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*President: Mr. Lazar MOJSOV (Yugoslavia).*

*In the absence of the President, Mr. Albornoz (Ecuador),  
Vice-President, took the Chair.*

AGENDA ITEM 30

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

1. Mr. JACKSON (Guyana): After a lapse of many years, the General Assembly in 1974 resumed the substantive consideration of the question of Palestine. At its twenty-ninth session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 3236 (XXIX), which, *inter alia*, reaffirmed the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and recognized that the Palestinian people was a principal party in the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

2. Speaking from this podium nearly a year after the adoption of that significant resolution, my Foreign Minister, Comrade Frederick Wills, acknowledged the importance of those conclusions when he observed that:

“The prospects for lasting peace in the Middle East begin and end with the rights of the Palestinian people. For their struggle is an integral part of the liberation struggle throughout the world.”<sup>1</sup>

3. Today there are few, if any, who deny that the rights of the Palestinian people are central to any search for a just and lasting settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. That the satisfaction of the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people is an essential prerequisite for the construction of a régime of secure peace in the Middle East is now all but universally recognized. Many speakers have for some time attested to this verity by recounting the appropriate references.

4. In this respect, my delegation wishes to commend the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People for the determined way in which it has pursued the execution of its mandate. Its report [A/32/

35], which is a principal document for our consideration, was eloquently introduced by its Chairman, Mr. Médoune Fall of Senegal, on Monday, 28 November [84th meeting].

5. While, however, the restoration of the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people is a *sine qua non* of a permanent solution to the Middle East situation, it is not the only requirement. Already we have had in this Assembly debates and conclusions on two related items: recent illegal Israeli measures in the occupied territories, and the situation in the Middle East. These debates and those conclusions have served to reaffirm the concern of the international community at the seemingly intractable situation in the Middle East. But they have also served to provide the Assembly with further opportunities to state clearly once again the requirements for a stable peace in the Middle East based on justice. Guyana has consistently reiterated the fundamental principles on the implementation of which, just and lasting peace in the Middle East can be secured. These are: first, respect for the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to a homeland; secondly, the non-acquisition of territory by force, thus involving the withdrawal of Israel from all Arab territories occupied since June 1967; and thirdly, the right of all States in the area, including Israel, to exist within boundaries that are secure and universally recognized.

6. Yet, the acknowledgement and reaffirmation of these principles are not enough to activate the processes leading to their implementation. An important factor which has frustrated their realization has been the attitude of the Israeli authorities over the years. Suffice it to recall that the present Israeli Government, adducing the argument that the occupied territories are part of Israel's historic homeland, has systematically promoted the establishment of Jewish settlements in those territories, thus creating additional obstacles to peace. Further, the Israeli authorities have taken steps for the application of certain administrative measures in the occupied Arab lands which have fuelled fears about Israeli annexationist intentions.

7. The international community has responded to those actions by reaffirming by an overwhelming majority its opposition to Israel's policies. An extraordinary meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of non-aligned countries held in New York at the end of September condemned Israel for taking illegal measures in Palestinian and other occupied Territories with the objective of changing the geographic, demographic, economic, cultural or historical characteristics of the occupied territories. Such measures, the Foreign Ministers stated, were not compatible with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the relevant resolutions of the United Nations and Israel's obligations under the fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War [see

<sup>1</sup> See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirtieth Session Plenary Meetings*, 2370th meeting.

A/32/255-S/12410, annex]. Similarly, General Assembly resolution 32/5 strongly deplored the Israeli measures and called for strict compliance by Israel with its international obligations in accordance with the principles of international law and the provisions of the Geneva Convention.

8. Last week this Assembly adopted resolution 32/20 on the Middle East situation. It represented the latest in a series of decisions by this Assembly giving prescriptions for a settlement of the Middle East problem. As regards the Palestinian people, that resolution *inter alia* reaffirmed:

“... 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”.

It recognized that “in particular the attainment by the Palestinian people of all their inalienable national rights” must be taken into account, and called for the inclusion of the Palestine Liberation Organization [PLO] in the Peace Conference on the Middle East.

9. Thus in the search for a permanent solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict a special responsibility devolves on Israel: its intransigence must give way to flexibility; and it must manifest a preparedness to adopt those attitudes which will accelerate the momentum towards a secure peace based on the principles I earlier enumerated.

10. Since the creation of the State of Israel, the Palestinian experience has been partly one of dispersal and dispossession, but it has also been one of hope and resolution. Rallying under the banner of the PLO, their authentic and legitimate representatives, the Palestinian people have mobilized a continuous struggle for the recovery of their freedom and the right to their national home. In those endeavours they are supported by the overwhelming majority of the international community, for no one can premise the rights of the Israelis on the denial of similar rights to the Palestinians.

11. Let us by the decisions we take in this debate support the Palestinian people and bring closer the day when, with their full participation in all the processes, the long desired peace in the Middle East is finally secured.

12. Mr. ABDEL MEGUID (Egypt) (*interpretation from Arabic*): The attention accorded by the United Nations to the Palestinian problem is an important and a principal factor in the process of establishing a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. There is an absolute conviction that this problem is the core of the situation and that in its just solution lies the foundation of permanent peace in the area. The Palestinian people are in no way less worthy than other peoples of the world who enjoy freedom. Therefore, to grant that people the right to independence and to self-determination is an indisputable matter.

13. Almost two years ago, President Mohamed Anwar El-Sadat of the Arab Republic of Egypt addressed the peoples of the world from this rostrum<sup>2</sup> and through this

Assembly expressed the Egyptian viewpoint on the most important international issues. The Palestinian question topped the list of issues because, for Egypt, it is a fundamental issue, an issue of right, justice and the destiny and future of a nation. In his statement President El-Sadat left no doubt that there could be no peace in the area without a political settlement of the Palestinian question. It is inconceivable and utterly unacceptable that the Palestinian people should remain homeless and dispersed. It must regain its entity so that it can make a constructive contribution to the development and progress of the international community. Since then, the General Assembly responded strongly to that appeal by reaffirming the concern of the States Members of the United Nations with regard to the Palestinian people and its inalienable national rights. On the basis of General Assembly resolution 3376 (XXX), which expressed the grave concern of the General Assembly that no progress had been achieved towards the exercise by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights, and while taking into consideration General Assembly resolution 3375 (XXX), the General Assembly once again clearly reaffirmed its position by adopting resolution 31/20 of 24 November 1976. Having reviewed and approved the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian people,<sup>3</sup> the General Assembly reiterated its deep concern that no just solution had been achieved to the Palestinian problem, which continued to aggravate the Middle East conflict. The General Assembly then urged the Security Council to consider once again the recommendations contained in the report of that Committee in order to take the necessary measures to implement those recommendations so as to achieve early progress towards a solution of this problem of Palestine and the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

14. In this connexion I should like to express on behalf of Egypt our deep appreciation of the great efforts exerted by the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and its Chairman, Mr. Médoune Fall, to affirm these rights and to create ways and means to ensure their implementation. The Committee has undertaken an objective analysis of the debate which took place at the thirty-first session of the General Assembly. It also discussed the views expressed and the contacts made by the Secretary-General with all parties to the conflict, including the PLO and the Co-Chairmen of the Geneva Peace Conference, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 31/62, which was proposed and adopted on the initiative of Egypt.

15. The report of the Committee stressed the important role the Security Council can play. It also deemed it useful that Council members that could not support the recommendations and/or the report of the Committee should express their views to the Committee's Chairman, who met with representatives of the parties concerned. The Committee has given due consideration to the central role played by the Security Council. This was manifested in the Council's debate which took place a few weeks ago.<sup>4</sup> Egypt therefore appeals to the Security Council to deal objec-

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Thirty-first Session, Supplement No. 35.

<sup>4</sup> See *Official Records of the Security Council, Thirty-second Year*, 2041st meeting.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 2388th meeting.

tively with the Palestinian question, which is the core of the Middle East conflict. If this problem is not solved, we shall not have contributed to a just and lasting solution of the Middle East question. We also appeal to the United Nations to increase its efforts to disseminate information about this just cause, which is considered a top priority issue with the United Nations and one which is compatible with the principles of the United Nations Charter.

16. I shall not go into the details of the Committee's report [A/32/35] because Mr. Fall, the Chairman of the Committee, has already made an excellent and comprehensive statement on the question. I should like, however, to make the following remarks, which reaffirm Egypt's position as stated at the previous session.

17. First, the report has touched upon the practical and objective aspects of the proposals that have been submitted and the phases of their implementation.

18. Secondly, it is based on United Nations resolutions, that is, on international legitimacy.

19. Thirdly, the phases proposed by the report are reasonable. The first phase, involving the return to their homes of the Palestinians who were displaced as a result of the war of June 1967, is a matter that was previously endorsed unanimously by the Security Council in resolution 237 (1967). There is therefore no excuse for any party to hinder this return.

20. Fourthly, the report has given a major supervisory role to both the United Nations and particularly to the Security Council.

21. Fifthly, the report has not disregarded any party, and it referred to the necessity for agreement among the parties concerned within the framework of the Charter and the relevant United Nations resolutions.

22. Sixthly, the report was accurate in asserting that it is not possible to implement these proposals while the occupation persists.

23. Seventhly, the report has put the Palestinian problem in the proper context since it considers it the core of the Middle East question.

24. Eighthly, the report notes that the Committee should strive to obtain the widest possible acceptance from United Nations Members and that this requires informal contacts with representatives of States not members of the Committee that could play a positive role on the Palestinian question in the Security Council and in the General Assembly.

25. Ninthly, and lastly, the report has stressed that the Middle East situation should not be allowed to stagnate and that there is a need for reconvening the Geneva Peace Conference.

26. Hence, my delegation believes that the Committee's report could serve as a proper framework for movement towards an over-all settlement. Consequently, we believe that the General Assembly should clearly reaffirm its

already established position and give its full support to the Committee and its work.

27. I should also like once again to commend the Secretary-General of the United Nations for the role he has been playing in the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. Last week, while the General Assembly was discussing the situation in the Middle East [79th meeting], I referred to the major efforts undertaken by the Secretary-General, especially his contacts with all parties to the conflict, including the PLO. The Secretary-General is thus emphasizing the important role being played by the United Nations in working out a solution to this problem. Egypt firmly believes that any solution should be made within the framework of the United Nations. Therefore, Egypt has called for a preparatory meeting in Cairo, in which all the parties to the conflict, including the PLO, the United Nations and the Co-Chairmen of the Peace Conference would take part. This preparatory conference is designed to make careful and proper preparation for the Geneva Peace Conference so that it may be convened as soon as possible and achieve its objective. That would help spare us many futile controversies and arguments. Egypt sincerely hopes that all parties will respond to this invitation so that we may all contribute to the march towards peace. In the meantime, Egypt is convinced that the Co-Chairmen of the Geneva Peace Conference and the United Nations have an important and central role to play in this connexion. That is why the Secretary-General responded quickly to the Egyptian Government's invitation to participate in this meeting. That was only a logical outcome confirming the role of the United Nations.

28. Egypt's basic and firm position towards the Palestinian question is well known and self-explanatory. Since the emergence of the Palestine problem in 1948, Egypt has offered up tens of thousands of its sons in the defence of this just cause. Therefore, any attempt to deny the role played by Egypt is a denial of the sacrifice of those tens of thousands of Egyptian martyrs. What Egypt has done was not to satisfy some selfish interest or for regional motives. The problem is not an Egyptian-Israeli one, but an Arab-Israeli problem. Whatever Egypt is doing is in defence of this just cause. Egypt will continue to shoulder its historic responsibility, disregarding all the stabs directed at it by the so-called supporters of the Palestinian cause, who had better realize, before it is too late, that Egypt has always been and will continue to be the mainstay of the Palestinian people. It is hoped that the experience of the last few years will be a good example to them.

29. President Mohammed Anwar El-Sadat firmly underlined the position of Egypt in his historic address in Jerusalem on 20 November 1977. He put all the facts before the whole world, emphasizing that nobody could deny that the Palestine cause is the crux of the entire problem. He said that no one could accept Israel's ignoring of the Palestinian people because that people have legitimate and inalienable rights, namely, the right to establish a national State and the right to return to it. There will be no basis for true peace unless it is founded on justice, not on the occupation of other people's land. No one can seek for himself what he denies to others.

30. Egypt firmly believes that the international situation and the fundamental changes brought about by the October

war, in addition to Egypt's determination and initiatives to achieve just and lasting peace, constitute a unique opportunity for the international community in general and the United Nations in particular. The United Nations has the responsibility of seizing that opportunity. Any attempt to miss or block this opportunity will be totally rejected by us because events have shown that such attempts are fraught with enormous danger, not only for the people of the Middle East but also undoubtedly for international peace and security. Egypt's position has consistently been that the United Nations and the international community should be parties to the establishment of a just and lasting peace in our volatile area, especially as the United Nations has been dealing with the Palestinian problem almost since its creation. For that reason, Egypt has insisted from the outset that the Peace Conference on the Middle East should be under the auspices of the United Nations.

31. It has become crystal-clear that continuation of the present situation in the area constitutes a threat to peace, since the Arab peoples and States will not accept the continuation of the Israeli occupation and the denial of the national and inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. The world is in a race against time. We shall either have a just and lasting peace, or we shall employ every means to restore our rights, guaranteed to us under the Charter and supported by the United Nations. Consequently, the international community must work to get things moving immediately. The States Members of the United Nations have an obligation to direct the situation towards a just solution and to face all obstructive manoeuvres with determination.

32. In conclusion, I should like to say that the rights of the Palestinian people require no interpretation. If Israel wants true peace in the area, it has to recognize those rights. It is time that Israel heeded the voice of the international community so that all the peoples and States of the area may enjoy security and prosperity and may contribute in the future, as they have done in the past, to the progress of humanity.

33. Mr. HOLLAI (Hungary): There is an international consensus that the question of Palestine is the core and substance of the conflict in the Middle East and that therefore a just and lasting peace in the area cannot be achieved without a just solution of this problem on the basis of the attainment by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights. There is also universal agreement that the solution of the question of Palestine can be found only within the framework of a comprehensive settlement in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the United Nations.

34. That concurrence of opinion is faithfully reflected in the basic considerations outlined by the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People in its report now before the Assembly [A/32/35]. My delegation endorses the report, which reaffirms the validity of the recommendations made last year by the Committee to the thirty-first session of the General Assembly. Those recommendations constitute a positive step towards the achievement of the aspirations and rights of the Palestinian people and make it clear that any agreement affecting its rights and concluded in its absence would be null and void.

35. The flagrant violation by Israel of the territorial integrity of Arab States, the continued occupation of Palestinian land, the denial to the people of Palestine of the right to establish a national State and Israel's refusal to comply with the most elementary norms of international law are a source of extreme concern to all of us here. The recent measures taken by Israel to change the geographical character, the demographic structure and the legal status of the occupied territories imply a continuation of the policy aimed at the permanent annexation of those territories and are incompatible with the principle of the inadmissibility of acquiring territory by force. Those measures are also incompatible with the recommendations contained in the report of the Committee, which was endorsed by the General Assembly at its thirty-first session. At the same time, those actions raise additional obstacles to the realization of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, whip up tension in the region, and undermine the efforts to promote a just and lasting settlement of the Middle East conflict.

36. The Palestinian people is a target of fierce attacks from different sources. We witness efforts and attempts to create confusion about the rights of the people of Palestine, their future, their destiny and their representation. Such attempts aim at achieving a settlement with regard to the ingredients of the Middle East conflict at the expense of the Palestinian people. We deplore the fact that certain States try to prevent a just solution of the Palestinian problem. A satisfactory solution to this issue is outlined in the Committee's report on the basis of the General Assembly resolutions dealing with the subject. Those resolutions, which were adopted over the past 30 years, recognize the right to self-determination without external interference, the right to national independence and sovereignty, and the right of the Palestinians to return to their homes and properties, from which they were displaced and uprooted. To attempt to bypass these basic principles means siding with the enemies of the Arab people of Palestine.

37. Certain political efforts and manoeuvres with regard to the question of Palestinian representation obstruct genuine peace efforts and jeopardize the possibility of negotiations. No one can challenge the fact—which has been reaffirmed time and again by the overwhelming majority of the Palestinian people, by the summit conferences of the Arab and non-aligned countries, and by the resolutions of our Organization—that the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinians is the PLO. The status and legitimacy of the PLO as the sole representative of the Arab people of Palestine has been widely recognized, with no room left for doubt that it is the only body having the right and mandate to speak on behalf of the Palestinian people. Sharing this view of the international community on the Palestinian representation, I should like to underline that my Government continues to give every kind of support to the Palestinian people, led by the PLO, in its efforts to achieve a just settlement of the Palestinian problem.

38. My Government believes that the road to peace in the Middle East leads through an international peace conference. The Geneva Peace Conference is the most suitable forum in which to work out a just and comprehensive settlement of the Middle East conflict, provided that all parties directly involved, including the representatives of the PLO, take

part in the Conference on an equal footing. This form of collective action is likely to make a tangible contribution to a just and lasting settlement of the conflict. We are firmly convinced that separate agreements jeopardize an over-all agreement and call into question a genuine and durable solution.

39. In this context we welcome the joint statement issued on 1 October by the Soviet Union and the United States to the effect that the peace settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict should be "comprehensive, incorporating all parties concerned and all questions". We equally welcome the affirmation in that statement of the fact that "insuring the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people" is essential for a comprehensive settlement of the Middle East conflict.

40. We maintain that a global settlement of the conflict in the Middle East can be achieved only by the withdrawal of the Israeli forces from all the territories occupied in 1967, by the restoration of the legitimate rights of the Arab people of Palestine, including the right to establish its own State, and by guarantees for the peace and security of all States in that area. Unless a solution to these problems is found, the situation in the Middle East will remain a source of permanent danger to world peace.

41. Mr. FLORIN (German Democratic Republic) (*interpretation from Russian*): A few days ago at its thirty-second session the General Assembly of the United Nations, at the end of the debate on the Middle East [82nd meeting], adopted by 102 votes—which is to say by the overwhelming majority of the membership—a resolution 32/20, which says:

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

The resolution further calls "for the early convening of the Peace Conference on the Middle East . . . with the participation on an equal footing . . . of the Palestine Liberation Organization." The General Assembly has thus once again laid down the basic principles for a resolution of the key issues involved in a just and lasting political settlement of the Middle East conflict.

42. Today, in its plenary meetings, the Assembly is holding a special debate on one of the key issues in the conflict, the question of Palestine. Once again the General Assembly is called upon to concern itself with this question because the ruling circles of Israel continue to this day stubbornly to refuse to withdraw from the Arab territories occupied in 1967 and to recognize the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people. It must be noted that there is no sign of any readiness on the part of Israel to correct its negative attitude towards the just demands of the Arab people of Palestine, the satisfaction of which is, however, pertinent to the establishment of peace in the Middle East.

43. This is indicated, among other things, by Israel's vote against draft resolution A/32/L.38 and Add.1 and 2, which

became resolution 32/20. That resolution was aimed at ending the continuing Israeli aggression and clearly outlines the requirements for a comprehensive settlement of the Middle East conflict. Furthermore, the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations thought fit to circulate in writing an appeal for Member States to vote against the adoption by the Assembly at its thirty-second session of the resolution on the Middle East.

44. It is asserted that it would be a bad idea to prejudge the results of the Geneva Peace Conference and that, accordingly, everything is negotiable. The question arises whether the intention here is to call in question Security Council resolution 242 (1967) as a whole. For example, that resolution contains a statement of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war, a demand for an end to the aggression against Arab territories that has continued since 1967, and a statement of the right of all States of the region to peaceful coexistence. In the view of the delegation of the German Democratic Republic, these are unquestionably principles that cannot be the subject of negotiations. The flaw in Security Council resolution 242 (1967) is the improper statement it makes in regard to the Arab people of Palestine, a matter which needs to be corrected. The whole world now recognizes that the question of Palestine is not merely a question of refugees, as it was stated in Security Council resolution 242 (1967). Even statements by Israel's allies now reflect an understanding of the fact that in the final analysis there can be no lasting peace settlement in the Middle East without recognition of the lawful rights of the Palestinian people. Statements by representatives of various States at meetings of the Security Council and the General Assembly—I am referring particularly to the meetings of the Security Council at which the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People was considered—reaffirm this fact. The right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, including the creation of its own independent State, is inalienable, and no one can dispute it. There is no logic in Israel's refusal to recognize that the Palestinian people has that right—a right to which Israel itself lays claim. In the final analysis, it is not a question of the creation of any "homeland" for the Palestinian people but of the creation for that long-suffering people of its own independent State. The Arab people of Palestine has the right to peace and justice.

45. The policies of Israel's ruling circles are obviously still determined by the wish to continue the aggression against their Arab neighbours, to annex the territory of other States and to flout the rights of a whole people, namely, the Palestinian people. When the deputy from Israel's Communist Party drew the attention of the Israeli Prime Minister to this fact, he received a characteristic reply: "The Hebrew language knows no Palestinian people, only the people of Israel".

46. Thus in the plenary meetings of the General Assembly we now have the task of emphasizing the importance of the exercise of the right of the Palestinian people to the implementation of the United Nations Charter and the attainment of a comprehensive peace settlement in the Middle East, and we therefore welcome and greatly appreciate the statement made by the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the

Palestinian People, the Permanent Representative of Senegal [84th meeting], and I should like to express to him our appreciation and gratitude for his tireless activity in that office. The German Democratic Republic, a member of the United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, has always unequivocally advocated and will continue to advocate the implementation of the lawful rights of the Palestinian people, including its right to create its own independent State. No one who wants a genuine peace settlement in the Middle East can evade this important question.

47. The PLO is the sole lawful representative of the Palestinian people. The United Nations General Assembly, too, has unconditionally recognized this fact. The PLO is today a respected and universally recognized factor in international relations. The number of States that recognize the PLO exceeds the number that maintain diplomatic relations with Israel.

48. The German Democratic Republic pays a tribute to the heroic struggle of the PLO for the exercise of the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people and is giving it active support and solidarity. It is self-evident to my Government that the PLO has the right to participate on an equal footing in the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East. It is inadmissible that negotiations on a lasting settlement of the Middle East conflict should be conducted without the participation of its representatives. The PLO rightly rejects manoeuvres aimed at excluding the key questions for genuine peace negotiations. In the final analysis, such attempts can only complicate the situation in the Middle East and the prospects for peace in the region, as was convincingly argued by the representative of the PLO in his statement on this agenda item from the rostrum [*ibid.*].

49. The PLO is waging a difficult and self-sacrificing struggle for the lawful rights of the Arab people of Palestine and thus for the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. Acts directed against the Palestinian people which sow discord and are aimed at weakening the role of the PLO militate against such a peace. The experience of the struggle against racism and colonialism has shown that actions aimed at so-called solutions through bypassing or excluding national liberation movements are in the final analysis doomed to failure.

50. If one considers some of the recent events in the Middle East, such as the notorious abuse of the veto right in the Security Council, Israel's rejection of the resolution adopted by the thirty-second session of the General Assembly and the statement by the Israeli Prime Minister to the effect that he allegedly knows of no Palestinian people, the existence of a serious danger is obvious. The world Organization is in duty bound to support the Palestinian people and the PLO and to help bring about the exercise of the inalienable rights of this long-suffering people.

51. My delegation considers that the United Nations must make a greater effort to explain the role of the Palestinian question in a resolution of the Middle East conflict. We therefore support the proposal to establish an appropriate unit in the United Nations Secretariat. The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian

People must continue its work. Allow me to express our confidence that the results of this debate will represent a contribution to the cause of supporting the Palestinian people and its representative, the PLO, in the arduous struggle for the exercise of their inalienable national rights.

52. In a statement recently handed to the Secretary-General, the Government of the German Democratic Republic has once again reaffirmed that it is striving tirelessly to extend the process of détente to all regions of the world. This also determines the position of the German Democratic Republic regarding a lasting peace settlement of the Middle East conflict. In this connexion, the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany, the leading party in the German Democratic Republic, noted at its recent Seventh Plenum:

"The conflict remains unresolved and threatens the international situation inasmuch as its principal causes have not been removed. Israeli troops continue to occupy large areas of Arab territory and to flout the inalienable national rights of the Arab people of Palestine. The Politburo reaffirms the viewpoint of the German Democratic Republic: namely, that the key questions for a peaceful settlement of the Middle East conflict are: the full withdrawal of all Israeli troops from the Arab territories occupied in 1967; the exercise of the inalienable rights of the Arab people of Palestine, including its right to create a national State; the recognition of the right of all States of the region to independent existence and security.

"The competent organ for considering and resolving these questions is the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East. We support the position of the Soviet Union designed by its initiatives to ensure the continuance of efforts for the resumption of the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East. The German Democratic Republic supports the demand of the sole lawful representative of the Arab people of Palestine, the Palestine Liberation Organization, in accordance with the resolutions of the United Nations, to take part on an equal footing in that Conference."

53. Mr. MESTIRI (Tunisia) (*interpretation from French*): At a time when the problem of the Middle East is once again at the centre of world concern, it is timely to remind ourselves that without a just solution of the Palestinian problem no peace effort has any serious chance of success.

54. That is an obvious fact that our General Assembly clearly recognized ever since 1974 in its resolutions 3236 (XXIX) and 3376 (XXX). Since then, little by little, the entire international community has accepted that fact. The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, in the report [A/32/35] introduced to us by its Chairman, Mr. Fall of Senegal, with the brilliance, precision and impartiality that are usual in him, and also by the Rapporteur of the Committee, Mr. Gauci of Malta, rightly notes that even the Western countries which are least well disposed to the Palestinian cause have changed and today willingly recognize the reality of Palestine and the cardinal role that it must play in any search for a just and lasting peace. In other words but with the same meaning, all stress the specific identity of the Palestinian

people, their legitimate rights and, above all, the impossibility of envisaging peaceful coexistence in the region without giving in deeds effective expression to the Palestinian national identity—in sum, without the establishment of a sovereign and independent Palestinian State enjoying boundaries as secure and recognized as those of all its neighbours.

55. While the Palestinian state remains to be set up, the Palestinian people for its part has long existed and has demonstrated throughout its rich history a great determination and an indomitable vitality. Despite the unbelievable vicissitudes of an inexorable fate, despite deliberate determination in certain quarters to destroy its existence, and the readiness in others to ignore its existence, the Palestinian people is today, more than ever, on its feet and resolved to fight for its most legitimate and natural rights. This struggle which it is waging today in the field, and which we hope tomorrow it will continue around the negotiating table, has been conceived by the Palestinian people—whether in the territories occupied by Israel or in the Diaspora—around a solid and representative organization, the PLO.

56. There is always a great temptation for occupying Powers to deny or to dispute the representative nature of liberation movements fighting against their rule. Israel is no exception. But, recognized first by the Arab community, and subsequently by the international community, and in the most striking fashion, the PLO is today the only valid interlocutor capable of committing the future of the Palestinian people. The representative nature of the PLO has expressed itself in many ways, which are fully familiar to the Israelis.

57. That is to say that it is impossible to conceive of genuine peace in the Middle East without the PLO; to turn down the PLO is to wish to ignore Palestine, and to ignore Palestine is to reject peace.

58. For that reason it is the duty of the entire international community to bring together, in addition to the other Arab interlocutors, Israelis and Palestinians—that is to say the representatives of the Israeli Government and those of the PLO—around the negotiating table, and the sooner the better. Their presence around the same table will pave the way to the mutual recognition of their two nationalisms and to a solution leading on to peaceful coexistence and, later perhaps, to co-operation.

59. The United States-Soviet joint statement of 1 October follows along those lines. It is important that the great Powers, as part of the responsibilities incumbent on them under the United Nations Charter, should sincerely and resolutely make every effort to give effect to that text.

60. The Arab States and the PLO have expressed, repeated and demonstrated again and again their readiness to negotiate on the basis of the pertinent resolutions of the United Nations—those of the Security Council and those of the General Assembly. Unfortunately the same cannot be said of Israel, which continues to dispute and even to deny the existence of a Palestinian problem. The Palestinian people's will to live and its determination to create a Palestinian State on Palestinian soil are political realities

that it would be dangerous to attempt to deny or pretend to ignore. That will and those realities are based on the sacred and inalienable rights that have been recognized and reconfirmed by the General Assembly. If the Hebrew State should persist in ignoring those realities and denying those rights, it would leave room for nothing but pessimism and despair that breed bitterness and rancour, with the danger that in the long term matters would degenerate to the point of producing a conflagration whose scope and consequences are unforeseeable.

61. If there is any question in which the United Nations has a direct responsibility it is indeed in that of Palestine. Since the 1947 General Assembly resolution partitioning Palestine to make possible the creation of the State of Israel [resolution 181 (II)], the entire region has known no respite: passing from crisis to crisis the Middle East has become a powder keg fraught with dangers, not only for all the States of the region but also for international peace and security. The efforts that have been made thus far to defuse the permanent threat posed by the situation have not succeeded because they failed to take account of the central element of the problem, namely, the question of Palestine and the fate of the Palestinian people. The best way of not falling back into the same rut is to take the bull by the horns and the problem of the Middle East by Palestine. Once that central problem has been smoothed away it will certainly be easier to set about reaching the necessary over-all agreement, for the question of the Middle East and the question of Palestine form a whole which calls for a single over-all solution. That solution, which we hope will be a peaceful one, can be attained only with the participation of the authentic representatives of all the parties concerned, including the PLO. That solution, as we all know, must begin with Israel's withdrawal from all the illegally occupied territories. That is the only approach which can lead to a definitive settlement which would recognize the dignity and right of everyone to live in his territory, free and independent. That is what the Palestinian people want, and that is what all countries which understand what is at stake want.

62. May this debate, by once again reaffirming the sacred and inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, make a positive contribution to the solution of a grave problem which has lasted for too long.

63. Mr. PAPOULIAS (Greece): My delegation has had the opportunity to state its position on the Palestinian problem during the discussion of the situation in the Middle East. What we said then is valid also in the case of the present agenda item. I am intervening today to repeat that for us the Palestinian problem continues to lie at the heart of the Middle East crisis. It is inextricably linked to a crisis that endangers international peace and security. It would indeed be futile, and in fact perilous, to try to ignore that basic truth.

64. It follows that the solution of the question of Palestine can be found only on the basis of the fundamental principles of the Charter and in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions. Such a solution should entail withdrawal by Israel from all the Arab territories occupied in June 1967 and the recognition and realization of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, including

their right to self-determination and to a national homeland. It entails also the return of the Palestinians to their homes and properties from which they have been uprooted, in accordance with resolution 3236 (XXIX), which my delegation supported.

65. I need hardly repeat that a just and lasting settlement of the Palestinian problem and of the problem of the Middle East cannot be achieved without the participation of all the parties concerned—which also means the representatives of the Palestinian people. In this respect, I recall that Greece voted in favour of resolutions 3375 (XXX) and 3376 (XXX), as well as resolution 32/20, which was adopted by the Assembly on 25 November 1977 and called 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.

66. Relevant to this debate also is the consensus statement made on behalf of the Security Council by its President on 11 November 1976,<sup>5</sup> whereby the Council strongly deplored any measures that alter the demographic composition or the geographical nature of the occupied Arab territories and particularly the establishment of settlements by Israel.

67. My delegation voted in favour of resolution 32/5, which was adopted by an overwhelming majority of the General Assembly during the present session.

68. The Greek delegation, like many other delegations, believes that a just and lasting settlement of the problem of Palestine and of the Middle East is urgently needed and should be sought through negotiations, notably by the convening of the Geneva Peace Conference at the earliest possible date, with a view to achieving a comprehensive solution on the basis of the principles of the Charter and the relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions.

69. Mr. AL-SAFFAR (Bahrain): On this occasion, when the General Assembly meets to discuss the Palestinian problem, my delegation would like to express its gratitude to the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People for the report [A/32/35] submitted by its Chairman, Mr. Fall of Senegal. In spite of all the difficulties and obstacles encountered, the Committee has succeeded in presenting us with the fruits of long and difficult work. I should also like to pay a tribute to all the members of that Committee, who have given their time to prepare a report which could serve as a point of departure in the search for a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

70. As a matter of fact, the General Assembly has before it a report dealing with the problem of the Middle East from a comprehensive point of view. The objective of this report is simple and clear, namely, that the international community should act on the proposals made by the Committee in its report, which lays the foundation for a comprehensive solution of the problem of the Middle East,

and in particular that it should act with regard to the implementation of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

71. It is quite well known to all members of this Assembly that the root and the essence of the Middle East conflict is the Palestinian question. The uprooting and displacement and the long-standing pain and suffering of the Palestinian people are the most important components of the Palestinian problem.

72. Since the occupation of the homeland of the Palestinians, the Zionist authorities have pursued the logic of force and completely rejected the course of a peaceful settlement, despite the many resolutions of the United Nations and the appeals of the international community that the dispersed Palestinians be allowed to return to their homes and property. Indeed, immediately after the Israeli aggression against the Arab countries in June 1967 and the occupation of their territories, Israeli leaders took a series of measures with the aim of annexing those territories once and for all. Those measures, which ranged from the annexation of Arab Jerusalem on 27 June 1967 and the destruction and expropriation of the property of the people to the establishment of Jewish settlements in the occupied territories were accompanied by the brutal repression of the population of those occupied territories.

73. On many occasions, the Palestinian people in the West Bank, Gaza and elsewhere have expressed their firm determination to continue the struggle for its survival and liberation from the Israeli yoke.

74. We still remember the explosion of popular feeling in the occupied Arab territories which took place last year. That showed how much the Palestinian people was attached to its homeland and to the PLO, its sole legitimate representative. It is through the PLO that its voice has been heard throughout the world.

75. The results of the municipal elections on the West Bank in April 1976 also showed the great attachment of the Palestinian population to its legitimate representative, the PLO, and to its principles. The popular uprising in the West Bank was a collective expression of a people against invasion and occupation of its territory. In spite of the brutality of the Zionist forces, the Palestinian people have shown a will of iron and a determination to achieve their liberation from the racist authorities in Tel Aviv and to assert their national identity.

76. In the light of the Committee's report, the General Assembly is invited to adopt measures to give effect to the principles of the return of the Palestinians to their homes and of their right to self-determination. These principles are, in effect, recognized by the General Assembly, as can be seen from the many resolutions adopted by this Organization in recent years. The General Assembly should reassert those principles and prevail upon Israel to accept and recognize them. These elements are fundamental to any settlement of the Middle East crisis. Consequently, Israel should create a favourable situation for the restoration of peace in the area. This means that Israel should withdraw from all the Arab territories occupied in 1967.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, *Thirty-first Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1976*, document S/12233.



77. In the view of almost all the Member States, the policy of expansion ceaselessly pursued by Israel on the pretext of ensuring its security constitutes a major obstacle to any just solution of the Middle East problem. Peace cannot be established without justice; and hence without the attainment of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including the right of return and the right to national independence and sovereignty in Palestine.

78. The report, so competently presented by the Chairman of the Committee, provides us with appropriate ways and means of doing that. In our view, the programme for the exercise of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people contained in the report is highly realistic because it takes account of the prevailing situation in Palestine. Although we take a different position on certain points in the report, we can say that it does contain positive elements which can bring us close to a solution of the problem. The report does, in fact, reflect the position of the majority of States Members of the Organization. It traces in outline the path to be followed to arrive at a solution based on the debates and discussions that have been held in the General Assembly and in the Security Council.

79. We are happy to see that this document goes to the very heart of the problem of the Middle East, which is the question of Palestine, for any approach or effort to find a solution to this problem which does not take into account the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people would be doomed to failure.

80. Yesterday, 29 November 1977, was the thirtieth anniversary of the adoption of the unjust recommendations of the 1947 plan to partition Palestine between Arabs and Jews. Those recommendations carried with them the seeds of unrest in the Middle East. Today, after three decades, the General Assembly has before it recommendations which, in our view, are omens of peace.

81. Therefore, the General Assembly, especially those Member States which supported resolution 181 (II) of 29 November 1947, which brought wars and destruction to the area, are invited to support the recommendations in the Committee's report. We believe that the recommendations contained in document A/32/35 could serve as guidelines in any peace talks on the Middle East.

82. In the view of my Government, any efforts being made to find a peaceful solution to the Palestinian question, not only should take into consideration the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, but should also recognize that the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, should occupy its rightful place and enjoy effective participation in any peace talks, including the Geneva Conference, on an equal footing with all parties concerned.

83. We hope that the General Assembly will take this historic opportunity to do everything in its power to restore peace and tranquillity to the Middle East.

84. Mr. KINENE (Uganda): The General Assembly has been debating the question of Palestine for the last 30 years or so. My delegation believes that the question of Palestine is now too clear to warrant any further in-depth elaboration or analysis. A bunch of racist Zionists, financed and

supported by Western imperialist Powers and posing as persecuted people, invaded the Holy Land of Palestine, turned the Palestinians into refugees and took possession of their land and property. As a consequence of that aggression, the region of the Middle East has known neither peace nor security since then and the Arab people, especially the Palestinians, have been the constant victims of four wars of aggression launched by the so-called State of Israel. Had it not been because of the Zionist aggression, there would probably have been neither a question of Palestine nor a question of the Middle East on the agenda of the General Assembly.

85. My delegation is of the firm view that, as long as the Zionists continue to ignore the Palestinian people and to deny them their legitimate rights and as long as Israel continues to occupy the Arab lands illegally, there will be no genuine peace in the Middle East and consequently no peace in the world at large.

86. The United Nations, realizing this fact, gave full recognition to the authentic representatives of the Palestinian people, namely, the PLO. This recognition by the entire world—except of course, the Zionists—came about thanks to the heroic struggle of the Palestinian people under the wise leadership of the PLO. It would, therefore, be self-deceiving to expect the people of Palestine to give up their just struggle unless their legitimate rights, as recognized by this body, the United Nations, are fulfilled. One cannot expect anybody whose land has been stolen and whose property was destroyed to give up the struggle simply because the thief insists that he does not recognize the victim.

87. Right now, as we are debating this critical problem, the Palestinians are still suffering in miserable conditions in refugee camps in the Middle East. It will, therefore, be irresponsible and unrealistic for anybody, and particularly for the United Nations, to continue to treat the problem of Palestine as a side issue and to deal with it on an *ad hoc* basis. The problem of Palestine is the heart of the problem of the Middle East.

88. Consequently, there will never be peace or security in that area of the world as long as the problem of Palestine remains unsolved. The only just and genuine solution to that problem lies in the following conditions: first, the Palestinian people must establish their own State in the land of Palestine; secondly, the people of Palestine must be compensated by Israel for all the property it stole from them after occupying their land; thirdly, Zionist Israel must withdraw without any further delay from all Arab lands it has been occupying illegally since the 1967 war; and fourthly, any peace talks on the Middle East problem must include among its full participants the authentic representatives of the Palestinian people, namely, the PLO. These, in the view of my delegation, are the minimum requirements that have to be satisfied if there is to be peace and security in the Middle East.

89. In this connexion, I should like to quote from a statement made by His Excellency the President-for-life of the Republic of Uganda, on the question of Palestine:

“No big Power, even if it is the United States of America, should try to tamper with the just struggle of

the Palestinian people. The Palestinian people shall fight until their country is fully liberated from Zionist occupation.”

90. Uganda therefore supports, and will continue to support, the just struggle of the Palestinian people until their rights are fully restored. In the same way, Uganda supports the struggle of the Arab people whose lands are occupied by Zionist Israel.

91. Israel must withdraw from Egypt, from the Golan Heights, from Arab Jerusalem, from the Gaza Strip, and from the West Bank of the Jordan.

92. It is with this in mind that my delegation supports the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian people and will support any resolution adopted by this Assembly, and aimed at fulfilling the recommendations contained in that report.

93. Mr. FARAH (Djibouti): Thirty years have elapsed since the inception of the State of Israel as a Jewish State in the land of Palestine under General Assembly resolution 181 (II) of 29 November 1947. Those same 30 years have passed without an Arab State being declared in the remaining part of Palestine in spite of the fact that the same resolution declared that an Arab State should be formed in that same year. Instead, and after the immediate abortion or miscarriage of their Arab State, the Palestinian people have passed through 30 tragic years, during which they have tasted the horrors of cold-blooded murder, the indignity of exile, continuing displacement from their homeland and, unfortunately, dispersal to the harsh experiences of alien lands.

94. After all these years the General Assembly is once again determined to consider the question of Palestine. During those 30 years the world has witnessed the tragic incidents of four destructive wars as a consequence of the insoluble problem of the Palestine tragedy. In all those four wars the world has been terrified by the possibility of the eruption of another world war.

95. Every moment of that long period of time has brought with it important developments that have intensified international attention and concern. This year, as in other years, the General Assembly is devoting itself untiringly to debating yet another report, the sole concern of which is to pave the way towards a just and equitable solution to the question of Palestine. The report in question is that of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. That report, as well as what has been reflected of it in the statements of representatives, depicts the grave situation the Committee described in accordance with its mandate and warns us of the impact that that situation would have on peace-keeping efforts in the Middle East.

96. My delegation, which has been following the discussion of the subject in question with keen interest, is very happy to show its support for the consideration of the question of Palestine at this rostrum and before this body by participating in this debate.

97. Each year the debate takes place against a background of new outrages. We continually hear about the new Israeli

methods of repression designed to crush the will and the hope of the Palestinians and other Arab people whose only crime is to demand the inalienable rights of which they have been robbed. The recent illegal Israeli measures designed to change the legal status, geographical nature and demographic composition of the occupied Arab territories are premeditated in design and constitute but a prelude to the annexation of Arab land; they constitute a vicious act of manoeuvring designed to confuse the real core issue in that region and a naive act designed to divert international attention from the real issue; they place obstacles in the way of the continuing efforts exerted by the international community to promote a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

98. The measures of the Zionist, racist Government of Israel to impose Israeli regulations on the Arab population in the occupied lands, its inhuman treatment of the Arab people who are so righteously worthy of inhabiting their indigenous land, its denial of the basic rights of the Palestinian people to return to their homeland to form the Arab counterpart State to the Jewish State established 30 years ago, and its sacrilegious acts against the holy shrines in the occupied Arab land are all atrocities which are but a few examples of the horrible acts emerging from the nightmarish dictates of the policy of the Tel Aviv Government, whose human, political and social contracts are not bound by the moral scruples so badly needed at a time when our world has entered an era where scientific and technological knowhow can be effectively exploited, either constructively or destructively, with overwhelming magnitude and unimaginable and ever wider international scope.

*Mr. Mojsov (Yugoslavia) took the Chair.*

99. We are fully aware that our good and non-paranoid communities have wisely chosen to extend their mental exploits to the lofty level of using marvelous scientific and technological know-how in the international alleviation of the misery of poverty and disease that seriously impedes our march towards the establishment of a peace-loving and prosperous international community.

100. It is strangely unfortunate that Israel has not been prone to these lofty ideas. Instead, its abnormal behaviour has exposed it as a delinquent child growing through the years to become the black sheep of the international community and of the family of nations, a family which abides by moral codes of conduct that are essential to the establishment of international peace and justice.

101. Contrary to internationally accepted human moral codes of conduct we find through the reports given by the competent organs and various committees of the General Assembly—and especially the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, rightfully assigned by the General Assembly to contribute to the search for an equitable solution to the Palestine problem—that the mental and moral aberrations of Zionist, racist and expansionist Israel have thrown it into a state of paranoid behaviour and into an attitude that has made it inhumanly insensitive and arrogantly passive to all international pressures and appeals. Israel has refused to desist from its belligerent behaviour against the Palestinian people. It has

categorically denied them their inalienable right to return to their homeland.

102. All this sadly psychological and mentally pathological behaviour of Israel not only contravenes the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and repudiates Israel's international obligations under the fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, but seriously calls for the able efforts of the organs of the United Nations and the concerted unilateral, bilateral and multilateral efforts of the big Powers and other peace-loving international organs in a united attempt effectively to chastise and bring sanity to Israel.

103. One cannot but realize that Israel is insane when it believes that it can struggle and continue to struggle in building a Zionist, racist and expansionist State among the indignant Arabs on whom it has imposed an alien way of life in their own land. Israel is absolutely insane when it entertains the absurd idea of safely achieving meaningful success in the struggle for a better future in a Zionist State when all the independent neighbouring Arabs and all the peace-loving nations of the world are exerting all moral and material efforts to protect the rights of the Arab nation in its struggle for national security, to liberate Palestine and other occupied lands, and to secure their independence and the safeguarding of their national sovereignty and territorial integrity against the expansionist wave of aggression from the Tel Aviv Government. Israel must be insane if it hopes—among other things—for a state of stability and tranquillity when the brave Palestinian people have bitter memories of four ravaging wars, when this people's courage and determination are ever aroused in bitter opposition against Israeli aggression, which has created new martyrs in the struggle for freedom, and when this people will one day make Israel appear as a hopelessly vulnerable enclave. It is foolish for Israel to forget or underrate the heroic struggle of the everlasting movement of the Palestinian people for the liberation of their land, a struggle forever perpetuated by their ardent love for their land.

104. If the omen of stagnation on the Palestinian problem prevails, notwithstanding and against the background of all past and present concerted efforts in the search for an equitable solution, then the next 30 years will never be the same again—neither for the Arabs and Israelis in the Middle East nor, for that matter, for the rest of the world. Those years will be years of damnation.

105. The situation in the Middle East is extremely delicate and potentially explosive. The tragedy of Palestine and the insoluble nature of the Palestinian question is the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict, with all other problems dangerously following as its ramifications. Unless a final solution to this question is arrived at, it will be impossible to bring about a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

106. We have more than once heard from authoritative sources that the Palestinian people, though very patient, are frustrated to the point of exasperation. We believe that it is high time that the United Nations General Assembly, and especially the Security Council, make radical changes in their efforts in the hope of achieving more tangible results with regard to the Palestine question.

107. Israel must know that the peace and security of the Jewish State will in the final analysis depend on the fair and just treatment of the Palestinians by recognizing their right to return to their homeland under the indisputable leadership of the PLO. Israel must bow to the reality of accepting the establishment of the Palestine State within peaceful and secure boundaries.

108. In conclusion, my delegation gives its full support to the principles and resolutions calling for the non-acquisition of territory by force. My delegation also supports all resolutions of the United Nations calling for the return of the Palestinian refugees to their homeland. We also support all efforts exerted for the recognition of the destiny of the Palestinian people for self-determination under the leadership of the PLO and under the banner of the struggle for the establishment of a Palestinian Arab State within recognized and secure boundaries.

109. Mr. MEDANI (Sudan): At the outset my delegation wishes to congratulate our brother the representative of Senegal and the members of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People for their excellent, dedicated and constructive work.

110. The report submitted by the Committee testifies to the seriousness and objectivity of the Chairman and of the members of the Committee in finding the elements of a feasible solution to the Palestinian problem.

111. Some existing situations are quite at variance with our craving—if not our moral ideals—for world peace and security and, as such, merit our attention as a matter of priority. The question of Palestine is one such familiar item, and it continues to be a source of serious concern to us.

112. Furthermore, it is now an established fact that the Palestinian problem is the heart of the conflict in the Middle East and that the United Nations, with the exception of Israel, fully recognizes that no peace will be attainable in that explosive area without solving the Palestinian question.

113. The United Nations, in resolution 3236 (XXIX), reaffirmed the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to self-determination and to the establishment of their own Palestinian State on their homeland. The General Assembly further emphasized, in resolution 3375 (XXX), that the PLO is the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and that no efforts for the advancement of peace or the solution of the problem in the Middle East—to which the Palestinian question is central—will be successful without the participation of the PLO on an equal footing with other participants.

114. In spite of those resolutions and the significant change in world public opinion reflected in this Assembly, Israel continues to give more evidence of its stubborn policy of permanent occupation in the recent manner in which the Likud government of Israel speaks of "liberated land", consciously ignoring United Nations resolutions and denying the very existence of the Palestinian people, thereby enhancing Israel's policies of expansionism and the continued occupation of Palestinian soil—a situation which

injects negative elements in the efforts of the United Nations, increases tension in the area and maintains incalculable risks of an international conflict. No thesis could be more wrongheaded and less in accord with the facts and rationale of history.

115. For the last 36 years the Palestinian people has been waging a heroic struggle to regain their independence and sovereignty and to recover their lands. They have made innumerable human sacrifices. Their recognition by the United Nations is one of a series of recognitions of that justified and heroic struggle. The countries of the third world expressed their support of the Palestinian cause long before the United Nations did. Recently, the admission in Colombo of the PLO to the ranks of the non-aligned movement as a full member and a member of the Co-ordinating Bureau bears witness to the importance the majority of the countries attach to the just Palestinian cause and to their struggle against colonialism, zionism and racism.

116. I do not wish to survey in detail the background of the Palestinian question. That is well known and is reflected in the records of the United Nations over the last 30 years, records which are full of the brutal injustices inflicted on the Palestinian people. All the resolutions of the United Nations which have been adopted to alleviate those injustices have been blocked by the negative votes of certain major Powers. By so doing, those countries have made it possible for Israel to maintain its obstinate and defiant attitude to those resolutions. Indeed, it has made it possible for Israel to give further brutal expression to its expansionist policy by occupying in 1967 the territories of three other Arab States Members of this Organization.

117. In contrast to that intransigent Israeli position, the Assembly will recall that for the last four years the representatives of the PLO, the legitimate and sole representative of the Palestinian people, have demonstrated their goodwill and co-operation by adhering to and respecting the resolutions of the United Nations. They speak of their sincere desire for a just peace that guarantees their independence and sovereignty and the establishment of their own Palestinian State.

118. Farouk Kaddoumi, the Chairman of the Palestinian delegation, has once more reiterated the Palestinian position and, in spite of the existing stalemate, has expressed the faith of the Palestinian people in this Organization.

119. It remains, therefore, for the United Nations to live up to its responsibility in finding a solution to the Palestinian problem, and that also necessitates a comprehensive settlement in the Middle East. That solution should provide for the withdrawal of Israel from all Arab territories occupied in 1967, for the respect of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and their right to self-determination and for the establishment of their own independent State.

120. Mr. POISSON (Niger) (*interpretation from French*): The question of Palestine, which has been on the agenda of the United Nations General Assembly since 1947, has never ceased to be an object of concern for the international community. The delegation of Niger wishes to associate

itself with those who speak out each year in this hall to deplore the tragedy of the Palestinian people. Who can imagine, without shuddering at the thought, 3 million human beings, shorn of all that they hold most dear, compelled to live in hiding and under threat of death on the very borders of what was and, despite everything, still is their homeland? Nevertheless that is the situation, however intolerable it may seem in the twentieth century, in which the Palestinian people, whose only fault was to claim its right to peaceful existence on its own territory and homeland, has been living for three decades. That right, recognized by the United Nations in General Assembly resolution 194 (III) of 11 December 1948, has been reaffirmed almost every year since the adoption of that resolution, as we are told in the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People [A/32/35], which has added that that right was also recognized unanimously by the Security Council in its resolution 237 (1967).

121. Many are the efforts that have been made by the international community in this field: from 1947 to 1975, the report submitted by that Committee to the thirty-first session of the General Assembly reveals no fewer than 188 resolutions and decisions, each dealing directly or indirectly with various aspects of this question, were adopted by the General Assembly and the Security Council. In addition, the establishment of that Committee reflected the will of the United Nations to shed all possible light on the question of Palestine to facilitate the implementation of decisions adopted in this field. That laudable initiative has led today to serious and comprehensive consideration of this question, resulting from numerous contacts and investigations carried out by the Committee since its inception. We wish to pay a tribute to its members for agreeing to devote their time and energy to one of the most burning issues of the last quarter of the twentieth century.

122. Given the extent of those efforts, we feel frustrated and, above all, astounded at the meagre progress that has been achieved in the effective implementation of the inalienable right of the Palestinians to return to their homes in Palestine. Our astonishment is the greater because the recommendations of the Committee aimed at facilitating the exercise of the national rights of the Palestinians were adopted by the General assembly at its thirty-first session.

123. Those recommendations stressed in particular the leading role taken by the Security Council on the subject and emphasized the need for that body to "...take appropriate action to facilitate the exercise by the Palestinians of their right to return to their homes, lands and property."<sup>6</sup>

124. That is why we find it incongruous and intolerable that the Security Council, with all its prerogatives, should still be unable to fulfill the hopes placed in it because of the unjustifiable refusal of one or more of its members to go along with its decisions on the subject.

125. A similar attitude had already been recorded in 1976, according to the report, during the Security Council's

<sup>6</sup> See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-first Session, Supplement No. 35*, para. 64.

consideration of the item entitled "The question of the exercise by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights". In fact, two draft resolutions aimed respectively at granting the representatives of the PLO the right to participate in its debate and to affirm "... the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination, including the right of return and the right to national independence and sovereignty in Palestine,"<sup>7</sup> could not be adopted because of the lack of unanimity among the members of the Council. We find that negative attitude unacceptable from every point of view. The disparity between what the Assembly works out and agrees upon and the pettiness of the Security Council should be resolved quickly in order to enable the frustrated Palestinian people to return to their homelands.

126. We are perplexed by recent events in the Middle East. Whether it is a question of optimism or of pessimism, nothing leads us to incline towards one or the other. Nevertheless, the Palestinian cause must be kept alive and support must be given to the people, who will emerge strengthened and matured by the useless contest between ardent supporters of their cause.

127. There has been no dearth of initiatives. In the letters addressed on 15 April last to the Permanent Representatives of Canada, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, the United Kingdom and the United States of America [see A/32/35, annex II] by the Chairman of the Committee we find that encouraging positions have been taken by leading political figures in those countries. Thus most of the statements finally recognize the need to implement Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), on the one hand, and to grant the status of equal partner to the Palestinian people in any negotiations, on the other. Let me add that the President of the United States, Mr. Jimmy Carter, whose country until now has been the most reticent in the Palestinian cause stated on 16 March 1977 that "... a homeland should be found for the Palestinian refugees who have suffered for so many years". At long last, justice for the Palestinians begins.

128. Those prospects, however encouraging they may appear to be, should not allow us to lose sight of the fact that the final success of the United Nations action hinges essentially on Israel, whose intransigent attitude, due to security considerations which are obviously a cover, undermines the efforts of the international community, while at the same time that country obstinately refuses to admit to the Middle East anything other than a reign of force and violence.

129. We have always condemned that attitude, because it is not inspired by the noble ideals of peace and justice enshrined in the United Nations Charter, whose terms Israel, having been accepted as a Member, if it is consistent, should respect, as it should respect both the terms and the decisions resulting therefrom.

130. Instead of that, Israel persists in its refusal to recognize the right of the Palestinians to exist as a sovereign nation free to exercise the attributes of that sovereignty, namely, the right to a territory and to be able to set up its own institutions thereon.

131. We believe that this sterile attitude that is dangerous for the very survival of the Zionist State itself will inevitably evolve one way or another. We are convinced that Israel cannot forever defy the Arab nation and the international community without running the risk of one day being defeated by its own blind obstinacy. It is high time for it to side with right and reason by agreeing to recognize that the Palestinians have the same rights it arrogated to itself about 30 years ago when it proclaimed a Jewish State in Palestine. It is only by safeguarding the interests of all the parties involved in the conflict, without exception, that a just and lasting peace will be established in the Middle East.

132. That need, which has been recognized by the international community, should guide Israel which, more than any other State, is indebted to the United Nations, one of whose resolutions sanctioned its existence in 1947. Is it not paradoxical today that this "creature" of the United Nations denies this worthy Organization any decision-making power, flouts its principles and violates its Charter?

133. By trampling under foot the relevant resolutions of the United Nations is not the Hebrew State itself sowing doubt in the minds of all as to the irreversible nature of its creation and its existence as an independent State? It is not in the interest of Israel to undermine the United Nations. That is why more than ever it is necessary for it to review its position and to go along with world opinion, because whatever its strength may be, it cannot guarantee what cannot be defended—in other words, the occupation by force of Arab lands, the spoliation of national Palestinian rights, and the annexation for its own benefit of Jerusalem, that meeting-place of the three greatest monotheistic religions of the world today.

134. The Zionist State appears not to have understood this truth. As a past master of the art of creating and sustaining equivocal situations, it calls for peace but rejects the principles of peace. In fact, while proclaiming its desire to conclude peace agreements with the Arabs, it pursues its odious practices in the occupied territories, thus flouting, as is its habit, all the international community's appeals to reason and moderation.

135. The Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People reported when the debate on the question of Palestine opened on the profound concern of that body at the decision of the Israeli Government to approve the establishment of three settlements in Qaddum, Ofra and Maala. That disapproval did not affect Israel unduly, since a dispatch from the Agence France Press of 28 November 1977 tells us that two groups of Jews called the Gush Emunim groups, composed of 25 families, will shortly be installed in the military camps on the West Bank in accordance with the programme adopted several weeks ago by Prime Minister Menachem Begin. The same news dispatch, quoting a responsible Israeli figure, states that the programme of Jewish settlements on the West Bank will not be changed and that negotiations for new settlements will be arranged. This deliberate change of the demographic structure of the occupied territories by the Judaization of Palestinian areas is incompatible with Israel's proclaimed desire to arrive at an over-all peace in the region. It is flagrant proof that the Zionist State

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, Supplement No. 35, annex IV.

continues to ignore Palestinian interests the respect for which, as it knows, is the key to any solution of the Middle East conflict.

136. Niger, faithful to its policy of bringing peoples together, sincerely hopes that the Arab countries will overcome the factors of internal division and will recover the unity of their blood brotherhood and of their legitimate pride in their three decades of heroic struggle side by side with the martyred Palestinian people.

137. This determination to fight for freedom and independence has won for the Arab peoples the respect of the whole world and in particular of Africa, whose States and peoples have given their unreserved support to the Palestinian cause.

138. The attitude of the African countries reflects a sincere and true solidarity forged by a common destiny of which Africans, Arabs and Asians became fully aware after the African-Asian Conference, held at Bandung in 1955. This will to co-operate, which was born 22 years ago, has since been affirmed at the political and at the economic levels. Niger, for its part, is gratified at this Arab-African co-operation, which has engendered a climate of mutual confidence and esteem and has helped promote mutual assistance between African and Arab States. The results of that co-operation, however negligible they may appear to be to the sceptic and the unfeeling, today more than ever militate in favour of tolerance and joint action. The miles that still lie ahead along the path leading to the total liberation of our peoples from all forms of domination demand that we close our ranks notwithstanding temporary misunderstandings.

139. We trust that the rays of hope we see on the horizon are not signs of a useless conflagration but, rather, the prelude to a just and lasting peace in the region.

140. Mr. HUMAIDAN (United Arab Emirates) (*interpretation from Arabic*): I had the honour of addressing the Security Council on 18 June 1976<sup>8</sup> as Chairman of the Arab group of States when the Council was studying the first report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.

141. At that time it was our hope the Security Council would react favourably to the Committee's recommendations, but the positions taken by certain countries made that impossible.

142. Recently, the Security Council has studied the latest report of the Committee. Once again, it was unable to take a decision on the Committee's recommendations, and even declined to consider any draft resolution on the question. Once again we find the same countries responsible for this failure. We cannot but express our regret that these same countries maintain their discriminatory position on, and deny their responsibilities concerning, the partition of Palestine and the expulsion of its authentic Arab population.

143. The General Assembly once again is considering the question of Palestine in the light of the facts set forth in the report of the Committee. I should like to express our thanks and our gratitude to the members of the Committee, to its Chairman, Mr. Fall, and to its Rapporteur, Mr. Victor Gauci, for their praiseworthy efforts in the performance of their work, the fruits of which are to be found in a report marked by seriousness, objectivity and neutrality.

144. We note that the Committee's second report is closely connected with its first report, submitted last year. These two reports show that members of the Committee are fully aware of and understand all aspects of the Palestinian problem and its effects so far as the Middle East and world peace and security are concerned. My country, within the framework of its obligations with regard to the destiny of the Arab nation and in the light of its views on ways and means of resolving the Palestinian problem, is obliged to express certain reservations concerning some of the points contained in both reports. Nevertheless, we feel that the programme drawn up by the Committee concerning the return of Palestinian refugees, in two phases, to their homeland, Palestine, and concerning Israel's withdrawal from occupied Arab territories and the exercise by the Palestinian people of their right to self-determination and national sovereignty in Palestine contains elements which are compatible with the United Nations Charter and the many resolutions of the United Nations on this question. These elements represent a minimum without which there can be no just and lasting settlement of the problem of the Middle East, a minimum without which it will be impossible to prevent another explosion in the region which could endanger world peace and security.

145. In the past, some believed that the expulsion of the Palestinian people from their land, their dispersal to other countries, and the denial of their right to self-determination in their homeland, Palestine, were only temporary phenomena that were acceptable because they would fade away in a few years' time. But as the years went by, events have proved otherwise, for with the intensified struggle of the Palestinian people and their determination to recover their legitimate rights no matter what difficulties they may encounter, all these events have belied what was believed at first. The struggle of the Palestinian people and their resistance have won them increased support from the peace-loving peoples of the world, the countries of the third world and other countries that believe in peace and justice for the question of Palestine. This is reflected in the numerous resolutions adopted at various international levels and in particular at the United Nations.

146. The PLO has been in the vanguard of the struggle. It embodies both the suffering and the hopes of the Palestinian people as well as the past, present and future of the Palestinian homeland. With the exception of Israel and the minority that supports it, the whole world has recognized the PLO and its role and the fact that it is the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

147. Given this well-established truth, the whole world knows that no just and lasting settlement of the Middle East problem is attainable without a settlement of the Palestinian problem. Similarly, the Palestinian problem cannot be resolved without the participation of the PLO.

<sup>8</sup> See *Official Records of the Security Council, Thirty-first Year, 1928th meeting.*

148. Those who refuse to recognize this truth or who prefer to ignore it are acting like the ostrich or are seeking deliberately to maintain the conflict in our region. And that is true of Israel.

149. In his statement in the general debate, our Minister for Foreign Affairs expressed this idea when he said:

“... how could anyone, including Israel, conceive of, or even consider, the possibility of a settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict without a solution of the Palestine problem and without the participation of the Palestinian people through their genuine and legitimate representative [the PLO]? ...

“The refusal of Israel to recognize this fact leads us to conclude that Israel does not really wish to settle the

Arab-Israeli conflict, nor does it want the establishment of peace and security in the Middle East.” [18th meeting, paras. 124-125.]

150. In conclusion, we wish to note a fact that has made itself felt in the past and is making itself felt today also—namely, that the Palestinian problem is the crux of the Middle East crisis and that all efforts that fail to take into account the need to solve that problem, all efforts that do not seek the specific return to the Palestinian people of the rights that have been wrested from them, including their right to return and to self-determination and their right to establish their independent State in their native land, are doomed to failure.

*The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.*