



UNITED NATIONS



SECURITY COUNCIL OFFICIAL RECORDS

THIRTY-FIRST YEAR

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JUL 5 1984

1870th MEETING: 12 JANUARY 1976 **UN/SA COLLECTION**

NEW YORK

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NOTE

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1870th MEETING

Held in New York on Monday, 12 January 1976, at 3.30 p.m.

President: Mr. Salim A. Salim
(United Republic of Tanzania).

Present: The representatives of the following States: Benin, China, France, Guyana, Italy, Japan, Libyan Arab Republic, Pakistan, Panama, Romania, Sweden, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania and United States of America.

Provisional agenda (S/Agenda/1870)

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. The Middle East problem including the Palestinian question

The meeting was called to order at 4.10 p.m.

Tribute to the memory of Chou En-lai, Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China

1. The PRESIDENT: The international community has lost a towering figure in the death of Premier Chou En-lai of the People's Republic of China. Not only was he, in the terms of China's official announcement, "a long-tested leader of the Party and State", but his lasting influence transcends the frontiers of his country. There are few people in this century who have left as strong an imprint on the world scene as he has.

2. Premier of his country since the formation of the People's Republic of China in 1949, Chou En-lai was a man of reason and cultivation. He combined the qualities of revolutionary and administrator and could transform vision into reality for the benefit of his people. His sharp intelligence, his astonishing memory, his alertness in dialogue and his versatility impressed every foreign visitor who was privileged to talk with him so often throughout the night. He had a rare knowledge of problems and people, an exceptional capacity to work and to lead, and a loyalty to the political goal which he identified with the best interests of China. As a companion of Chairman Mao Tse-tung in the "Long March" and later in the reconstruction of his nation, he played a unique role. He became known to the world community as China's interlocutor. One recalls even now his presence in Geneva in 1954 and in Bandung in 1955. He was no stranger to the United Nations. Each Secretary-General has known

his wisdom. Surely he must have seen the important role now played by China in the Organization as a positive and welcome fruit of his international policy. I believe that, as representatives of Member States, we feel united with the Government and people of China in their great loss.

3. On behalf of the members of the Security Council, I should like to request the representative of China to be good enough to transmit to the Government and people of China our deepest condolences at this time of sorrow and grief. May I also be allowed to make a personal remark. I have cause to feel personally the loss of Premier Chou En-lai as I had the honour of serving in the People's Republic of China as my country's ambassador to that great country. The vivid memories of his warmth and interest only serve to exacerbate in me the sad sentiments which have gripped all of us.

On the proposal of the President, the members of the Council observed a minute of silence in tribute to the memory of Chou En-lai.

4. The PRESIDENT: I now call on the Secretary-General.

5. The SECRETARY-GENERAL: Mr. President, I wish to associate myself most sincerely with the sentiments which have been expressed by you on the death of Mr. Chou En-lai, the Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China. I have already conveyed my sympathy and condolences to the Government of the People's Republic of China.

6. The death of Mr. Chou En-lai is indeed a great loss, not only to the Chinese people but to the world at large. He played a historic role both in the development of his own country and in its relations with the world community. He was a distinguished and beloved leader of his people, whose wisdom and statesmanship spread far beyond the boundaries of China. His influence in fostering better understanding among nations and in furthering international peace was of particular importance.

7. Mr. Chou En-lai's character and personal qualities inspired the greatest admiration and respect in those who were privileged to meet him. I shall always remember the warmth and the graciousness with which he received me when I visited China. I was also

deeply impressed by his profound grasp of international issues and by his acutely perceptive understanding of the United Nations. I should like, once again, to convey to the representative of China and, through him, to his Government my sympathy and condolences on this great loss, a loss which the world shares with the Government and people of China.

8. Mr. HUANG Hua (China) (*translation from Chinese*): Chou En-lai, Vice-Chairman of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, passed away on 8 January 1976. Premier Chou En-lai was a great proletarian revolutionary of the Chinese people, a loyal revolutionary fighter of the Chinese people and an outstanding, long-tested leader of our Party and State. His death is a gigantic loss to the cause of China's revolution and construction as well as to the cause of human progress.

9. In these days of profound grief, the President of the Security Council, the Secretary-General and the representatives of many countries have extended deep condolences both at today's meeting and on other occasions to the Chinese delegation on the death of Premier Chou En-lai and their kind sympathy to the bereaved family and the Chinese people. We are deeply moved by all this. We consider it a tremendous encouragement for the just cause undertaken by the Chinese people. I wish to take this opportunity, in the name of the Chinese delegation, to express our heartfelt thanks to the President, the Secretary-General and our fellow representatives, and we will convey their profound sentiments to the Chinese Government and people and to the bereaved family.

Opening statement by the President

10. The PRESIDENT: At the very outset of this first meeting of the Security Council to be held during the month of January 1976, I should like to express to my predecessor in the office of President of the Council, Mr. Richard of the United Kingdom, the appreciation of all of us who served under his presidency during the month of December last year. During that period, when the General Assembly was at the height of its activity, Mr. Richard presided over no less than 12 full meetings of the Security Council, on four difficult agenda items, and called one meeting at which he ceded his chair, invoking rule 20 of the provisional rules of procedure. In addition, Mr. Richard conducted countless meetings of consultations. I am certain that I can speak for all in expressing to him on behalf of the Council our sincere gratitude.

11. On this occasion, when the Security Council has lost five non-permanent members and gained five new ones, I consider it appropriate to pay a tribute to our former colleagues for their devoted service during two arduous years. I wish to assure Mr. Tchernouchchenko of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Mr. Salazar of Costa Rica, Mr. Al-Shaikhly of Iraq,

Mr. El Hassen of Mauritania and Mr. Oyono of the United Republic of Cameroon, as well as the members of their delegations that served with us, that all of us who had the pleasure of serving with them on the Council will long remember our work together. I also wish to extend a very warm welcome to the five new members of the Council who are with us today for the first time. I wish to assure Mr. Boya of Benin, Mr. Kikhia of the Libyan Arab Republic, Mr. Akhund of Pakistan, Mr. Boyd of Panama and Mr. Datcu of Romania that all the members of the Council and its staff look forward with pleasure to working with them in the weeks and months to come.

Adoption of the agenda

12. The PRESIDENT: I turn now to the business before the Council, the first item of which is the adoption of the agenda. The agenda has been drawn up in the light of resolution 381 (1975), adopted by the Security Council on 30 November 1975. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the agenda is adopted.

The agenda was adopted.

The Middle East problem including the Palestinian question

13. The PRESIDENT: I should now like to inform the members of the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Egypt, Jordan, Qatar, the Syrian Arab Republic and the United Arab Emirates in which they have requested, in accordance with rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure, to be invited to participate in the discussion of the question just included in the Council's agenda. In accordance with the usual practice and in conformity with the relevant provisions of the Charter and the provisional rules of procedure, I propose, if there are no objections, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion without the right to vote.

It was so decided.

14. The PRESIDENT: Members will recall that, on 30 November 1975, following the adoption of resolution 381 (1975) wherein the Council decided to reconvene on today's date, the President of the Security Council made the following statement:

"It is the understanding of the majority of the Security Council that when it reconvenes on 12 January 1976 in accordance with paragraph (a) of resolution 381 (1975) the representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization will be invited to participate in the debate." [*1856th meeting, para. 23.*]

15. With this background in view, I should like to put forward the proposal that the representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) be invited to participate in the debate on the item included in the

agenda. This proposal is not being put forward under rule 37 or rule 39 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, but, if it is adopted by the Council, the invitation to the PLO to participate in this debate will confer on it the same rights of participation as are conferred when a Member State is invited to participate under rule 37.

16. Does anyone wish to speak before I put the proposal to a vote?

17. Mr. MOYNIHAN (United States of America): Thank you, Mr. President, in the first instance for the pleasant opportunity which my speaking first in this first meeting of the Council in the new year gives to me to express first the appreciation and admiration which we all feel for the distinguished service which Mr. Richard, our colleague from the United Kingdom, performed in his role as President of the Council in the month of December, a month not without its tribulations and not without its dangers. The extent to which they were averted surely attests to the skill of Mr. Richard and his colleagues.

18. Also, Mr. President, the opportunity presents itself to me to congratulate you on your ascent at such an early and youthful age to a position of such eminence in which we have every expectation you will distinguish yourself as you have done in so many other positions in the past. I would like hereupon, Mr. President, to thank you for the opportunity to state the views of the United States with respect to the motion which you have presented.

19. As will be recalled, on 4 December 1975, the last occasion on which the Council dealt with Middle East affairs, it was proposed to invite the PLO to participate in that debate with "the same rights of participation as are conferred when a Member State is invited to participate under rule 37" [1859th meeting, para. 3]. The same proposal has been made today. The proposal of 4 December 1975 elicited strong objections from some members of the Council, including the United States. Our position today is unchanged from that of four weeks ago.

20. What is at issue today in significant measure is the integrity of the processes of the Security Council. We have already seen a startling decline in the confidence with which the processes of the General Assembly are viewed. Seeking to create precedents while at the same time not adhering to the rules can erode the Council's influence and authority, as has occurred in the Assembly. It is in nobody's interest for this same process to take hold in the Council. Rule 37 of the provision rules states that:

"Any Member of the United Nations which is not a member of the Security Council may be invited, as the result of a decision of the Security Council, to participate, without vote, in the discussion of any question brought before the Security

Council when the Security Council considers that the interests of that Member are specially affected, or when a Member brings a matter to the attention of the Security Council in accordance with Article 35 (1) of the Charter."

21. It goes without saying that a Member of the United Nations is a State. We do not have Members and the Charter does not provide for Members which are not States. The PLO is not a State. It does not administer a defined territory. It does not have the attributes of a Government of a State. It does not claim to be a State. This is the basic relevant fact we have here with respect to the proposal before us.

22. When we were faced with a similar proposal on 4 December, it elicited, as I have said, the strongest protest from several members of the Council, including the United States. I described it as a concerted attempt to disregard the rules of procedure and to accord to the PLO a role greater even than that which over the years the Council has granted to Governments of observer States, and a role greater by far than has in more recent times been granted to the spokesmen of legitimate national liberation movements invited here under rule 39. I said then, and I repeat, that the United States is not prepared to agree, and we do not believe the Council should agree, to an *ad hoc* departure from the rules of procedure which ignores the needs of this institution. Unfortunately, despite our opposition and authoritative statements by other permanent members and elected members of the Council, rule and precedent were ignored on 4 December to the extent that the invitation was proposed.

23. I wish to emphasize at this point that I am not addressing the question of whether our proceedings are of interest to the Palestinian people. The United States view that the legitimate interests of the Palestinian people are an intrinsic part of the problem of lasting peace in the Middle East is also well known and is unchanged. This is not the matter I am addressing. It is not my intention to deal with these matters today at all.

24. The specific issue before us is our responsibility to the integrity of Security Council procedures and to the future effectiveness of this body. If we take liberties with those procedures and, under the influence of immediate political positions with respect to a given question before the Council, establish or reaffirm unwise precedents, this will come back to haunt us. I want to stress that a decision to invite the PLO to participate in our deliberations not under existing Council rules, but as if it were a Member State with the same rights as a State Member of the United Nations, would open a veritable Pandora's box of future difficulties.

25. Were that box to be opened, there are groups in all parts of the world that could seek to participate

in our proceedings as if they were Member States. No nation represented at this table, including my own, would necessarily be immune from the pernicious consequences.

26. I repeat: the PLO is not a State; it does not claim to be a State. For the most elemental of reasons, only Member States can participate in our proceedings as Member States. Unless, of course, we change the rules, whereupon we shall look forward to welcoming the dissident factions and nationalities of half the world, for in point of fact roughly half the nations in the world today face serious to extreme problems of internal cohesion owing to internal ethnic conflict. This is true of more than half the present members of the Security Council.

27. Moreover, the PLO, which is not a State, much less a Member State, suffers from an additional disability in seeking to participate in the work of the Security Council. It does not recognize the right to exist of the State of Israel, which is a Member State, and whose right to exist is guaranteed by the Charter which the Council is pledged to uphold.

28. Finally, the PLO, which is not a State and which does not recognize the right to exist of Israel, which is a Member State, further refuses to acknowledge the authority of the Council, which in its resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) has undertaken to uphold the rights of the States of the Middle East. My Government is not prepared to go along with an action which will undermine the negotiation process, which is the only process that can lead to peace.

29. The representatives of the PLO have repeatedly told the General Assembly of their hostility to systematic negotiations and their hostility to the work of the Council. They categorically rejected Security Council resolution 242 (1967), which for years has served and continues to serve as the only agreed basis for serious negotiations.

30. The Security Council is the capstone of the United Nations. It can act and has done so with distinction in ways which have been essential to peace, especially in the Middle East. The preservation of its integrity and effectiveness deserves our care and attention. The Council should not repeat its mistaken *ad hoc* decision of 4 December. The United States asks that a vote be taken on your motion, Mr. President. The United States will vote against the motion.

31. Mr. KIKHIA (Libyan Arab Republic): Mr. President, the motion proposed by you is, in the view of my delegation, in line with the practices, decisions and resolutions adopted by the Organization for two or three years now. By its resolution 3236 (XXIX), the General Assembly recognized that the Palestinian people is entitled to self-determination, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations; it recognized that the Palestinian people is a principal party in the

establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East; and it requested the Secretary-General to establish contacts with the PLO on all matters concerning the question of Palestine.

32. Furthermore, in its resolution 3237 (XXIX) concerning observer status for the PLO, the General Assembly noted that the Diplomatic Conference on the Reaffirmation and Development of International Humanitarian Law Applicable in Armed Conflicts, the World Population Conference and the World Food Conference had in effect invited the PLO to participate in their respective deliberations, and that the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea had invited the PLO to participate in its deliberations as an observer.

33. The General Assembly, in resolution 3237 (XXIX), invited the PLO to participate in the sessions and the work of the General Assembly in the capacity of observer; it invited the PLO to participate in the sessions and the work of all international conferences convened under the auspices of the Assembly in the capacity of observer; and it considered that the PLO was entitled to participate as an observer in the sessions and the work of all international conferences convened under the auspices of other organs of the United Nations. So, Mr. President, this motion is in line with all those practices and resolutions.

34. Furthermore, the Security Council in its resolution 381 (1975) decided "to reconvene on 12 January 1976, to continue the debate on the Middle East problem including the Palestinian question". That resolution was followed by this statement:

"It is the understanding of the majority of the Security Council that when it reconvenes on 12 January 1976 in accordance with paragraph (a) of Security Council resolution 381 (1975) the representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization will be invited to participate in the debate." [1856th meeting, para. 23.]

Practically speaking, the decision was taken by the Security Council.

35. The statement to which you, Mr. President, referred was a part and maybe, juridically speaking, an annex linked to resolution 381 (1975). That statement was presented by the representative of Guyana, as the representative of the sponsors. He said:

"As a result of those efforts, the members of the Council now have before them two documents. The first [S/11888] contains the text of a draft resolution which, in the opinion of its sponsors, reflects to a large extent the need for Security Council action on this matter." [Ibid., para. 7.]

36. The representative of Guyana added that the second document [S/11889] contained a draft statement

by the President of the Council, simple in its language and clear in its terms. Anyhow, the opposition of the representative of the United States was expected: he maintained his position declared at the meeting of the Security Council on 30 November [1856th meeting].

37. I should like to stress that the procedure that you proposed to the Council, Mr. President, is in line with the practice of the Council, and I invite all representatives to vote for it.

38. Mr. MALIK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (*interpretation from Russian*): Speaking for the first time in the new year 1976 at this meeting of the Security Council, the delegation of the Soviet Union first of all would like to congratulate the members of the Council and the Secretary-General and wish them a Happy New Year with good health, personal happiness and success in discharging the main task devolving upon the Council: that of maintaining international peace and security. May we also greet you, Mr. President, as an outstanding representative of the African continent. I am very pleased indeed to point out that strong relations of mutual understanding, co-operation, assistance and friendship are being developed between your country and the Soviet Union, as well as between the Soviet Union and many other African States.

39. On the basis of its principled Leninist policy of granting total assistance to the revolutionary struggle of peoples for their national liberation and of giving assistance and support to young independent countries in the construction of their new lives, the Soviet Union has been and will be the firm supporter and friend of the peoples of Africa struggling against the vestiges of colonialism, racism and neo-colonialism on the continent. The members of the Council know you, Sir, as an outstanding diplomat from an independent African country which has already gained immense authority in the international arena. The delegation of the Soviet Union sincerely wishes you great success in the responsible post of President of the Security Council and, for its part, will exert every effort to co-operate with you. May we also express our gratitude to your predecessor in the presidency of the Council, Mr. Richard, whose task it was to preside over a whole series of Council meetings on extremely complex questions.

40. It is with great satisfaction that the Soviet delegation welcomes in this chamber today at this first meeting of the Security Council in the new year 1976 the new members of the Security Council: the Socialist Republic of Romania, the Libyan Arab Republic, Benin, Pakistan and Panama. We are certain that these new members of the Council—among which are countries that have already acquired great experience from participating in its work—will actively participate in the work of the Council and will make a worthy contribution to the search for generally acceptable solutions to questions involving the strengthening of interna-

tional peace and security. The Soviet delegation expresses the hope that friendly, business—like relations of mutual understanding will develop between the delegations of the new members of the Security Council and the delegation of the Soviet Union for the sake of the success of the work of this chief organ of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace. For our part, we shall spare no efforts to achieve this purpose.

41. The past year was not an easy one in the work of the Security Council: the Council had to consider and adopt important decisions on pressing international questions. We believe that the decisions of the Council on such important questions as those of the Middle East, Cyprus, Western Sahara and Timor doubtless had a positive influence in improving and stabilizing the international climate. Unfortunately, in view of circumstances known to all, we were not able to take important decisions on the problem of decolonizing the African continent. That problem is awaiting decision. Neither was the Council able to take a positive decision on recommendations for the admission of two new independent States, namely the two Vietnamese States, to membership in the United Nations. Whatever the business of the Council, experience of its work shows how vast and positive a role in its activities has been, is being and doubtless will be, played by delegations of non-permanent members of the Council, and particularly by delegations of non-aligned countries. We look forward to working with them in a spirit of co-operation in the interest of strengthening international peace and security.

42. In welcoming today the representatives of States non-permanent members of the Security Council, the Soviet delegation should like to pay a due tribute also to the delegations of those States whose Council membership expired at the end of 1975. I refer to the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Iraq, Mauritania, the United Republic of Cameroon and Costa Rica. In their joint work and friendly co-operation with all the other members of the Council, they made a substantive contribution to its work during their terms of membership.

43. Turning now to the problem before the Security Council, our delegation would like to make the following statement. In connexion with the motion just put forward by you, Sir, on the invitation of the PLO to participate in the work of the present meeting of the Security Council, each of us knows very well that this question was already considered by the Council in November of last year, when the representative of the Soviet Union was presiding over the Security Council.

44. It is our firm conviction—and in this matter I fully endorse what was stated here by the representative of the Libyan Arab Republic—that the question of inviting the PLO to participate in the Security

Council's discussion of the item on the agenda was decided—or, if you wish, was pre-decided—by the Security Council on 30 November 1975 by its adoption of resolution 381 (1975).

45. This opinion, which was expressed in the official statement of the President as the understanding of the majority of the Security Council, was closely linked with Council resolution 381 (1975). In the statement made by the President of the Security Council, in accordance with the agreement reached in the consultations between members of the Security Council, the following announcement was approved. I shall read it *in extenso*:

“It is the understanding of the majority of the Security Council that when it reconvenes on 12 January 1976 in accordance with paragraph (a) of resolution 381 (1975) the representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization will be invited”—and I stress “will be invited” “to participate in the debate.” [1856th meeting, para. 23.]

46. Consequently the Security Council—or, at least, the majority of the members of the Council—expressed its will and position in the most resolute terms to the effect that the representatives of the PLO would be invited to participate in the debate on the issue which is today included on the Security Council's agenda. Thus the question has been predetermined.

47. Those who now subject this opinion of the majority to doubt, who call it into question and who object to this invitation were well aware of the contents of this consensus of the members of the Security Council. When I read out the statement in the Council, they did not insist on a vote. They agreed with it. In this official statement of the President of the Council, it was unequivocally stated that the representatives of the PLO would be invited to participate in the debate on the Middle East problem including the Palestinian question. That was a kind of consensus. The matter is clear. But for unknown reasons, the matter is now being raised anew, in order to waste the Council's time and to distract it by a procedural discussion instead of immediately and urgently turning to the discussion of the item on the agenda and to its substance.

48. On the basis of the foregoing, the Soviet delegation believes that this question is not subject to any doubt. The representatives of the PLO should be invited as the representatives of the Arab people of Palestine and they should participate in the debate on this issue from beginning to end. The Security Council already set a precedent when at one of its previous meetings [1859th meeting] it invited the representatives of the PLO to participate as full representatives in a debate of the Security Council from beginning to end of that debate. At that time the Soviet delegation took the same position as it takes now.

49. The argument put forward to the effect that the General Assembly apparently allowed an error to creep in is quite unjustified. What error? At its thirtieth session the General Assembly, by an overwhelming majority of votes, adopted a resolution to invite the PLO to participate in the search for peace in the Middle East. In paragraph 1 of resolution 3375 (XXX), the General Assembly

“Requests the Security Council to consider and adopt the necessary resolutions and measures in order to enable the Palestinian people to exercise its inalienable national rights in accordance with General Assembly resolution 3236 (XXIX)”.

In paragraph 2, the General Assembly

“Calls for the invitation of the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people, to participate in all efforts, deliberations and conferences on the Middle East which are held under the auspices of the United Nations, on an equal footing with other parties, on the basis of resolution 3236 (XXIX)”.

50. This is the legal basis on which the Security Council should also proceed, if it does not wish to enter into confrontation with the General Assembly. Where is the mistake of the General Assembly? Where is the error? Quite the contrary, the Assembly—where the balance of forces is fairer than in the Council and where those who feel for the victims of aggression, including the Arab people of Palestine, are more numerous—actually adopted a just resolution, a resolution that was unequivocal and very fair, to restore and recognize the international rights of the Arab people of Palestine, who have been expelled from their homeland by the aggressor.

51. During the Second World War, quite a few people were driven from their homeland and left homeless. There were quite a few Governments in exile. No one questioned the right of those Governments to speak on behalf of their countries and peoples, not even those countries whose representatives are now calling into question the right of the Palestinian people to speak here in the Security Council and the right of its delegation to defend the rights of the Arab people of Palestine.

52. History has many such examples; hence there is decidedly no basis whatever to dispute the decision of the General Assembly, to call it into question, to cast doubt on it or to consider that the negative votes of eight Member States on this resolution are right and that the 101 Member States which voted in favour of it are wrong. Only a person who has a rather *sui generis* way of thinking could agree with that. From the point of view of the normal procedure of the General Assembly and the Security Council, this Assembly decision, taken by a majority, is an official resolution of the Assembly and it would indeed be quite regrettable should the Council take a different

decision and not permit the delegation of the PLO to participate in a debate which is so vital to the Arab people of Palestine. I think that there could hardly be more than very few persons around this table who would agree with such an approach to the question.

53. I state that, because as President of the Security Council in November I was convinced that most of the members of the Council at that time were in favour of the delegation of the PLO participating in the debate on this question. Today an attempt has been made to bring up the fact that five members of the Council that were among the majority at that time have left the Council and that their place has been taken by five new members whose position on this issue is not yet known. But I am deeply convinced that those five new members of the Council agree with the decision taken by the majority in November last and will support the opinion of the majority of the Council, and that there will be no attempt on their part to review or revise the decision.

54. It has been alleged that the prestige and authority of the General Assembly have been undermined by the adoption of the resolution on the Palestine question. Let us analyse that allegation. Is it really true that the authority of the General Assembly or the Security Council has been undermined? And, if so, in whose eyes has it been undermined? In the eyes of the Fascist Chilean junta. Why? Because at its thirtieth session the General Assembly resolutely condemned the Fascist Chilean junta for the terror and violence to which it subjects people. Further confirmation of that treatment is to be found in the recent tragedy involving a British doctor. The sad news of that incident has been heard by the whole world.

55. Who else is displeased with the United Nations and its General Assembly? In whose eyes has the prestige of the United Nations been undermined? In the eyes of the South African racists, who were expelled from the General Assembly at the twenty-ninth session and did not dare to show themselves at the thirtieth session. No one can be surprised that the authority of the United Nations has been undermined in their eyes.

56. In whose eyes has the authority of the United Nations been undermined? In the eyes of the aggressors that have seized foreign territory. In the eyes of Israel. Israel ignores the Security Council. It has not appeared here today to participate in a debate of direct concern to it, because it understands that it is the guilty party in all the tragedies of the Middle East, including the tragedy of the Arab people of Palestine.

57. Who else is displeased with the United Nations? In whose eyes has its authority been undermined? Apparently in the eyes of those who during the years of the cold war dictated their conditions to the United Nations, during the time when the United Nations and its General Assembly and Security Council were

obedient tools in the hands of a small mechanical majority. I say "small" because compared to the majority of the contemporary United Nations it was indeed a small majority. But it was strong and it imposed its decisions. Of course, in the eyes of those who commanded the United Nations at that time the authority of the United Nations has indeed been undermined. But the prestige of the United Nations has been increased in the eyes of the overwhelming majority of States and people, and there are now 144 States in the United Nations. A small group does not like the Organization now; it cannot get a majority for anything.

58. That is the situation. That is the reality. It must be reckoned with. Those who do not do so will find themselves in an invidious position. Those who describe the decisions of the General Assembly on the Palestine question as erroneous decisions are trying to confuse the Security Council so that it will not act in conformity with the decisions of the General Assembly. Our delegation cannot agree with such a position. The Security Council must, on the contrary, act in keeping with the decisions of the General Assembly. As I have already said, in its resolution 3375 (XXX) the General Assembly recognized the inalienable national rights of the Arab people of Palestine. It requested the Security Council to consider and adopt the necessary measures to enable those rights to be exercised. It called upon the Security Council to invite the PLO, the sole representative of the Arab people of Palestine, to participate in all efforts, deliberations and conferences on the Middle East held under the auspices of the United Nations.

59. On what basis could the Security Council take a different decision, object to that General Assembly decision, set itself on a collision course with the Assembly? On the sole basis that the Assembly decision displeases Israel and some of its protectors? I think that the Security Council—or at least the majority of the Council—should not take the course of disputing the General Assembly decision on this question, should not set itself on a collision course with the General Assembly. We are convinced that the Security Council—or at least the majority of the Council—will act fairly, logically, correctly, and in conformity with the position taken by the General Assembly, by voting in favour of the participation of the delegation of the PLO in the debate on the item on the Council's agenda today in an appropriate manner and from the beginning to the end of that debate.

60. Mr. BOYD (Panama) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Since this is the first time the Security Council has met in 1976, I should like on behalf of my delegation cordially to greet all the members of the Council, the Secretary-General and the members of the Secretariat. It is symbolic that we begin our work this year under the presidency of the representative of the United Republic of Tanzania, Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim. All of us are aware of the intense efforts he has

deployed in the task of liberating Africa and solving all the problems connected with colonialism and the strengthening of peace.

61. In 1976 my country will celebrate the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the Amphictyonic Congress, which was convened in Panama by Simón Bolívar and which has been recognized as the first demonstration in the history of mankind of international solidarity and co-operation. Panama's presence in the Security Council at this time has particular importance and significance, therefore. We are here because of the generosity of the countries of the Group of Latin American States in the United Nations. At this decisive moment of its history, Panama needed to occupy this important place in order better to defend its position of effective sovereignty over the Panama Canal Zone, a goal for the achievement of which we have been struggling relentlessly.

62. We wish to acknowledge the brilliant work which has been done by the distinguished delegation of the sister Republic of Costa Rica, and we are honoured now to take its place. We would particularly like to thank its representative, Mr. Fernando Salazar.

63. Panama is a peace-loving nation and in the Security Council it will fully discharge its duty to work for the maintenance of peace throughout the world. We are a country with an international vocation, a country which wishes to entertain friendly relations with all States of the world. The leader of the revolutionary Government, General Omar Torrijos, is now in Cuba on a goodwill visit and he has been able to capture the sympathy and the solidarity of the broad majority of countries in America and in the third world because of his independent and worthy foreign policy, the positive results of which have already been translated into the unity of the Latin American continent in the defence of our cause which constitutes a problem of the highest priority in the western hemisphere.

64. I have touched briefly on this topic because we should like to take advantage of our first public appearance of our term of membership at this meeting to indicate the fact that there are very clear symptoms in my country that the Panama Canal Zone will continue to be one of the most sensitive centres of international tension. While it is true that the meetings held by the Council in Panama in March 1973 did contribute to strengthening peace in the region, it is none the less true that we have as yet been unable to reach a solution of the problems of the Canal Zone because the efforts made by the United States towards recognition of the inalienable rights of my country over the Canal Zone have not been sufficient. Therefore it should surprise no one that Panama will support the presence of the PLO in the debate we begin today.

65. We believe that their presence here is fully justifiable, since the PLO is the authentic representa-

tive of the people of Palestine and since it has been so recognized in resolutions adopted by the General Assembly in the past. Once again, it is a pleasure for us to express our support for the presence of the PLO so that it may participate in the debate on matters touching on the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people in that area of tension.

66. I do not wish to extend this procedural debate, but we should like to indicate the fact that, in our view, the PLO does indeed have the right to be represented when any questions in this connexion are debated in any of the bodies of the United Nations, and that it may participate on an equal footing with other States. Panama, which is struggling for sovereignty over the Panama Canal Zone and which is ready to claim its inalienable rights over its territory by all possible means, must act in conformity with this position. Thus it is a pleasure for us enthusiastically to support the legitimate right of the Palestinians to their own homeland in the Palestinian territory, without thereby signifying that Panama is modifying its position with regard to the right of States of the Middle East to live in peace within secure and recognized borders.

67. Mr. DATCU (Romania) (*interpretation from French*): Mr. President, I should first like to express our particular satisfaction at seeing you presiding over the work of the Security Council this month, and to extend to you the cordial congratulations of the Romanian delegation as well as our wishes for success. I should like to take this opportunity to thank you for the kind words you addressed to my delegation, and to assure you that we will co-operate fully. Our thanks go equally to our colleagues who have congratulated my country as we begin our term of membership in the Security Council.

68. I should also like to say how deeply grateful we are to those States Members of the United Nations which by their votes have entrusted my country with this honourable task and at the same time have conferred on it a lofty responsibility. My delegation would like to assure the Security Council and all Member States that Romania has decided to contribute in so far as it can to the accomplishment of the aims and purposes of the Organization so that it will be able to fulfil the hope vested in it by the peoples of the world.

69. Mr. President, turning to the topic of our procedural discussion I would like to reply to you, on behalf of the Romanian delegation, and express our full support for your proposal. The Security Council is meeting today to study the general problems of the Middle East situation, including the Palestinian question. When the Council took that decision on 30 November last [*1856th meeting*], it was also decided that the oral statement made by the President of the Security Council would be included in the records of the Council. In that statement the President said that a majority of the members of the Security Council

understood that when the Council met again on 12 January—today—in accordance with subparagraph (a) of resolution 381 (1975) the representatives of the PLO would be invited to participate in the debate.

70. We believe that this decision accords fully with the requests made by the General Assembly. These requests have been mentioned here and they indicate that the representatives of the PLO, the representative of the Palestinian people, should be invited to participate in all efforts, deliberations and conferences held under the auspices of the United Nations.

71. In our view, the debate did not have to be resumed, because this question had already been decided; but since we have proceeded in a different manner I should like briefly to clarify the position of my delegation. First let me recall that the General Assembly had recognized, in its resolution 3236 (XXIX), that the Palestinian people is a principal party in the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. In resolution 3375 (XXX), the General Assembly requested that the PLO be invited to participate in deliberations and conferences on the Middle East on an equal footing with other parties. It would be only normal for the PLO to enjoy the same rights of participation as those conferred upon a Member State which has been invited by the Security Council to participate in a debate under rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure.

72. If the Security Council is to create a climate conducive to the holding of a true dialogue among all the interested parties, it must ensure equality among the interlocutors. This is a necessary condition in efforts to open and pursue any debate or any negotiation among the parties.

73. The arguments raised against this decision are based on various of the rules of procedure but they are not convincing to my delegation—for two reasons. The first reason is that this is a situation which is totally new. It was not foreseen 30 years ago when the rules of procedure were drafted. In parenthesis let me say that these rules of procedure were provisional, and it is high time they were updated. The second reason is the well-known principle according to which the Security Council, like any other body of the United Nations, is the master of its own procedure. Romania, like the majority of States Members of the United Nations, is convinced that the participation of the Palestinian people through the PLO, its authentic representative, is necessary and indeed essential in all efforts for the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

74. Therefore the delegation of Romania resolutely supports the full participation of the PLO in the present debate and in any future debate in the Security Council with regard to the problem of the Middle East, as well as with regard to any other questions which might directly affect the Palestinian people. The Romanian

delegation, therefore, will vote in favour of your proposal, Mr. President.

75. Mr. RICHARD (United Kingdom): Mr. President, at the outset I wish to thank you for the kind remarks that you and other representatives around this table have made about me and about my month as President. May I welcome you—or perhaps commiserate with you—on your assumption of the office of President of the Security Council for this month. I also welcome to the Council the representatives of Benin, the Libyan Arab Republic, Pakistan, Panama and Romania. I am sure that in the months to come we in the Security Council will have the same co-operation from them as we had from their predecessors, the representatives of the Byelorussian SSR, Costa Rica, Iraq, Mauritania and the United Republic of Cameroon.

76. It would be idle to say that this is an important debate. It clearly is. It would be superfluous to say that this procedural matter we are at present discussing is also of great importance. It clearly is. How disappointing, therefore, that at the outset of this debate we should have been treated to a diatribe from the representative of the Soviet Union which was at the same time misleading and mischievous and which was designed to confuse rather than to clarify. The representative of the Soviet Union said—and I noted his words carefully as he said them—that the question of inviting the PLO to participate was decided on 30 November, in the adoption of resolution 381 (1975). That is, quite simply, untrue.

77. The position, as those of us who were present on that occasion and were members of the Council at that time know, was this. The President made a statement in which he said:

“Now, in accordance with the agreement reached at the consultations between members of the Council, I shall make statement on behalf of the majority of its members. As I said in my prefatory comments, the text of the statement is to be found in document S/11889. It reads as follows:

“It is the understanding of the majority of the Security Council that when it reconvenes on 12 January 1976 in accordance with paragraph (a) of resolution 381 (1975) the representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization will be invited to participate in the debate.” [*Ibid.*, para. 23.]

78. That is in fact what the then President of the Security Council said. I shall make three observations on it. First of all, he himself described it as an opinion of the majority. Secondly, the document itself uses the phrase “It is the understanding of the majority of the Security Council”. Thirdly, it says that the PLO “will be invited to participate in the debate”—not that it has been invited to participate in the debate, but that it will be. It is, with great respect to the representative

of the Soviet Union, straining language, logic and credulity to claim that a decision was taken on 30 November to invite the PLO to participate in this debate. There was not a decision, there was no resolution, there was neither a motion nor a proposal, there was no consensus, and, with respect to him, as he must know, this is clear on the face of it in the record. There is only one meeting of the Security Council that can take a decision, and that is this meeting of the Council, meeting in public. It cannot be done in private, in informal consultations, no matter how much the representative of the Soviet Union might wish otherwise.

79. He accused us of wasting time. I shall now, unlike the representative of the Soviet Union, turn to the matter before us this afternoon. When I spoke in the Council on 4 December [1859th meeting], I explained, on behalf of the United Kingdom, why my delegation found it necessary to vote against the proposal that was then before us concerning the participation in the debate of a representative of the PLO. The proposal we are now discussing is essentially the same as that proposal, and my Government's attitude to the procedural issues involved has not changed. In our view, the proposal constitutes an undesirable and unnecessary departure from our established practice. The provisional rules of procedure of the Council make a clear distinction between the right of participation which may be enjoyed by a State Member of the United Nations in certain circumstances and the facilities which may be made available to other bodies and persons to make their views known to the Council in an appropriate manner. We think this is an important and valuable distinction. We think it is very undesirable to ignore it or to allow it to be blurred.

80. However, we also have to take account of the fact that, as was shown by the agreed statement made by the President of the Council on 30 November 1975, [1856th meeting, para. 23], the majority of the members of the Council as it was then composed took the view that the representatives of the PLO should be invited to participate in the debate which we are beginning today. That also seems to be the view of the majority of the Council as it is now composed. We have also taken into account the fact that the decision taken by the Council itself on 4 December [1859th meeting] showed that the procedural objections which my delegation entertained were not shared by the majority of our colleagues on the Council. In these circumstances my delegation does not think it right to press these procedural objections to the point of voting against the proposal, and therefore we will abstain.

81. Mr. AKHUND (Pakistan): Mr. President, I wish first of all to associate my delegation with the tribute you paid to the late Premier Chou En-lai of China and the condolences you offered on behalf of the Council. Mr. Chou En-lai was together with Prime

Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto the architect of a friendship between our two countries which, on the basis of mutual respect and a common pursuit of peace, has deepened and grown with time. By Mr. Chou En-lai's death the people of Pakistan have lost a true and steadfast friend.

82. Mr. President, I wish to thank you and the other members of the Council who were good enough to address to my delegation and those of the other new members some very kind words of welcome. We look forward during the period of our tenure to working together with other members in the pursuit of our common tasks. It is a matter of particular gratification to my delegation, Sir, to begin its term on the Security Council under the presidency of the representative of a country with which my country has the closest and friendliest relations. We know you for the strength of your convictions, for your great ability and experience and for your impartiality. These are good auguries for the successful outcome of this meeting and those that are to follow in the course of this month.

83. Pakistan was not a member of the Council in December but we had the occasion to observe the conduct of those meetings by our colleague the representative of the United Kingdom, Mr. Richard. I wish to place here on record the respect and admiration of my delegation for the skill, the aplomb and the exemplary sense of propriety with which he discharged his responsibilities.

84. I should now like to speak briefly about the question at hand. My delegation has some difficulty in grasping the reasons that have been advanced against inviting the representatives of the PLO to participate in our work. If the legitimate interests of the PLO are recognized—and we find that a rather curious, half-hearted phrase, "legitimate interests"; one should have thought that rights would come before interests—however, if it does have legitimate interests, who then is to come and express them for it?

85. It was urged that it does not represent a State and that it is not a Government, and that therefore we would be doing violence to the principles and purposes of the Charter in inviting the PLO to come and address us here and participate in our debates. But the reason that the Palestinians have no Government and the reason that they have no State is precisely why we are gathered here today. This is the very subject-matter of our debate. We shall have more to say about it when we begin our substantive discussions. Meanwhile I wish only to say that, far from being a dangerous precedent, the invitation to the PLO is a step towards correcting, after long years, a wrong which was done to it, let us not forget, by this very Organization—in very different times and in very different circumstances. It has been a travesty of justice and negation of reality that the Council has so far turned its face away from the issue of Palestine. There are numerous decisions, which my neighbour

and colleague from the Libyan Arab Republic has cited, by the Organization recognizing the status and legitimacy of the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people, decisions taken in due and proper form. This very Council invited the PLO to this table and heard it last month. Pakistan considers that the participation of the PLO in the debates is essential and useful, and we shall vote in favour of the proposal.

86. Mr. MOYNIHAN (United States of America): May I first take the pleasant opportunity of welcoming the representatives of our new members—the Libyan Arab Republic, my brother from Panama, my colleagues from Romania and Pakistan, and to congratulate them on their maiden speeches, which were set forth in a spirit of inquiry and goodwill. I look forward to the maiden speech of my colleague, Mr. Boya from Benin, and I assure him that I have the same expectations of him.

87. It is necessary to intervene this second time, and hopefully this last time, to share with you, Mr. President, some of the alarm—I think that is not too strong a term—expressed by your predecessor and our colleague, the representative of the United Kingdom, alarm at the persistence of an assertion before the Security Council, with which we dealt all morning in informal consultations and with which it appears we shall go on dealing, despite insurmountable objections of language and of logic to this assertion. The assertion, as will be clear, is the one made to the effect that the Council decided on 30 November to invite the PLO to our gatherings.

88. Mr. President, we did not. We did not—that is all—which does not say that we cannot or that we will not. No one for a moment hesitated in the informal consultations this morning to say, as many have said this afternoon, that we should proceed to do so. Why this insistence that in fact we have done so? What is this? Let me read to the Council for the record this afternoon what I read this morning, an example of one representative's perception of what took place on 30 November—our perception of 30 November.

89. If you recall, Mr. President, you sat to my right then, as you do now. I stated:

“My delegation wishes... to make clear that the United States does not support the statement made by you, Mr. President”—the statement that the majority wishes to extend this invitation when the time comes. We were simply making the point that we were not part of that majority, since by definition, some members were in the minority, if it was not a unanimous decision—“indicating that the PLO will be invited to participate in the January session. This statement, in any event, did not report a decision but was merely a summation of the views of some members of the Council.” [1856th meeting, para. 118.]

90. That was my language. I shall repeat it:

“This statement, in any event, did not report a decision but was merely a summation of the views of some members of the Council. We do not consider that the extraneous matters which have been introduced into the Council's actions today can have the effect of changing either the negotiating framework, the basis for these negotiations”—referring to the Middle East and Security Council resolution 242 (1967)—“or the participants in them.” [Ibid.]

91. Obviously, on 30 November we were proceeding in an orderly way, as has been the pride of the Security Council. As a matter of comity, it had been the wish of a majority in this case to record a view it had—and there was never any objection in the Council to members stating their views. Six members of the Council did not share the view—at least some members; we did not vote, as members will recall. We said: “We do not have to vote. This is not a decision, but by all means do this. This is good. If that is what you want and you would like to have that matter on record, fine; that is your right and we are desirous of having nations state their views here and, when there are more than one, to state them as a group.” So as a matter of comity, of good sense, we went forward.

92. But now, suddenly, we are presented with a proposition to the effect that we did not do what everyone present thought we were doing but that we did something quite different: that we bound ourselves, when we merely thought we were listening to one another on a matter of interest and obvious relevance; that the procedures as we all understood them at the time have somehow in retrospect changed; that some kind of obligation arose from a process in which no obligation was asserted and none perceived—at least none that I am aware of, and certainly not at the time.

93. The representative of the United Kingdom said of that assertion that it was designed to confuse rather than to clarify. I would like to go beyond that and ask if something larger is not in our presence and if it ought not to be erased, because it is precisely the matter which the United States addressed in its opening statement.

94. Some may wonder why this matter was confined to procedural questions and not to substantive ones. The answer in the first instance is that there is a procedural matter before us. But there is a second answer, and that comes out of the experience of two centuries of constitutional government which is that process is everything; that when procedure is destroyed liberty is destroyed; that the way one goes about affairs of government is the essence of the outcome. It is not an aspect of governance; it is the essence of government. The term “due process” in American jurisprudence and constitutional law is the

single, central concept, as we understand it, of the rule of law of constitutional government.

95. And so, when the United States speaks from the experience of two centuries, in this our bicentennial year, of the "erosion of procedure" we speak of a matter of fundamental concern to us. We speak of a matter concerning which we may at least be said to speak with the experience of two centuries.

96. What is going on in regard to this matter of the sudden appearance amongst us of the proposition that an informal, friendly statement or arrangement that suited the purpose and that was contrived to suit a certain circumstance, and did so well at the time, in retrospect acquires enormous, ominous, foreboding, alarming proportions? I will tell you. What we may very well have to come to judge and are seeing here today is the commencement of an effort to subvert the open and public proceedings of the Security Council and replace them by the rule of an extra-legal, semi-secret *apparat*, which is inaccessible to the membership of the United Nations and inaccessible to the processes of inquiry. There is a term for this; the term is "totalitarianism".

97. In the nineteenth century, the great Swiss historian Jacob Burckhardt said that the twentieth century would be "l'âge des terribles simplificateurs"—with apologies to my cousin from France for my pronunciation—the age of the terrible simplifiers, the age of those who took complex reality and asserted it to be anything but, crushed it into a slogan, stamped it into a phrase. This has happened under different names in the twentieth century, with different slogans in different regions, but always the same technique is involved: the transfer of real authority and true power from the established constitutional centres, institutions, organs, out of the public light and the fresh air of exchange, inquiry and review, into the dark recesses of totalitarian conspiracy.

98. It is not the nineteenth century where one can look forward with some uncertainty to such a thing happening. We approach the latter part of the twentieth century where it has happened in nation after nation; people after people have succumbed to it. We have seen the constitutional organs of the world subverted by this process in every region of the world among peoples of every condition and peoples of every aspiration. And the most damning thing said about the process is that it works, it does work, it has succeeded; liberties have disappeared the world over, and procedure has been eroded and institutions have been sucked dry of their life and ended as empty shells.

99. My Secretary of State has spoken of the prospect that this institution will end as an empty shell. And we speak out of concern; we speak out of a desire that this should not happen and out of the perception that it may be happening. And so when we raise the

question of procedure I would hope that it be understood that we raise not a peripheral matter but what to us is a central matter, and we raise it in the context of this baffling, this alarming assertion of what I have described as a proposition which faces insurmountable objections of logic, and of language and, as a matter of record, an assertion which my colleague from the United Kingdom has chosen to describe in even stronger terms. This worries us.

100. Mr. MALIK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (*interpretation from Russian*): I believe that the present procedural debate should be postponed until after the vote, since the vote will confirm whether indeed the question of inviting the representatives of the PLO to participate in today's meeting was decided or not. That would be the best course—to seek confirmation by the majority of the Council of the position it took at its meeting. Therefore, Mr. President, why do we not proceed to the vote? The vote will show who is right and who is wrong.

101. As for the lecture we were given on liberty, democracy and totalitarianism, I of course agree with the professor, who lectured us to the effect that totalitarianism is a terrible thing indeed. But no less terrible is gangsterism in politics.

102. Mr. MOYNIHAN (United States of America): It is time for an element of seriousness in these proceedings. Totalitarianism is bad; gangsterism is worse. But as my colleague and friend from the Soviet Union will no doubt agree, capitulationism is the worst of all—a prospect which we must be careful to avoid, and in fact which I do not propose to succumb to.

103. Mr. President, I agree with you as follows: if we now proceed to vote, it will demonstrate that we did not take a decision on 30 November, because had we done so there would be no need to vote. The fact that we are going to vote is proof positive of the fact that it is necessary to vote. If it is necessary to vote, it is because no vote has been taken. If no vote has been taken, it is concluded, as it must be, that it was not taken on 30 November, or on any other day. A vote proves the necessity of voting because of the necessity to reach a decision which has not been taken.

104. The PRESIDENT: The question on which the Council will now vote is the following: whether the representative of the PLO shall be invited to participate in the debate on the item included in the agenda on the basis which I outlined earlier.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour: Benin, China, Guyana, Japan, Libyan Arab Republic, Pakistan, Panama, Romania, Sweden, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Republic of Tanzania.

Against: United States of America.

Abstaining: France, Italy, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

The proposal was adopted by 11 votes to 1, with 3 abstentions.

105. The PRESIDENT: I call on the representative of France, who wishes to explain his vote after the vote.

106. Mr. de GUIRINGAUD (France) (*interpretation from French*): Mr. President, my delegation can only rejoice at seeing you presiding over our work at this time when the Council is embarking on a particularly difficult month. Your outstanding talents, which are so well known to us, will surely be brought to bear in the complex and sensitive matters before the Council. I should like to extend to you my warmest congratulations and to assure you of my delegation's full support.

107. Our work in December, too, placed a particularly difficult burden on the President. The representative of the United Kingdom, our friend Mr. Richard, proved to be the man of the hour, as all of us had expected, and I cannot fail to extend to him the deep gratitude of my delegation. His qualities as a diplomat and his parliamentary experience were valuable assets in the Council.

108. As we meet today in this first meeting of the year, we note with regret the absence of the retiring members. For two years we had the benefit of the co-operation and activity of the representatives of Mauritania, the United Republic of Cameroon, Costa Rica, Iraq and the Byelorussian SSR. We shall miss them for their valuable and outstanding contribution to the Council's work. However, we are pleased to welcome the five new members, who, for the most part, are experts in the United Nations and doubtless are familiar to all within this hall. We have no doubt whatsoever that they will immediately contribute to our debates the knowledge and experience which they have demonstrated on other occasions, and at times even here.

109. I do not wish to go into the substance of the matter before us without first saying that my delegation unreservedly associates itself with the excellent and very apt statement which you, Mr. President, made with regard to the sad death of the outstanding Premier of China, Mr. Chou En-lai. We associate ourselves also with the condolences which you addressed to the Chinese delegation.

110. To its great regret, my delegation was unable to associate itself with the proposal just adopted by the Security Council. It is obviously not the principle of having the Council hear representatives of the PLO which explains our position. On many occasions the French authorities have emphasized how desirable it was, in their view, to have the voice of the Palestinians heard in international debates dealing with the Pales-

tinian problem. Is it not normal that they should be able to express their views on a matter which involves their own rights? It was in this spirit that the French authorities recently decided to authorize the opening in Paris of a PLO information and liaison office.

111. But the rules of the Security Council are unambiguous: outside the framework of rule 39, which, according to the actual terms used by the President does not apply to the invitation extended to the PLO, only representatives of States, whether Members or non-members of the Organization, may be heard by the Security Council. Therefore, notwithstanding whatever relations we may have established with the PLO, we must recognize the fact that it is not, nor does it claim to be, a State.

112. The abstention of my delegation therefore can be explained by the status which the Council, contradicting its rules of procedure, is attempting to confer upon the PLO in our work. Our abstention does not call into question either the role which the French authorities recognize as being that of the representatives of the PLO or the fact that those representatives must be allowed to speak during the very important debate which our Council is beginning.

113. Mr. VINCI (Italy): Mr. President, before explaining my delegation's vote, I should like to begin, in this first meeting of the Security Council in 1976, by saying that I find it both meaningful and rewarding for all of us here that this series of meetings has begun today under your presidency. We all recognize in you a distinguished and talented representative of the United Republic of Tanzania, a leading country in Africa and highly respected as such. At the same time, we see you as Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim, one of the strongest voices of Africa, of the emerging countries and of all they stand for. Our respect and our esteem are strengthened by empathy with the personal human touch which you put into your mission, a mission inspired mainly by a deep-rooted commitment to the ideals of the Organization and in particular to those ideals that relate to the political, social and economic emancipation of underprivileged and emerging societies. So we know how fortunate we are to have you presiding over this most important debate and the discussion of other issues on the agenda of the Security Council this month. For your part, you may rely on the full co-operation of my delegation in order to bring to fruition your gifts in carrying out your high responsibilities.

114. I could not proceed without once again paying my deep respect and admiration to Mr. Ivor Richard of the United Kingdom, who presided over the Council during the month of December. The results we achieved during three very busy weeks speak for themselves. The esteem and prestige which the British representative rightly enjoys in United Nations circles for his global vision of the world, for his political instinct and his straightforwardness were so widely

known that we took those positive results for granted. However, as a fellow member of the European Community I wish to say how much I rejoiced in the success of his presidency.

115. I should now like to extend a cordial welcome to the five States—Benin, the Libyan Arab Republic, Panama, Pakistan and Romania—which have now joined the Council. Italy enjoys friendly and very fruitful relations with all these countries. I wish to assure their representatives—among whom I am glad to notice some good friends and colleagues of past association and partnership—that the Italian delegation will at all times offer them its full co-operation in our common work and responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. I have no doubt that their participation will contribute to the enrichment of our work and to making it more constructive.

116. If I may insert a note of historic value not only for my country, I would add that the current presence of the Libyan Arab Republic and Italy on the Security Council could not perhaps better epitomize the great changes which have taken place in the world community. It is a significant event, and I should like to share the pride which our Libyan colleague Mr. Kikhia must rightly feel in taking his seat as the representative of a member of the Council.

117. This meeting also calls for a tribute from us to the five members which ended their term on the Council on 31 December—the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Costa Rica, Iraq, Mauritania and the United Republic of Cameroon. Each of their delegations assisted the Council with its specific experience and political orientation resulting from its geographical situation, its culture, its past and its present concerns and directions. Imbued with the sense of responsibility flowing from membership in the main organ entrusted with the maintenance of international peace and security, each of their permanent representatives together with their delegations in one way or another tried in this chamber to find solutions which, in their view, reflected the best interests of the international community. The Security Council owes them a debt of gratitude for their two years of service on the Council.

118. I wish also to associate my delegation and myself to the eloquent tribute which you, Mr. President, paid to Premier Chou En-lai, a great statesman, one of the chief figures of our times, an outstanding politician and a leader of the People's Republic of China. I wish to associate myself also with the condolences which you conveyed to the representative of China.

119. I now turn to the explanation of my delegation's vote. The position taken by the Italian delegation on the invitation to the PLO to participate in the debate on the Middle East problem including the Palestinian question, following the decision taken by the Security

Council in resolution 381 (1975) of 4 December, does not require a lengthy explanation. In fact I made our position clear on previous occasions, namely, on 30 November [*ibid.*] during the debate on the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Disengagement Observer force and on 4 December [*1859th meeting*], when the Council met on the issue of the Israeli air raids in Lebanon. In order to spare the Council's time after so many statements, I shall simply refer to the statements I made on those occasions.

120. To sum up my delegation's position, we do not have reservations as to the participation of the PLO in the present debate. Our reservations concern the terms under which this invitation is to be extended. We still have doubts about those terms, since they do not seem to our delegation to be consistent with the provisions of the Charter and the rules of procedure as they now stand. This cannot be construed as indicative of less interest on the part of my delegation in the debate starting today. On the contrary, as I stated twice on 8 December [*1862nd meeting*], we look forward to a debate which could produce a very comprehensive review of the Middle East situation including the Palestinian question.

121. The PRESIDENT: In accordance with the decisions taken by the Security Council, I now invite the representatives of Egypt, Jordan, the Syrian Arab Republic and the Palestine Liberation Organization to take places at the Council table.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Abdel Meguid (Egypt), Mr. Sharaf (Jordan), Mr. Allaf (Syrian Arab Republic) and Mr. Khaddoumi (Palestine Liberation Organization) took places at the Council table.

122. The PRESIDENT: Because of the limited number of places available at the Security Council table, I shall invite the representatives of the United Arab Emirates and Qatar to take the places reserved for them at the side of the Council chamber, on the usual understanding that they will be invited to take a place at the Council table when it is their turn to address the Council.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Humaidan (United Arab Emirates) and Mr. Jamal (Qatar) took the places reserved for them at the side of the Council chamber.

123. The PRESIDENT: The Security Council will now begin its examination of the question placed on its agenda pursuant to its resolution 381 (1975).

124. Mr. KIKHIA (Libyan Arab Republic): Before the Council begins its discussion of the substance of the item before it, I should like to make a very brief statement. First, I should like to say that it was with profound grief that we learned of the passing away of Premier Chou En-lai. On behalf of the delegation of the Libyan Arab Republic, I wish to express our deep

and heartfelt condolences on the death of that great statesman and eminent son of Asia to the representative of the People's Republic of China and, through him, to the delegation, Government, Party and people of the People's Republic of China, as well as to the family of the deceased.

125. As this is the first meeting of the Security Council in the new year, I should like to extend my best wishes to you personally, Mr. President, and to all the members of the Council. I should like also to express to you, Mr. President, and to the members of the Council my sincere gratitude for the generous words of welcome addressed to the delegation of the Libyan Arab Republic as we take up our responsibilities as members of this important organ of the United Nations. Those words of welcome constitute encouragement for the policy of peace, co-operation and understanding among nations which is ours, as well as for the tenacious and continued struggle of the Libyan people against imperialism, colonialism, racism and exploitation in the world.

126. Since this is the first time that the Libyan Arab Republic has participated in the deliberations of the Security Council as one of its members, may I be permitted on behalf of my Government and people to convey our sincere and deep gratitude to those friendly States which voted in favour of our election to membership of the Security Council, and especially to the members of the Organization of African Unity for the confidence they expressed in my country by lending us their unanimous support and endorsing our nomination to membership of the Council.

127. In assuming membership in the Security Council, we in the Libyan Arab Republic are conscious of the privilege and the heavy responsibility which will be ours. We shall work in close co-operation with you, Mr. President, and with our other colleagues in the Council, and I hope we shall be equal to the duty. I am certain also that this new experience will be a most rewarding one. It is indeed a high point of our involvement in the work of the United Nations.

128. I look forward with optimism and confidence to our work in the future, including the weeks ahead. As a representative of the third world, the Libyan Arab Republic has a particular and keen interest in the solution of those problems before the Security Council that have their origin in imperialism, colonialism, racism and the economic exploitation of our nations. May I add that we are aware of the special responsibility we have assumed as one of the three countries from Africa and the only Arab member in the Council. We do not represent only the Libyan Arab Republic; we are justly expected to represent here the special interests of our African continent as well as the larger Afro-Arab community.

129. I cannot let this occasion pass without expressing the satisfaction of the delegation of the

Libyan Arab Republic at the fact that the first meetings of the Security Council in 1976 will be held under the presidency of an eminent African brother. I am convinced, Sir, that thanks to your long political experience and your high personal qualities you will succeed in directing the Council's proceedings during the month of January to the general satisfaction. You can always count on my fullest co-operation and support towards the successful discharge of your high and delicate responsibilities.

130. I should like to express my appreciation also to the Secretary-General for his great efforts in the interest of the causes of humanity and peace and towards consolidating the role of the United Nations at a time when its burdens are increasing and when it must face the difficulties and conspiracies of which it is a target on the part of those who want the Organization to remain an exclusive arena of their influence and manipulations, as well as an instrument serving their ambitions. We reiterate on this occasion our indefatigable support for the Secretary-General in his struggle to preserve the independence and the effectiveness of the United Nations within the framework of full respect for the decisions of the majority.

131. We come to the Security Council without any pretensions. We know that the Libyan Arab Republic is a small, developing country. History teaches us, however, that small nations can and must play a very important role in international politics and within the Organization. Especially now, in the so-called era of détente, they can play their role and influence events individually or collectively, in spite of the fact that they are threatened, pressed and blackmailed by some big Powers. Recently a super-Power was reported to be aiming punitive cuts at nations that have sided against its policy in the United Nations. The reported cutback in aid involves in some cases food and humanitarian relief. According to *The New York Times* of 9 January, agreements on development aid to two non-permanent members of the Security Council have been postponed because of their votes in the General Assembly to condemn zionism and because of their opposition to certain positions on Korea. Other nations, which supported that super-Power in the United Nations, will be given additional aid. No comment can be made on that cynical approach except to deplore it and to affirm to big Powers that the policy of punishing the small countries because they are small and to show them that their behaviour in the Organization is not cost-free is cynical, dangerous, immoral and, finally, counter-productive.

132. Our delegation, during the debate in the General Assembly, warned against this new so-called get-tough approach. However, we are confident that in our fight for freedom and justice against imperialism, racism and exploitation we shall stand together in solidarity and resist any kind of pressure from any big or super-Power or group of Powers. We must be very cautious and not remain silent in the face of this

aggressive policy of intimidation. As Mr. Moynihan said moments ago, and I agree 100 per cent with him, that capitulation is the worst of all. It is a sign of the times that super-Powers talk of capitulation.

133. In connexion with the discussion of the item on the agenda, my delegation will express its views during the following days in the course of the debate. However, my delegation would like, from the outset, to stress some important points, and so I ask you, Mr. President, to allow me to speak after the statement of our brother, the representative of the PLO.

134. Mr. MOYNIHAN (United States of America): Mr. President, could I make a point of order.

135. The PRESIDENT: I call on the representative of the United States on a point of order.

136. Mr. MOYNIHAN: On a point of order, the term is "capitulationism". It is a failing said to have been revealed in a fourteenth-century Chinese novel, *The Water Margin*.

137. The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the United States, although I think that that was not a point of order but a point of clarification. To begin our discussion of the item on the agenda, I now call on the first speaker, the representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

138. Mr. KHADDUMI (Palestine Liberation Organization): Mr. President, since this is my first appearance before the Security Council, I should like to express our warm congratulations on your assumption of the presidency. We are fully confident that you, as the distinguished representative of a great African country that steadfastly struggled for the extension of human freedom, equality, justice and independence for oppressed people, will chair the session and guide the discussions objectively and most competently. Your broad experience, your total familiarity with international questions, your championship of liberation movements, and your well-known attributes of originality and nobility of purpose constitute an important resource in providing guidance to the Council as it responsibly deliberates issues involved in one of the most dangerous contemporary political crises known as "the Middle East crisis".

139. May I be permitted, Mr. President, to express to you and to the representatives of friendly Member States in the Council our appreciation for the efforts you have exerted to enable the people of Palestine to exercise its legal right to speak for itself. Our people's case, the question of Palestine, is the essence, the core of the crisis with which the Council has been concerned and of which it is endeavouring to reach a just settlement. The Council's decision to invite the PLO to participate in the discussions of the Council, combined with the totality of the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly over the past two years,

testifies to the profound and widespread international understanding of the Palestine question. They reflect the concern of the majority of the States of the world with rendering justice to the Palestinian people and with responding affirmatively to their national rights. It is for the attainment of these national rights that the Palestinian people have resorted to armed struggle.

140. However, I should note the deliberate absence of Israel from this discussion. Why is Israel not present? What is its pretext for boycotting the Council's meeting? Israel is absent simply because the representatives of the people of Palestine are invited to take part in these deliberations. This is symbolic of who is anxious to participate in the process of peace-making and who is deliberately eager to frustrate the will of the Council.

141. Moreover, the Council's decision constitutes a basic and imperative step along the path of confronting the facts as the Council prepares itself to issue a just decision, the decisive resolution for which our people has long waited. Our people has been waiting for such a just decision for over 28 years, during which our people suffered anguish, deprivation, exile and oppression. This Council's decision, in our view, is a courageous international recognition of the fact that whoever wishes to search for a serious resolution of the Middle East conflict will have to begin with its root cause and heart, which is the question of Palestine. Had there not been the question of Palestine, all the wars our region has suffered, in 1948, in 1956, in 1967 and in 1973 would never have been; there would never have been the constant tensions which threaten further wars. In short, had there not been a question of Palestine there would not have been what is mistakenly termed "the Middle East crisis".

142. Although the invitation of the Council comes after very long and painful years, it is better late than never. For without addressing the essence of the "crisis" with which the Council is dealing, it would be useless to attempt to find its solution, and consequently there would be no peace in the Middle East or, perhaps, in the world. The Council's invitation to the PLO to participate in the deliberations of the Council is right and just, but it is also based on the serious search for peace in our region, where peace is most threatened.

143. The question of Palestine, its background, details and causes, is no longer a strange and unfamiliar question to the United Nations. Although the sinister design against the land and people of Palestine was formally initiated in 1917 with the issuance of the Balfour Declaration,¹ the tragedy of Palestinian dispersion commenced right here, in the United Nations, in the aftermath of the recommendation to partition Palestine in 1947,² which was unjust and infamous. Since then—that was over 28 years ago—our case has been in suspension; it has been awaiting someone

who would deal with it justly and fairly, someone who would possess the moral and human courage to realize justice and to translate it into reality.

144. Throughout these years the Zionist enemy, in collaboration with its imperialist supporters, was betting that with time the tragedy and the sinister design would become a *de facto* political reality with which the Palestinian people would come to terms and to which they would capitulate. For half a century various malicious attempts were made to liquidate the people of Palestine and dispose of our land. Acts of extinction, through either genocide or assimilation and emigration, have been attempted; all those attempts failed, and nothing weakened the resolve of our people. The struggle and the perseverance of our Palestinian people, supported by our brothers and friends, have voided this artificial political reality which is based on aggression and treachery. Despairing of a peaceful solution, we resorted to armed struggle to attain our national rights and to put an end to injustice and aggression. The Security Council should, therefore, consider the only remaining alternative: namely, to recognize our people's national inalienable rights and to assist it in realizing its national aspirations.

145. Where do you wish us to begin? Shall we begin with the initiation of the sinister design in 1917? Or shall we begin with the Palestinian tragedy? Shall we begin with the iniquitous Balfour Declaration by which those who did not own the land of Palestine promised it to those who had no right to it? Or shall we begin with the unjust recommendation of the General Assembly on 29 November 1947 to partition Palestine?

146. We shall not dwell on the joint British-Zionist scheme to usurp Palestine; that scheme has been sufficiently exposed and condemned. We shall concentrate instead on the Palestinian tragedy, since it is a consequence of the joint action of imperialism and Zionism, a tragedy which came about within the framework of the United Nations, which recommended the partitioning of Palestine.

147. The First World War ended with the defeat of the Ottoman Empire and the triumph of European colonialism in the Middle East. The European Powers decided to partition the entire Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire in accordance with the infamous Sykes-Picot Agreement. Palestine became a distinct political unit inhabited by its rightful Arab population. At that time Palestine had a population of approximately 700,000 people, of whom 55,000 were indigenous and European Jews. Palestine was placed under the Mandate of Britain which was committed to implement the Zionist scheme. Britain, in co-operation with the Zionist movement, began to undertake effective measures to create the appropriate political, social and economic circumstances in which to establish a Jewish national home in a land which it did not own and to which the Zionists had no right. Palestine was

consequently opened for the immigration of alien European Jewish settlers.

148. That was the beginning. That was the beginning of the sinister scheme against our people, which had lived its entire life on its national homeland. Our people lived in all of Palestine: in its cities and villages. We had built mosques and churches; we had farmed the land; we had established its workshops and factories. We lived in the land, respectful of its heritage, and we looked forward to contributing, like all peoples of the world, to the enrichment of humanity. Our people were in the land when civilization was born, long before any Zionist had entertained the idea of Israel. We confronted the sinister designs on our land. Our people confronted the Zionist onslaught and British colonialism, which then sponsored and sustained that onslaught. Our country witnessed continual revolutions: in 1920, in 1929, in 1936 and in 1947, to mention only those which occurred during the British colonial administration. The end of the Second World War considerably weakened the old colonial empires, whose power began to recede, and the Mandates System, which was established by the League of Nations, lost its viability. After the Second World War, the United Nations was founded and was entrusted with the task of dealing with the Palestine question.

149. At the request of the British Government, which exercised the Mandate over Palestine, the Secretary-General convened a special session of the General Assembly on 15 May 1947. The General Assembly established a Special Committee to investigate and report on the question. The Special Committee presented its report³ and recommended the partitioning of Palestine; a minority report⁴ recommended the independence of Palestine and its unity and envisaged the possibility of all Palestinians living in a unified Palestine on a footing of equality. When that report was presented at the second session of the General Assembly, the Assembly, many of whose members were subjected to extreme pressure and intimidation by the United States Government and the Zionist movement, recommended the partitioning of Palestine and adopted the infamous resolution 181 (II) on 29 November 1947.

150. It is axiomatic that the United Nations did not have the right in 1947 to partition our country against the wishes of its citizens, just as it does not today possess the right to partition any country in the world. I wish to add that the General Assembly did not discuss the question of Palestine at the request of the Palestinian people but rather debated the issue at the express request of the British Mandatory Power. The General Assembly, by its decision, did not resolve that the Jews should be independent in Palestine but rather determined that Palestine was to be partitioned into two States, one Arab and the other Jewish.

151. The United Nations did not deem fit, after it had adopted its resolution, to inquire into the wishes

of the Palestinian people and did not permit them to express their will. The United Nations, *de facto*, permitted the Zionist movement to implement and transcend the limitations of that decision, a task which it effected through the brute force of its gangs which had been armed by the Mandatory Power. It was natural that our people should reject this unjust resolution, whose effects we continue to experience in the form of exile, dispersion, oppression and wars.

152. The Zionist demand traditionally had been for an exclusive Jewish State; but the recommendation for the partition of Palestine envisaged a Jewish State which had a population of 498,000 Jews and 497,000 Moslem and Christian Arabs. The Arab State, on the other hand, was to have 10,000 Jews and 725,000 Moslem and Christian Arabs. From this, one important conclusion is inescapable: the real object of the partition resolution was the dismemberment of Palestine, not the separation of its people. And if we keep in mind that the Jews of Palestine at that time did not own more than 6 per cent of the total land area, then we realize the degree of injustice, illegality and harm the partition resolution entailed. That resolution entailed the transfer of about 55 per cent of Palestine to the owners of about 6 per cent. Within the projected Jewish State, Jews had title to no more than 9 per cent of the land. These facts underlie our people's rejection of the partition proposal.

153. It was natural for the Zionist movement subsequently to declare the establishment of its State. It was natural for it, as a colonial racist movement, to undertake all measures designed to expel the Palestinians who came under its military control and to utilize the most vicious forms of terrorism to compel them to depart. By doing so even then it was defying the will of the United Nations and all principles of law and justice. As a matter of fact, since it was established, Israel has not committed itself to the implementation of any decision or resolution concerning the Palestine question, including the partition resolution.

154. On 1 April 1948, the Security Council held a special meeting to discuss the situation in Palestine [277th meeting] and subsequently adopted resolution 44 (1948), which requested the Secretary-General, in accordance with Article 20 of the Charter, to convene a special session of the General Assembly in order to consider further the question of the future government of Palestine.

155. It should be recalled that Security Council resolution 44 (1948) took into account that the General Assembly resolution recommending the partitioning of Palestine entailed injustice to the Palestinian Arabs and that therefore it was necessary to revise it either entirely or partially to realize the interests of the Arabs. However, the Assembly did hold a special session at the request of the Council and resolved in resolution 186 (S-2) to dispatch a United Nations

Mediator to Palestine to undertake political initiatives, the most important of which was to encourage the search for a peaceful settlement of the future of Palestine. Count Folke Bernadotte was chosen for this task.

156. Count Bernadotte carried out his mission. He visited Palestine, ascertained the facts and finally submitted a report⁵ proposing the modification of the frontiers of the proposed Jewish State; the new modifications restored the role which Palestine had historically served, namely, that of a bridge between the Arab east and the Arab west. The Zionists, enraged by the report, decided to liquidate the Mediator; he was eventually assassinated by Zionist gangs in Jerusalem. This act was condemned by the Security Council, which asked the Government of Israel to apprehend the criminals.

157. The Security Council reconvened on 15 July 1948 [338th meeting] and adopted resolution 54 (1948) establishing the second truce. That was followed by Council resolution 62 (1948) adopted on 16 November 1948 [381st meeting] and which called for a truce in all parts of Palestine in preparation for a move towards lasting peace. That resolution led to the General Armistice Agreements signed in Rhodes in 1949,⁶ with the United Nations representative, the late Mr. Ralph Bunche, acting as Mediator. The General Armistice Agreements clearly stipulated that the demarcation lines agreed upon were dictated by military considerations and thus were military, not political, boundaries, and in no way prejudiced Arab territorial claims or the rights of the Palestinian people.

158. The General Assembly had previously debated and expressed its appreciation of Count Bernadotte's report. It adopted resolution 194 (III) on 11 December 1948. That resolution affirmed Count Bernadotte's orientation regarding the necessity of modifying the partition resolution to take into account the rights of the Palestinian Arabs. It entrusted this task to the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine, composed of France, Turkey and the United States of America. In paragraph 11, the resolution called for the repatriation of all Palestinian refugees to their homes and property and for the compensation of those who did not wish to return. Instructions were issued to the Conciliation Commission to facilitate the repatriation of the Palestinians.

159. When the Conciliation Commission held its meetings at Lausanne in April of 1949, Israel had not yet succeeded in joining the United Nations. On 12 May 1949, the representatives of Israel, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon and Jordan signed documents, known as the Lausanne Protocols, which states that the delegations of the Arab States and Israel accepted the Commission's proposal to use the partition map proposed by the United Nations as a basis for discussion with the Commission.⁷

160. After the signing of the Lausanne Protocols, Israel's application for membership in the United Nations was considered. Although the General Assembly expressed misgivings at Israel's request, it nevertheless accepted its application in its resolution 273 (III) of 11 May 1949, reaffirming first General Assembly resolution 181 (II), and secondly, General Assembly resolution 194 (III).

161. Not only did the United Nations fail to assume its responsibility of compelling Israel to carry out its resolutions but, more disastrously, it began gradually to omit altogether the question of Palestine from the agenda of the General Assembly. Instead, it began to substitute the discussion of the report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East for the debate on the question of Palestine and thereby conveyed the harmful impression that the question had become either one of displaced persons or a matter of disputed frontiers between the adjacent Arab States and Israel. Such a depiction of the question of Palestine was a blatant attempt to ignore the existence of the Palestinian people, its national rights, its right to self-determination, independence and sovereignty, and even the resolutions of the United Nations—unjust as some of these were.

162. Palestinian exile continued within the framework of the Rhodes Armistice Agreements until 1956, when Israel participated in the tripartite aggression against Egypt and the Gaza Strip. Israel thus militarily occupied additional Palestinian land. The Security Council in its resolution 119 (1956) of 31 October 1956 dealt with that act of aggression. Because of the exercise of the veto by a permanent member, the Security Council was unable to discharge its responsibility to adopt a resolution calling for the immediate withdrawal of the aggressors. Therefore, the Security Council requested the General Assembly to convene an emergency special session to deal with Israel's aggression and to adopt appropriate resolutions calling for the withdrawal of the military forces of the aggressors.

163. In June 1967, Israel launched its next aggression and occupied what remained of Palestine, as well as Sinai and the Golan. The Security Council met to study the Middle East crisis but ignored the heart and essence of the conflict, namely, the question of Palestine. It adopted resolution 242 (1967), which addressed itself to the so-called "Middle East crisis". That resolution dealt neither with the Palestine question nor with the national rights of the Palestinian people to independence and sovereignty.

164. Since then it has become commonplace to speak of the "Middle East crisis", with the intent of camouflaging, obscuring and evading the essential question, which is the question of Palestine. This was the reason for our people's rejection of that resolution, which compounds the errors and the injustice instead

of confronting them, and for our rejection of the cease-fire and, finally, for our determination to carry out our armed struggle.

165. We resumed our armed struggle on 1 January 1965, when our people despaired of peacefully restoring their national rights and sovereignty and declared that armed struggle was the only means to achieve the liberation of our homeland and to attain our national rights.

166. We are more aware of and experienced with our Zionist opponent. We know its expansionist objectives which are based on its racist, backward ideology. We warned all concerned that Israel would ignore and try to subvert any United Nations resolutions limiting its colonialism and expansionism. Although some of the States of the region committed themselves to resolution 242 (1967), Israel ignored it, as it had ignored prior resolutions. Thus, another war in the Middle East became inevitable to compel Israel to evacuate its occupation forces from Arab lands; hence, the 1973 war.

167. Subsequently, the Security Council met and adopted resolution 338 (1973) which, like its predecessor, was devoid of any reference to the question of Palestine and ignored the national rights of our people. Our people rejected it, because its intention was to deal only with the effects of the 1967 aggression against the Arab States. It in no way refers to our national rights or to our existence in Palestine prior to 1967. Additionally, that resolution asked the Arab States to recognize the boundaries of a State established in a land which, originally and according to the principles of international law, was the property of the Palestinian people. It is surprising and shocking that the Arab States should be asked to recognize an entity which contravenes even resolution 181 (II), on the basis of which it was established, and notwithstanding the damage done by this resolution to the rights of the Palestinian people.

168. Did the Security Council forget, when it adopted resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), that Egypt, Syria and Jordan were in a state of war with Israel before June 1967 and before October 1973, a state of war which had prevailed since 1948 and which was caused by the serious Zionist-imperialist attempt to liquidate the existence of Palestine and its national inalienable rights to independence and sovereignty? Was the Council unaware of the fact that the armistice lines of 1949 were military and not political? Was the Council unaware of the fact that Israel had earlier occupied more than 60 per cent of the land of the Palestinian Arab State for which the United Nations called in the partition resolution—resolution 181 (II)—on the basis of which Israel was accepted as a Member of the Organization? Was the Council unaware that this earlier aggression and occupation prevented the Palestinian people from exercising its right to self-determination and establishing its independent State in its homeland?

169. The Security Council undoubtedly recalls the considerations which governed Israel's acceptance as a Member of the United Nations in accordance with resolution 273 (III), Israel's pledge before the United Nations Conciliation Commission at Lausanne in 1949, and its signature of the Lausanne Protocols.

170. The Council undoubtedly also recalls that Israel's so-called declaration of independence based itself on the partition resolution. According to international law, recognition of the existence of States and of régimes is a prerogative of sovereign States which cannot be imposed by international resolutions.

171. Such is the tragedy which affects our people. We have summarized its unfolding within the framework of the resolutions of the United Nations and the concepts which underlie them. We have avoided the details, which are available to Members and which exemplify this tragic reality which our people endures and suffers:

172. If we wished to summarize this tragedy in a single short sentence, we would say that it is a tragedy epitomized by two types of resolutions: unjust resolutions, which found States to support, sustain and implement them and to extend their purview; and resolutions which tried, sometimes partially, to relieve oppression and injustice, which remained ink on scraps of paper and have never been implemented.

173. Thus we resumed our revolution. We took up arms and had recourse to force in defence of our very existence, of our right to live in our land, and of our independence and sovereignty. While we carry out our armed struggle, we continue to hope to attain our goals through political options.

174. Accordingly, the Palestine Liberation Organization, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, moved politically in the aftermath of the October 1973 war to rectify the mistaken view of the identity of the conflict in our region. We requested the inclusion of the question of Palestine as an independent item on the agenda of the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly. Our request was supported by the overwhelming majority of Member States, which were dissatisfied with the continuing deliberate disregard of the question of Palestine and the fate of its people. The question was debated in the presence of the Chairman of the PLO Executive Committee, Mr. Yasser Arafat, who spoke⁸ in the name of the people of Palestine, explained our cause in all its dimensions and intricacies, and shared with you his vision of the Palestine of tomorrow.

175. The international community then recognized the following facts:—First, that the question of Palestine is the central issue in the Middle East conflict;—Secondly, that peace in the Middle East is contingent upon the realization of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, beginning with their right to return,

to self-determination and to sovereignty on their national soil;—Thirdly, that the 1967 war was not in reality a conflict over regional frontiers between the Arab States and Israel: it was one of the inevitable results of the continued Israeli usurpation of Palestinian land and violation of Palestinian rights;—Fourthly, that resolutions of the Arab summit conference at Rabat and General Assembly resolution 3237 (XXIX) decisively confirmed the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people.

176. The resolutions of the General Assembly at its thirtieth session—resolutions 3375 (XXX) and 3376 (XXX)—have increased our hope of reaching a just solution through the United Nations. We trust that the Security Council will not make us lose that hope, especially since the Council today has a historic opportunity to right a wrong and to relieve the oppression of our patient and steadfast people.

177. The Zionists established their racist entity in our Palestinian homeland, relying on a racist ideology already condemned by the General Assembly at its thirtieth session. The Zionists have used all methods of conquest and oppression to usurp the homeland of others. They have also relied on external Powers, some of which have supported them in order to protect their own imperialist interests in the Arab region and in order to retard the development and unity of the Arab countries.

178. The Zionists have never yet been able to base their claim on any law or internationally recognized charter. We, the people of Palestine, as you have noted from our narration of our cause, are struggling for just goals endorsed by the United Nations and anchored in international legitimacy. We struggle to attain freedom and peace, not to seize what does not belong to us. What we aspire to is consonant with the principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations.

179. Therefore we wish to emphasize here the resolve of our people to continue their struggle, military and political, until they attain the fulfilment of their national responsibility to restore and return to their national soil and to exercise their self-determination and to establish their independent State. We have legitimate national rights—not "interests", as some like to put it. The difference between interests and national rights is obvious, and our belief in peace is no less than our belief in right and justice. Were it not for the disregard of our rights, none of these wars and tragedies would have occurred in the Middle East.

180. We want peace for us and for the Jews in Palestine; we wish to stress, with the utmost sense of responsibility, that the Security Council can assume a basic and effective role if it applies the Charter and compels the aggressors to put an end to their aggressions. The time has come for the Security Council to adopt a resolution which recognizes the objective facts

in the region, beginning with the Palestine question and the necessity of finding a just solution to it so that our people may exercise their inalienable rights in their homeland. The time has come for the adoption of a resolution which would rectify the error and which would rely on practical, correct and effective means for its implementation. Such a resolution would contribute to the relaxation of tension and to the realization of peace.

181. It is of concern to us to declare before the Council that the PLO, the legitimate representative of the people of Palestine, rejects the false allegations propagated by Zionist and imperialist circles regarding its intention, or the intention of our people, concerning the fate of the Jews in Palestine. Our struggle is not against the Jews. No, it is not against the Jews in Palestine, but against the Zionist movement, its racist doctrines, its expansionist practices and its aggressive intentions, which have led, in fact, to the exile and homelessness of our people.

182. We have also declared our categorical rejection of any alternative homeland. Our people have one homeland, which is Palestine, and we struggle for its restoration and the exercise of our historic and inalienable rights over its sacred soil.

183. The General Assembly in its last two sessions offered us some hope with its positive resolutions. And here we are today, looking confidently to the Security Council for the realization of this hope, especially since the Council, according to Article 36 of the Charter, has the power to implement its resolutions.

184. Those of our people who have lived in exile since 1948 and those who live under occupation expect the Security Council to adopt a resolution which would end this tragedy and offer them a brighter future and a path to return to their homeland. The PLO, on behalf of the people of Palestine, offered, and continues to offer, a solution to the question of Palestine. Its democratic solution assures all Arabs and Jews of Palestine a peaceful and dignified life therein; its solution is predicated upon the unqualified acceptance of the principle of human equality.

185. The PLO, in its transitional programme which preceded General Assembly resolution 3236 (XXIX), envisaged an independent Palestinian State in Palestine. Israel today, in yet another of its more notorious attempts to frustrate the will of the international community and to subvert the intent of that resolution, is proceeding shamelessly with "elections" under military occupation. Our people, in exile and under occupation, have made it abundantly clear that our immediate aim is the establishment of an independent sovereign State on our national soil.

186. Members of the Security Council are fully aware that the majority of Member States have

recognized our national rights and our right to independence. The United States Government, which has been the principal political, diplomatic, economic and military sponsor and sustainer of the continuing aggression and expansion of Israel, is isolated by its obdurate equivocation on these facts. This undoubtedly accounts for the abysmal failure of the United States Government to contribute to a just solution of the conflict in the Middle East. For how can a solution be found to a conflict which is derivative? How can we resolve a conflict when we ignore its heart and we deny the legitimacy of the principal party to that conflict in all international efforts concerned with peace?

187. We wish to emphasize that a just and lasting peace will not prevail in the Middle East unless and until the historic, inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people are fully realized and Palestine resumes its historic role as a bridge between the Arab States west and east of Suez and between Africa and Asia.

188. We await a decisive, effective resolution and meaningful measures from the Council, in accordance with Article 36 of the Charter, which would consolidate, strengthen and implement General Assembly resolutions 3236 (XXIX) and 3376 (XXX). The PLO is prepared to participate in and contribute to all international efforts based upon General Assembly resolutions 3236 (XXIX) and 3376 (XXX), in order to bring peace with justice to all.

189. Meanwhile, our people will continue its just struggle by all legitimate means to attain its legitimate goals. When these are attained—hopefully with the Council's affirmative resolution—a just and lasting peace will prevail in the Middle East.

190. Mr. KIKHIA (Libyan Arab Republic): In connexion with the discussion of the item on the agenda—namely, the Middle East problem including the Palestinian question—my delegation will express its views during the following days in the course of the debate. However, my delegation would like, in compliance with our basic attitude explained on more than one occasion, now and from the outset to stress the following points.

191. First, the Palestinian problem is the centre, the source and the origin of the Middle East question. No peace will reign in the area as long as the centrality of the Palestinian question is not recognized and as long as the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people are not restored.

192. Secondly, we reaffirm our unconditional support for the principles declared in the General Assembly by the representative of the Palestinian people on 3 November 1975,⁹ comprising the following:

(a) There can be no peace in the area without justice, and there will be no justice without full

implementation and full recognition of the national rights of the Palestinian people;

(b) No international conference has the right to discuss the question of Palestine in the absence of the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people;

(c) Any resolution which ignores the national rights of the Palestinian people is to be rejected;

(d) The PLO refuses to participate in any conference which considers such a resolution as the basis of its work;

(e) The PLO welcomes any international effort arising out of General Assembly resolution 3236 (XXIX);

These principles have been reiterated today by my brother Abu Lutf, representative of the PLO.

193. Thirdly, we reaffirm our previous attitude with regard to Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). These resolutions are not relevant as a framework for any possible durable solution of the Middle East question. In fact, General Assembly resolution 3236 (XXIX), which recognizes the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people—rights that would logically and normally lead to the achievement of national sovereignty—and resolution 3379 (XXX) condemning zionism as a racist movement, in addition to resolution 3376 (XXX) advising on the means to implement Palestinian national rights, reflect a profound change and development in the attitude of the United Nations and international public opinion and call for a review of the entire question and the method of dealing with it.

194. Fourthly, peace in the Middle East cannot be established without complete and unconditional withdrawal from all Arab occupied land and the enjoyment by the Palestinian people of its inalienable national right in secular democratic Palestine and the eradication of the Zionist, racist and colonialist aggression.

195. Fifthly, in the face of the scandalous Zionist record of defiance and obstruction and the Zionists' treatment of the United Nations with the most cynical contempt, the international community must find the appropriate answer. Platonic resolutions have been simply and contemptuously ignored by Israel and its allies and protectors. In fact, the Zionist entity is playing for time while creating facts in the area. The international community must take effective measures by imposing appropriate sanctions against the aggressive Zionist authorities. As I said, I shall elaborate later and at the appropriate time on the points which I raised in this meeting.

The meeting rose at 7.20 p.m.

Notes

¹ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Second Session, Supplement No. II*, vol. II, annex 19.

² See General Assembly resolution 181 (II).

³ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Second Session, Supplement No. II*, vols. I-IV.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Supplement No. II, vol. I, chap. VII.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Third Session, Supplement No. II.

⁶ See *Official Records of the Security Council, Fourth Year, Special Supplements Nos. 1-4*.

⁷ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fourth Session, Ad Hoc Political Committee, Annex*, vol. II, document A/927, annexes A and B.

⁸ *Ibid.*, Twenty-ninth Session, Plenary Meetings, 2282nd meeting.

⁹ *Ibid.*, Thirtieth Session, Plenary Meetings, 2390th meeting.