therefore, was well-advised in drawing the material for its proposals from the existing mass of often very pertinent documents. In addition, the Committee invited all Member States as well as intergovernmental regional organizations to take part in its work or to submit to it their proposals or suggestions. We therefore fail to understand how anyone can accuse the Committee of partiality in terms of its composition or the results of its work when any interested party was free to bring before it its views and to defend them in the course of its meetings.

101. For our part, we consider that the recommendations of the Committee represent a first step towards a much more realistic approach than the one taken hitherto to this Middle East problem, and we are convinced that, if applied in all sincerity and expeditiously, those recommendations could bring about such a change in the thinking of all that a definitive global settlement will no longer appear impossible of achievement.

102. We are not, however, so naive as to think that it will be easy to implement the programme proposed by the Committee so long as the Israeli leaders continue to nurture their expansionist dreams and so long as their aggressive attitude and warlike policy find moral, material or military support among the Western countries and, in particular, the United States. Israel has become too accustomed to defying with impunity the decisions of our Organization and the

resolutions of the Security Council. It has always shown an attitude of contempt for any attempt to settle the Middle East crisis. It is true that, in the last analysis, it is Israel that has benefited from the continuation of the present situation. There is no doubt that history will hold up Israel as a perhaps unique example, and in any event the strangest example, of an aggressor, which enjoys at leisure the fruits of its aggression and even transforms it into a bargaining chip to use against the victims of its aggression.

103. The General Assembly requested the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People to submit its report to the Security Council, through the Secretary-General. The discussion that took place in the Security Council on that report revealed the willingness of member States to support the rapid implementation of the programme proposed by the Committee, thus breaking the deadlock which has characterized all attempts at an over-all settlement of the Middle East crisis. The proposals of the Committee had no other aim, in fact, but to chart a practical course for the implementation of the decisions of the Security Council. We had every right to expect that body, whose principal responsibility is to ensure international peace and security, not only to approve the recommendations submitted to it but to put on them the seal of its authority and, as the sole United Nations organ vested with executive powers, to endorse them as its own decisions. We regret to have to express here, yet again, our disappointment at the exercise by the United States of its veto, which has paralysed any useful action by the Council. This attitude on the part of the United States is unfortunately tending to become more and more frequent, turning the right of veto of the permanent members of the Security Council into the tool of an arbitrary policy which is unacceptable to the remainder of the international community and which, in any event, runs counter to the spirit of the Charter and to the reasons underlying the establishment of the right of veto.

104. We are convinced that, for its part, the General Assembly will attach due importance to the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. As the Security Council did, the General Assembly will find among the recommendations of the Committee the decisions it has already adopted and reaffirmed, although without being able to ensure their implementation. The Assembly will note the intentionally practical thrust of those recommendations, which are above all designed to be couched in realistic terms and to be translated into facts. It is worth emphasizing this approach, because it seeks to remedy one of the greatest shortcomings in our Organization, which is often, and not without reason, criticized for being incapable of implementing its own decisions.

105. The Committee did not presume to put before the General Assembly an over-all solution to the Middle East crisis or a final settlement of the Palestinian problem—that was not its task. Its only objective, and this is what we expected of it, was to translate into practical measures the recognition and reaffirmation by the General Assembly of what the Assembly itself has called the “inalienable rights of the Palestinian people”. The apparent modesty of this task does not cause us to overlook the enormous and at times insurmountable difficulties it presents. I believe this

will be the first time that the Assembly, after taking a decision, affirming principles or setting an objective, has attempted also to chart the course for their implementation. This welcome process must not stop half-way.

106. The negative attitude of the Security Council is certainly not encouraging, especially as it is a body vested by the Charter with the authority to act on behalf of the entire membership of the United Nations. It is for this reason that the Assembly, in our view, should not confine itself to considering the recommendations submitted to it by the Committee. It must also consider the means that would ensure their implementation in so far as possible, of course, through the Security Council, but even outside the Security Council, if, as unfortunately we see only too often, the permanent members or some of them continue to counterbalance with their veto the clearly expressed will of the remainder of the international community. This situation has already arisen in the past and there is no doubt that the Assembly has the means to restore the sole legality in which we believe and which we shall not cease to clamour for, namely, one that finds its legitimacy in what, at the State level, corresponds to the will of the people at the national level.

107. The report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People enables us this year to approach the Palestinian problem on a practical level and on the basis of concrete proposals. It is hardly necessary to set forth or enunciate new principles or to elaborate new provisions. The elements of the solution are available and derive from decisions already adopted, more often than not, by very comfortable majorities. We must now move to a new phase whereby we may reasonably hope to change the climate in which the Palestinian problem has been dealt with thus far, thus opening the door to broader and more comprehensive settlements. The General Assembly must not waste this opportunity at a time when the situation in Lebanon appears, happily, to be subsiding gradually and in a lasting manner, at a time when we have not been plunged into a new war and at a time when a general rethinking appears to be going on with regard to the problems besetting that region. The participation of the PLO in this debate in itself offers an additional chance of serving the objective that could be achieved at the current session of the Assembly. Now, perhaps more than ever, the responsibilities are clear, in particular for those who must commit the life of their peoples and the future of their country. The General Assembly, for its part, should live up to its responsibilities and to the expectations that our peoples continue to place in our Organization.

108. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): One representative has asked to exercise his right of reply. Before I give him the floor I am in duty bound to remind members of the Assembly that at its 4th plenary meeting the General Assembly decided that interventions in the context of the exercise of the right of reply should not exceed 10 minutes. I now give the floor to the representative of the PLO who has asked to exercise his right of reply.

109. Mr. Al HOUT (Palestine Liberation Organization) (*interpretation from Arabic*): We do not believe that the

intervention of the representative of the Zionist entity made at the 70th meeting has been in any way a surprise to this Assembly, because, as usual and as has been done by other Zionists from this high rostrum, he has made an intervention based on untruths and allegations. The form of his intervention gave proof of the greatest possible cynicism. His intervention did not take us by surprise, especially when he began by attacking the Committee as he attacked the United Nations and the General Assembly. Ever since the Assembly became aware of the rights of peoples and began to defend them, the position of the Zionist representative reflects the isolation in which the Zionist entity he represents finds itself. It also reflects the popularity of the PLO as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and as the responsible political authority which has given proof of its capacity to co-operate with the peoples of the world in the search for world peace and security. The representative of the Zionist entity, recognizing that the overwhelming majority of the members of the Committee entertain no diplomatic relations with Israel, forgot to ask himself the reasons why such relations do not exist or why such relations were broken, although they may have existed in the past. He forgot also the fact that those countries, together with the majority of Member States, represent peoples which have already suffered under the yoke of colonialism and racial discrimination. Therefore, it would have been easy to understand the substance of the Palestinian problems and to support the recommendations put before us on the basis of peace and in the quest for security. The Zionist representative, basing himself on misrepresentations of the truth and refuting the truth and reality of these past years, views the Committee as having a subjective position. But if he had taken cognizance of the realities of the world today, he would have seen that, if there was any subjectivity, it was for the sake of peace and to the detriment of the Palestinian peoples, who are the direct link with the children of Palestine for over 2,000 years.

110. The representative of Israel reproaches the Committee for disregarding the resolutions of the Security Council. Such a statement requires a great deal of courage, since it denies the facts and the truth. We can hardly find in the annals of the United Nations as many examples of violations of the resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council as those perpetrated by Israel. Even the United States of America, which usually supports the interests of Israel in the Security Council, was unable, a few days ago, to deny what was said in the Security Council concerning the inhuman practices it engages in against the Palestinian Arabs. We know that the Committee and the countries supporting it do not need anyone to defend them. But we felt that this was a timely opportunity to express our gratitude of the members of the Committee for the efforts they have made for the sake of peace above all.

111. As for the allegations of the Zionist representatives, we do not know where they begin and where they end. It would be a miracle to be able in 10 minutes to refute all the untruths which are in such glaring contradiction with the realities of the situation. The Zionist representative, who was born in Ireland, feels that he has every right in conformity with his racist doctrine to be a citizen of Israel for the simple reason that he is of Jewish extraction. But he prevents us Palestinians from exercising this ancestral right

because we are not of Jewish extraction. I would add, furthermore, that, when supporting what is called the law of return to the fatherland which allows Jews to emigrate to Israel, he cast doubt on the right of the Palestinians to return to their homeland, thus condemning generations of Palestinians to live in exile.

112. With effrontery and cynicism the Zionist representative speaks of the solution of the refugee problem through integration, whereas he supports the doctrine which rejects coexistence. In view of the argument that the Jews cannot be integrated into the communities in which they live outside Israel, is it not surprising to hear talk of integration from a member of the Zionist movement, which divided the world into two categories—the Jews and the non-Jews? Let him then renounce his claim, because the PLO is honoured to fight in order to enable the Arab Jews to return to the country where they lived in the past. We are happy to learn that three Arab countries—Iraq, Sudan and the Kingdom of Morocco—have opened their doors and welcomed today those who have returned from that alleged paradise.

113. At the same time that the Zionist representative is trying to cast doubt on the leadership of the PLO and its popularity among the Palestinian masses, he dares to speak on behalf of what he called the Jewish people. But he knows better than anyone that our people in Jordan and in Gaza, despite direct confrontations with the occupying authorities, have responded affirmatively to the PLO as the only organization responsible for our people in the occupied territories. Like the other Zionist leaders, he arrogates to himself the right to speak on behalf of all the Jews in the world, without taking into account the problems he creates for those Jews as regards the question of citizenship and allegiance. Thus, the Jews violate the sovereignty of the

countries in which they live. They use the same language that was used by the Nazis, but there is nothing astounding in this because zionism is no more than another facet of nazism.

114. The Zionist representative had shed crocodile tears about bleeding Lebanon. But he seems to forget that the Security Council condemned the Zionist entity more than 10 times for barbarous acts of aggressions perpetrated by zionism against Lebanon and its people and for destroying villages and towns in Lebanon, while shelling and dropping napalm bombs on refugee camps. This is an attempt by Israel to create conflicts in those villages in Lebanon. He shed tears for the fate of Lebanon and yet compelled the Palestinian people to live in exile or to integrate in other countries, whether in Jordan or Lebanon.

115. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): I must tell the representative that he must conclude his statement; he has exceeded his 10 minutes.

116. Mr. Al HOUT (Palestine Liberation Organization) (*interpretation from Arabic*): But we and the people of Lebanon and Jordan will never let untruths divide us. We shall continue to present a united national front against Zionist ambitions within and without Palestine. The representative of the Zionist entity concluded his statement theatrically and dramatically by saying that they were ready to start negotiations in the search for peace and a solution to the Palestinian problem. To this we reply that the cause of peace in the Middle East has only one key, the exercise of the inalienable right of the Palestinian people as represented by the PLO.

The meeting rose at 5.50 p.m.