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SIXTH COMMITTEE, 1185th MEETING

Tuesday, 29 September 1970, at 10.55 a.m.

NEW YORK

Chairman: Mr. Paul Bamela ENGO (Cameroon).

Tribute to the memory of Mr. Gamal Abdel Nasser, President of the United Arab Republic

1. The CHAIRMAN said that shortly after the Committee had adjourned its previous meeting, the announcement had been made of the tragic death of President Gamal Abdel Nasser of the United Arab Republic, who had passed away in Cairo after a heart attack, at the age of fifty-two.

2. President Nasser had played a historic role in the full glare of world publicity. He had been called upon to bear the great burden of leadership in his homeland at a relatively early age, and he had borne that burden with legendary courage and dedication. He had demonstrated that modern youth was not only fully capable of understanding the nature of contemporary problems but also, aided by the recognition of its stake in the future, was determined to dedicate its life and resources to the solution of such problems.

3. President Nasser had been cut off in his prime, but it was not how long one lived that mattered but how well. Some passed through the world unnoticed. It was a privilege to be granted a role, a mission in one's lifetime. Whatever the mark made on the pages of history, the important thing was to have served the common good of mankind. The price of leadership and freedom was perhaps no higher today than in earlier times. Yet the demands on human endurance were undoubtedly greater. The premature demise of President Nasser was a vivid reminder of the dangers attending contemporary life. The challenges were stimulating but the strain was often overwhelming.

4. The peoples of Africa would mourn the passing of President Nasser with a profound sense of shock. He had been a great Pan-Africanist, a crusader against imperialism and for the self-determination of peoples. His friendship with the President and the people of Cameroon made his death extremely painful to them. His loss was irreparable in the Arab world and would have an effect on the current moves for peace in the Middle East.

5. He asked the representative of the United Arab Republic to convey to the Government and people of that great nation the profound feelings of loss which he and his people shared with them in an hour of grief and rededication. He also asked the United Arab Republic representative to convey their condolences to the members of the immediate family of the late President and felt sure that his sentiments were shared by all members of the Sixth Committee.

On the proposal of the Chairman, the members of the Committee observed a minute's silence in tribute to the memory of Mr. Gamal Abdel Nasser, President of the United Arab Republic.

6. The CHAIRMAN suggested that, following tributes to the memory of President Nasser, the Committee should adjourn its meeting as a mark of respect.

It was so decided.

7. Mr. BOULBINA (Algeria) said that death had put an end to the life's work of a great man. History, which was the best judge of human actions, would show clearly his merits and his values. He hoped that the United Arab Republic delegation would transmit the condolences of the Algerian delegation to the family of President Gamal Abdel Nasser and to the Government and people of the United Arab Republic, together with an expression of Algeria's sympathy and solidarity. It was his delegation's firm conviction that the fraternal people of the United Arab Republic would be able to transcend the present difficult moment in their history. President Nasser had been dear to the Algerian people and to all the Arab nations.

8. Mr. KOLESNIK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that President Nasser had been an eminent politician and statesman and an active champion of the independent national development of the United Arab Republic. His life had been a model of dedicated service to the people of his country; and under his leadership, far-reaching social reforms had been achieved and great headway had been made in the development of the national economy. His name had been inseparably linked with the successes of the United Arab Republic in the international arena. President Nasser had opposed all attempts by imperialist States to involve the Arab countries in an aggressive military bloc and had sought to consolidate the unity of the Arab world. He had attended the major conferences of the non-aligned countries and had everywhere defended the just causes of those seeking freedom and independence throughout the world. His name had been linked with the Egyptian struggle for liberation and with the highest aspirations of all the Arab peoples. He had striven constantly to consolidate the friendship between the United Arab Republic and the USSR. He had been a friend of the Soviet people, who cherished great respect for him and had received the news of his death with the deepest grief. He asked the United Arab Republic delegation to convey his delegation's condolences to the people and Government of the United Arab Republic and to President Nasser's family.

9. Mr. FRANCIS (Jamaica) said that the death of President Nasser would be lamented not only in the United

Arab Republic and in Arab nations but throughout the world, especially in the developing countries. He had been a champion of the basic principles dear to the developing countries and had defended those principles bravely. The conclusion of history would inevitably be that he had been one of the great leaders of the Arab world. His tragic death had ironically come at a time when he had been intimately involved in working for a peace settlement in the Middle East. The Jamaican delegation hoped that the fruition of the promises which had been held out before President Nasser's untimely death would not be impaired by that tragic event. He expressed his delegation's condolences to the representative of the United Arab Republic and to all the Arab representatives in the Sixth Committee and asked that his delegation's deep sympathy be conveyed to the Government and people of the United Arab Republic and to President Nasser's family.

10. Mr. VOHRAH (Malaysia) expressed the great sorrow of his delegation on hearing of the death of President Nasser, who had been a leader highly respected in the countries of Asia and Africa and throughout the world on account of his deep concern not only for the well-being of his own people but for all freedom-loving nations. He asked that his delegation's condolences be conveyed to the delegation, Government and people of the United Arab Republic.

11. Mr. DELEAU (France) said he had been greatly shocked to learn of the sudden death of President Nasser, who had been an outstanding individual in the United Arab Republic and the Arab world and had won great prestige in the world at large through his courageous actions. His delegation wished to express its heartfelt condolences to the delegation, Government and people of the United Arab Republic and to President Nasser's family.

12. Mr. SECARIN (Romania) said that his delegation wished to be associated with previous speakers in expressing its deep grief at the unexpected and tragic death of a great statesman. He paid a tribute to President Nasser's dedicated efforts to ensure the freedom, sovereignty and independence of the United Arab Republic and his contribution to his country's dignity and economic and social development through the full exercise by the people of their national rights. The Romanian people, which had always maintained friendly relations with the United Arab Republic, felt solidarity with the people of the United Arab Republic in their present time of trial. He expressed his delegation's deep sympathy and condolences to the United Arab Republic delegation and asked that they be transmitted to the people and Government of the Arab Republic and to President Nasser's family.

13. Mr. KLAFKOWSKI (Poland) said that the news of President Nasser's death had evoked deep grief in Poland and throughout the world. His delegation expressed its condolences to the delegation of the United Arab Republic and asked it to convey them to the people of the United Arab Republic.

14. Sir Vincent EVANS (United Kingdom) said that no one could fail to recognize the admiration and affection felt for President Nasser by the people of the United Arab Republic or his dedication to his country and its people. His delegation wished to express its condolences to the bereaved family and to the Government and people of the United Arab Republic.

15. Mr. BIGOMBE (Uganda) said that both the supporters and opponents of President Nasser would agree on his stature as a political leader. The Government and people of Uganda felt special grief at the news of his untimely death, because he had provided them with material and moral support in their struggle for independence. He asked the delegation of the United Arab Republic to convey his delegation's condolences to the Government and people of the United Arab Republic.

16. Mr. RATTANSEY (United Republic of Tanzania) said that President Nasser's death was a loss not only to the United Arab Republic but to people throughout the world who believed in his progressive, socialist and humanist principles. Because of his battle against colonialism, Tanzania and other African countries would feel a special sense of bereavement. He expressed his delegation's deep sympathy with President Nasser's people and the rest of the Arab world.

17. Mr. ŠAHOVIĆ (Yugoslavia) said that President Nasser's death would strike the Yugoslav people, whom he had often visited, like the death of a member of their own families. His delegation expressed its condolences to the bereaved family and to the delegation, Government and people of the United Arab Republic.

18. Mr. NITTI (Italy) said that his delegation was deeply shocked and grieved at the news of President Nasser's death, which had come at a crucial moment for the Middle East and the Mediterranean area. He asked the United Arab Republic delegation to transmit its condolences to the Government and people of the United Arab Republic.

19. Mr. JELENIK (Hungary) expressed his delegations's grief at the death of President Nasser, who would always be remembered as a great Head of State and a lover of peace and independence.

20. Mr. ROSENSTOCK (United States of America) said that President Nasser had dedicated his life to the service of his country and had displayed unusual energy and courage. He would be sorely missed in all countries. He expressed his delegation's condolences to President Nasser's family and people.

21. Mr. GHOREISHI (Iran) said President Nasser's death was a catastrophe for mankind. His delegation found it difficult to do justice to the grief it felt and wished to convey its condolences to the bereaved family and to the delegation, Government and people of the United Arab Republic.

22. Mr. ZAVOROTKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that President Nasser, who had visited Kiev on more than one occasion, would always be remembered by the Ukrainian people as a symbol of the struggle for freedom and social reform. He expressed his delegation's grief at President Nasser's untimely death and asked that it be communicated to the people of the United Arab Republic.

23. Mr. NJENGA (Kenya) said that President Nasser's tragic death had come as a great shock to the people of Kenya and would leave a vacuum in African politics. Kenya had received valuable assistance from the United Arab Republic as a result of President Nasser's belief in freedom, justice and equality. He would be grateful if the United Arab Republic delegation would convey his delegation's condolences to the bereaved family and the people of the United Arab Republic.

24. Mr. CALVALCANTI (Brazil), speaking on behalf of the Latin American countries, paid a tribute to the greatness of President Nasser, whose death would leave an empty space in the world political scene. He asked the United Arab Republic delegation to convey the Latin American group's condolences to the family of President Nasser and to the Government and people of the United Arab Republic.

25. Mr. PINTO (Ceylon) said that President Nasser had gained the love of his people, as well as the admiration and respect of all countries that revered justice and freedom, for leading his nation into independence. He would be long remembered by the people of Ceylon.

26. Mr. BIKOUTHA (People's Republic of the Congo) said that his delegation wished to pay a tribute to the memory of President Nasser and to convey its heart-felt condolences to his family. President Nasser's struggle against colonialism and imperialism had won him the deep friendship of the Congolese people and his name would always be a symbol for peace-loving peoples, particularly those of Asia, Africa and Latin America.

27. Mr. TSURUOKA (Japan) expressed deep grief and consternation at the news of President Nasser's death, and asked the United Arab Republic delegation to convey his delegation's condolences to the people of the United Arab Republic.

28. Mr. KHAN (India) recalled that President Nasser had frequently held discussions with the late Prime Minister Nehru about the plans of the non-aligned countries. His death, coming at a time when he was engaged in efforts to put an end to the Middle East turmoil, had caused such a sense of loss in the Indian delegation that it was unable to express its grief in an adequate manner. He wished to convey its condolences to the people of the United Arab Republic and to President Nasser's family.

29. Mrs. SLÁMOVÁ (Czechoslovakia) associated her delegation with the grief and condolences expressed by the Chairman and other speakers on the death of President Nasser.

30. Mr. ALIO (Niger) said that Africa was in mourning and would remain so for a long time to come. It would be difficult for it to recover from the loss of a man as great as President Nasser. His Pan-Africanism, his struggle against colonial domination and his efforts for the economic and social development of Africa would undoubtedly be recorded by history. On behalf of the African group and the Niger, he wished to convey his condolences to the bereaved family and the people of the United Arab Republic.

31. Mr. KA (Senegal) said that the people of the United Arab Republic should know that Senegal shared their deep grief at the loss of President Nasser, who had been a great African leader. His memory would live on as a symbol of excellence and leadership.

32. Mr. MAÏGA (Mali) associated his country with the deep grief expressed at the loss of so illustrious an African as President Nasser, whose energy and human warmth would keep his name eternally fresh in the history of the liberation of the peoples of the world.

33. Mr. ZOTIADIS (Greece) expressed his delegation's condolences on the untimely death of President Nasser, who had served his people with energy and devotion and had been seeking a peaceful solution for the difficult situation in the eastern Mediterranean region.

34. Mr. MIRAS (Turkey) said that his delegation was deeply grieved at the news of President Nasser's death and requested the United Arab Republic delegation to convey its condolences to all concerned.

35. Mr. CHAILA (Zambia), speaking on behalf of the non-aligned countries, expressed his grief at President Nasser's tragic death. His own country was deeply indebted to President Nasser, who had provided moral and material support to Zambia in its struggle for independence. He requested the delegation of the United Arab Republic to convey his condolences to the Arab people and the bereaved family.

36. Mr. JACOVIDES (Cyprus) said that his country felt deep sorrow at the loss of one of the great figures of the twentieth century. President Nasser's name would always be linked with the struggle for national independence and dignity. The people of Cyprus regarded him not only as one of the great statesman of the non-aligned countries but as a friend. His personal ties with President Makarios were well known and had stood the test of time. The deep sympathies of the people of Cyprus went to the people and Government of the United Arab Republic.

37. Mr. ARYUBI (Afghanistan) said that President Nasser had been the leader of a country with which Afghanistan maintained the most cordial realtions. The people of Afghanistan mourned his loss but were determined to pursue the struggle against colonialism. He expressed his deepest sympathies to the people and Government of the United Arab Republic.

38. Mr. SHITTA-BEY (Nigeria) said that his country had been deeply shocked at the news of the death of a man whom Nigeria considered to be a great statesman. President Nasser's decease was a grievous loss not only to the countries of Africa but to the whole world. He wished to convey his condolences to the people and Government of the United Arab Republic and to the bereaved family.

39. Mr. LEE (Canada) joined in the expressions of sympathy with the people of the United Arab Republic in their great loss. President Nasser had led his country to play a full part in the modern world and had won the admiration and esteem of his people. His loss would be most keenly felt, particularly at the present time of crisis in the Middle East.

40. Mr. VEROSTA (Austria) voiced his shock and concern at the death of President Nasser, whose place in the history of his country and the Arab world was assured. On behalf of the Government of Switzerland and his own delegation, he wished to express his most sincere condolences.

41. Mr. NANA (Pakistan) said that the President, Government and people of Pakistan were deeply moved by the death of President Nasser, a statesman of great devotion and integrity, who had paid the price of the heavy burden he had had to bear. In the context of recent events in the Middle East, his death would be a great loss to the world community as a whole.

42. Mr. MAGENGE (Burundi) said he was deeply grieved by the news of the death of President Nasser, whose disappearance would be a loss to the United Arab Republic, Africa and all peace-loving countries. His life had been dedicated to the cause of peace and progress and the liberation of man. He alone had been able to hold out some prospect of peace in the difficult situation in the Middle East. The people and Government of the United Arab Republic deserved the sympathy and condolences of all countries in their loss.

43. Mr. BOFUNGA (Democratic Republic of the Congo) expressed his consternation at the death of President Nasser, who had been a great African statesman. He had played a vital role in the Organization of African Unity and had supported the African countries in their struggle against their oppressors. He would remain one of the outstanding figures in the decolonization of Africa.

44. Mr. BRENNAN (Australia) said he was deeply shocked at the loss of one of the most outstanding figures of the post-war world. He expressed his condolences to the people and Government of the United Arab Republic.

45. Mr. BREWER (Liberia) said that President Nasser had been a man of destiny in the history of the modern world. He deeply mourned his passing and extended the sympathy of the Liberian Government and people to the United Arab Republic delegation.

46. Mr. RACHMAD (Indonesia) said that President Nasser had devoted his life to improving the lot of the people of the United Arab Republic and to the development of the region as a whole. He had been one of the founders of the movement of non-aligned countries and had played an important part in the Bandung Conference of 1955. The Indonesian delegation wished to express its condolences to the people and Government of the United Arab Republic.

47. Mr. TUTU (Ghana) expressed his shock and sorrow at the tragic death of President Nasser, who had championed liberation movements throughout Africa. His disappearance would be a great loss to his own country and the entire continent. The Organization of African Unity, the conferences of non-aligned countries and the United Nations would all be seriously affected by his demise.

48. Mr. WATANAKUN (Thailand) expressed his grief at the loss of a great statesman and leader. His passing would be mourned in the United Arab Republic, the Arab world and throughout Africa and Asia.

49. Mr. RAKOTOSIHANAKA (Madagascar) recalled the friendly relations existing between the United Arab Republic and his own country. With the death of President Nasser, Africa had lost a great son. He expressed his condolences to the people of the United Arab Republic.

50. Mr. KOSTOV (Bulgaria) said that President Nasser had been one of the great figures of the twentieth century and his loss would be deeply felt in the struggle against imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism. Bulgaria maintained friendly relations with the United Arab Republic and wished to convey its deep sympathies to that country.

51. Mr. CHAO (Singapore) associated his delegation with the expressions of grief at the death of President Nasser, who had been a great leader and the architect of his country's independence. He wished to convey his regrets to the Government and people of the United Arab Republic.

52. Mr. BARRY (Guinea) said that the United Arab Republic and all freedom-loving peoples had suffered a great loss. President Nasser's name was a symbol of the struggles of the Third World. He had been a staunch friend of both the people and the President of Guinea, who wished to express their sincere condolences to the Government and people of the United Arab Republic.

53. Mr. SHARDYKO (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) expressed his grief at the loss sustained by the people of the United Arab Republic and all peace-loving countries throughout the world. President Nasser had been an eminent politician of world standing and a tireless fighter on behalf of international peace and security. The Byelorussian people mourned his death and expressed their deepest sympathies with the people and Government of the United Arab Republic.

54. Mr. HARDING (Sierra Leone) said that President Nasser had been a great leader who had created the modern state of the United Arab Republic out of a feudal society. The void left by his death would be very difficult to fill. He wished to express his condolences to the people and Government of the United Arab Republic.

55. Mr. KIBRET (Ethiopia) said that the achievements of the United Arab Republic had been admired everywhere and President Nasser had become a personality of heroic proportions. Ethiopia and Egypt had been bound together by history since time immemorial and he wished to express his deep condolences to the people of the United Arab Republic in their loss.

56. Mr. PERSSON (Sweden), speaking on behalf of Denmark, Finland, Norway and his own country, associated himself with the condolences that had been voiced on the occasion of President Nasser's death. He had disappeared at a time when his services were most needed and the Scandinavian countries wished to express their regret at his untimely death to the Government and people of the United Arab Republic.

57. Mr. EL HUSSEIN (Sudan) said that the whole Arab world was affected by the tragic death of President Nasser. He wished to express his gratitude to all those who shared the grief of the Arab countries.

58. Mr. MARTINEZ MORCILLO (Spain) associated his delegation with those which had expressed their grief at President Nasser's death. He wished to convey his regrets and sympathy to the people of the United Arab Republic who were bound to the Spanish people by close ties of friendship.

59. Mr. SHRESTHA (Nepal) joined other delegations in expressing his sorrow at the death of President Nasser, the maker of modern Egypt. His disappearance had occurred at a critical time when he alone made possible a glimmer of hope in the Middle East. The Nepalese delegation wished to express its condolences to the delegation and people of the United Arab Republic and to the bereaved family.

60. Mr. ESPEJO (Philippines) said that President Nasser had led his nation with dignity and dedication towards a better life. He had been a heroic figure and his death would leave a void difficult to fill. The Philippine delegation wished to convey its condolences to the Government and people of the United Arab Republic, as well as to President Nasser's family.

61. Mr. AL-ATRACHE (Syria), speaking on behalf of the Arab countries, thanked all those delegations which had expressed their condolences to the Arab nation on the tragic loss of President Gamal Abdel Nasser, the acknowledged leader of the Arab world, devoted to its unity, well-being and peace. Throughout his life his aim had been to restore Arab rights and allow all the Arab peoples to live in full dignity. In centuries to come his memory would remain fresh in the hearts of the rising generations. Future Arab leaders would strive to follow his example and to resemble him in all their actions. He had embodied all that the Arab world held dear, in particular its aspirations to a life of freedom and dignity. He had struggled against foreign occupation and made his country master of its own destiny. For the first time in modern history he had created a united Arab republic in 1958 by uniting Egypt and Syria. Although the experiment had not been a success, a precedent had been created for the future.

62. His example remained to guide the Arab people to final victory. He had played a decisive role in the revolutionary struggles in Algeria, Yemen and the Arab principalities in south-east Arabia. Although an Arab by birth, language and culture, his influence had extended to all regions of Africa and Asia, and indeed to all countries devoted to the ideals of freedom and dignity. He had been one of the founders of the Organization of African Unity, and together with Prime Minister Nehru and President Tito had helped to create the movement of non-aligned countries. All the third world leaders who had recently met in Lusaka would mourn his disappearance.

63. He had died on the battlefield, having just brought to an end the fractricidal war in Jordan. His death had occurred at a moment when he was most needed. To be worthy of him, his successors must be prepared to follow his example to the death in order to realize his great ideal, which was peace in the Arab nation and throughout the world, based on the principles of liberty and the dignity of man.

64. He wished to express his profound gratitude to those who shared the grief of the Arab world.

65. Mr. EL BARADEI (United Arab Republic), speaking on behalf of the people and Government of his country, thanked all those who had expressed their grief at the tragic loss of President Gamal Abdel Nasser, whose memory would remain for ever in the hearts of the Arab people. All his life President Nasser had fought for progress and freedom; his death would be an irreparable loss to the United Arab Republic, the Arab countries as a whole, the continent of Africa and all forces in the world fighting for peace, justice and progress. An idealist himself, he had devoted his entire life to the attainment of his ideals. To perpetuate his memory, the people of the United Arab Republic would dedicate themselves to the struggle for a better world in which peace and justice would prevail.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.