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President: Mr. Abdul Rahman PAZHWAQ
(Afghanistan).

AGENDA ITEM 5

Letter dated 13 June 1967 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (A/6717) (continued)

1. The PRESIDENT: Before the Assembly continues the general debate on the item before the emergency special session, I recognize the representative of the United Arab Republic, who has asked to be permitted to make a brief statement.

2. Mr. EL KONY (United Arab Republic): Members may recall that at the beginning of yesterday's meeting [1531st meeting], the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Jordan revealed that the Israeli armed forces are executing a calculated plan with a view to obliterating the demographic structure of the west bank of the Jordan by systematic expulsion of its inhabitants, and that Israel is continuing its aggressive policies, wiping out villages and committing unprecedented atrocities in defiance of the Security Council resolutions and its obligations in accordance with the Charter and the International Covenants on Human Rights. Parallel to what the Israeli authorities are doing in Jordan, they have followed the same practice in the parts of the United Arab Republic that are illegally occupied by Israeli troops as a result of their naked aggression.

3. In this connexion, my Foreign Minister has addressed a letter to the Secretary-General which, with your permission, I should like to quote:

"I have the honour to inform you that Israel has expelled today at 1300 hours local time through the cease-fire line at Kantara 405 Palestinians. Israel stated that this figure is to be completed to 1,000 Palestinians by the end of the day and that they will expel several thousands more on the basis of 1,000 per day.

"Such action constitutes a flagrant violation of the successive resolutions adopted by the General Assembly year after year concerning the right of the refugees to return to their homes, the last of which is resolution 2154 (XXI), of 17 November 1966.

"Furthermore, this latest action by Israel came within a week and in complete disregard and disrespect of Security Council resolution 237 (1967) adopted on 14 June 1967.

"While the General Assembly is convened in an urgent session to deal with the Israeli armed aggression against the Arab countries, no interpretation could be given to the latest Israeli action of forceful expulsion of Palestine refugees, other than sheer contempt and disregard of the prestige and authority of the General Assembly and the Security Council.

"In view of the above, the United Nations must, in the opinion of my Government, undertake the necessary measures to:

"(a) Condemn the said action of Israel as a gross violation of the resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council;

"(b) Direct Israel to stop all such actions;

"(c) Direct it to take back all refugees affected by such action and assure them safe dwelling and living in their original homes;

"(d) Direct Israel to pay compensation to all those who have been affected by that action for the damages they have sustained." [A/6726]

4. It should by now be crystal-clear to everyone in this Assembly that the Israeli Government not only committed its premeditated aggression against the Arab countries, but also is in the process of executing a plan of far reaching consequences, in complete defiance of world public opinion and the elementary norms of human rights.

5. The Israeli behaviour is in fact not new, because it presents a very well known pattern of Zionist aggression since 1946. If it is not checked forthwith and if it is not condemned by the international community, it will lead to the deterioration of an already lamentable situation.

6. Bent on violation and aggression, Israel, in complete defiance, is once again challenging the United Nations and the views universally expressed inside and outside this hall, the calls upon Israel to ensure the safety, welfare and security of the inhabitants of the areas where military operations have taken place and to facilitate the return of those inhabitants who have fled the areas since the outbreak of hostilities.

7. Israel is in fact doing exactly the contrary and completely ignoring the resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly in this respect. No country has ever acted in this unprecedented manner, and therefore, the General Assembly is in

duty bound to take the proper measures in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations to deal with a so-called Member State which has repeatedly disregarded its obligations as stipulated in the Charter.

8. Faced with Israeli aggression, which should be checked promptly with all vigour because of Israel's contempt for and utter defiance of the general will of this Assembly, the Assembly, in its wisdom, cannot remain idle.

9. In our opinion, Israel cannot escape its responsibilities emanating from the maltreatment of, and the complete disregard of human ethics in dealing with, the civil population which could not defend itself against these barbaric acts of aggression. World public opinion cannot condone such atrocities, and Israel will never be able to erase the scars of its aggressions.

10. The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now proceed with the general debate.

11. Mr. MAIWANDWAL (Prime Minister of Afghanistan): Ever since the aggression of Israel against the Arab countries, this Organization has been on trial before humanity. At the outset of the consideration of the recent aggression of Israel, I should like to take this opportunity to pay a most sincere tribute to the distinguished Secretary-General, U Thant, for his untiring efforts in the cause of peace in general and the effective discharge of his onerous responsibilities in an impartial manner.

12. We have come here to express our deep concern about the dangers and catastrophes that have arisen as a consequence of Israeli aggression in the Near East. At this time, with the cease-fire being finally observed, the troops of Israel are occupying considerable portions of the territories of the three neighbouring Arab countries and subjecting the civilian population in the captured areas to reckless and tyrannical atrocities. If, in this crucial moment, the United Nations yields to the aggressor and fails to eliminate the consequences of the aggression, the world's faith in the Organization will be shaken, while the Israeli extremists will consider such a failure of the world body as a monumental reward for their acts of aggression.

13. Having invaded and occupied the territory of its neighbours, Israel is indeed demanding a new settlement on its own terms. It is becoming clear that the premeditated aggressive action of Israel has been motivated by a desire to attain military positions enabling it to bargain from a position of strength and to dictate new conditions favouring its expansionist aims.

14. The air strikes made by Israel on 5 June 1967 were intended to launch a surprise attack on its Arab neighbours and confront the world with a fait accompli. Israel is now demanding a so-called peace while its aggression continues. Arabs are invited to accept the "hard realities" and to be "realists", and therefore to resign themselves to their fate and to the aggressor's terms.

15. Let me state that the Afghan nation is not an Arab one. It belongs to the same Muslim community to which the majority of the Arabs belong. In accordance

with the tenets of our religion, Islam, we abhor racist ideologies, especially under their most modern manifestations of expansionism, securing vital space, securing land by invasion and the use of force, and belief in the concept that might is right.

16. The tragedy of Palestine, the mutilation, uprooting and expulsion of its lawful inhabitants is one of the most unjust of the phenomena imposed upon the Arab people. The issue before us today, in spite of being acute, is not a new one.

17. Israel, which was conceived in international political duplicity, born in subterfuge and terror against disorganized, peaceful and helpless Arabs and maintained in perpetual and unceasing aggression, has succeeded through collusion of interests, not so honourable, in confronting the Arabs and this Organization with one fait accompli after another.

18. That was the case at the very creation of Israel, which had well passed the blueprint stage and which was thrown in the lap of this Organization for anointment. Because of this, the responsibility of the United Nations for a just and proper settlement of this issue is more pressing. The State thus created capitalized on its assets to embark on expanding its ill-gotten land and continued its aggression against the Arabs in an overt and clandestine manner.

19. The high-powered propaganda in the Western world, arousing public opinion because of the inhuman and barbaric atrocities to which the Jews were subjected by the nazis and relying upon the self-interest of colonial ambitions, has enabled the Israelis to foist themselves upon the Arab world, and to try to maintain themselves there. It is not surprising, under the circumstances, that this pampered child of colonialism has the unique distinction of having attracted the censure and condemnation of the United Nations on many occasions. The brash impunity with which it ignores its responsibilities in this Organization is but one manifestation of the assured protection of its position by those who, unfortunately, may at times consider international welfare, justice, peace and security subservient to the internal national policies of pressure groups—this is not altogether hard to understand, but its wisdom can easily be questioned. Twice in the past two decades Israel has brought the world to the very brink of a world war and all the horrible consequences that this would entail.

20. Let us remember the important phases of the last Israeli aggression. On 7 April 1967, Israeli forces mounted a heavy attack against Syria. Later, the Premier of Israel threatened: "We may have to adopt measures no less drastic than those of 7 April". The Chief of Staff of the Israeli Army said, "The time might have come to seize Damascus and to topple the Syrian Government". It is striking to notice that the military planning of the Israeli aggressor down to the last details, was paralleled by psychological preparation: a large-scale propaganda campaign was launched to mislead world public opinion and to create an atmosphere of international psychosis in which Arabs were to be recognized as provocateurs and therefore responsible for a war which Israel was conspiring to launch and did launch in accordance with a carefully calculated plan. The world was told

that Israel would like only to survive in peace and that it had no territorial claims. The world had to be ready to welcome a preventive war undertaken by a "small" nation in self-defence.

21. The Secretary-General, in his statement of 20 June 1967 in this Assembly restored "the balance which the facts warrant" [1527th meeting, para. 2] regarding the withdrawal of the United Nations Emergency Force on 18 May 1967. He reminded us that:

"... the indispensable basis for the effective buffer function exercised by the United Nations Emergency Force for more than a decade was the voluntary decision of the Government of the United Arab Republic to keep its troops away from the line...", while "Israel extended no such co-operation on the United Nations Emergency Force to the United Nations". [ibid., para. 6]

22. This means that the United Arab Republic was perfectly within its legal right in asking for the withdrawal of the United Nations Emergency Force from its sovereign territory, and the Secretary-General took the only possible legal action. It has been made clear that Israel rejected once again the idea of the United Nations Emergency Force being stationed on the Israeli side of the line. In this connexion, we pay tribute to the Secretary-General for his noble efforts to discharge his responsible functions, and fully support the action taken by him in this regard.

23. The Security Council was convened to consider the situation following the exercise by the United Arab Republic of its sovereign rights in its territorial waters. The issue, in spite of being essentially of a legal nature, was turned into a casus belli by Israel and represented as a major threat to international peace.

24. On the morning of 5 June 1967, Israel started the thoroughly premeditated aggression against Arab countries. On the next day, when the Security Council proposed an end to all hostilities as the first step towards the restoration of peace, Israel widened the operation. Israel responded in the same way to subsequent Security Council resolutions, in order to confront the world with a series of faits accomplis. When the cease-fire was ordered, the Israeli forces had not yet occupied any part of Syrian territory. The invasion of Syria began after Israel had assured the Secretary-General of its acceptance of the cease-fire. While Israel committed such a perfidious aggression, the Security Council, unfortunately, did not respond by condemning the aggressor and calling for the immediate withdrawal of its forces. Instead, the Council called for a simple cease-fire—a call which itself was not observed by Israel until it had put into execution some of its hideous expansionist military and political plans by seizing additional territories belonging to the United Arab Republic, Jordan and Syria.

25. The brash behaviour of Israel armed forces has not only unleashed aggression and agony against the Arabs but has brought about repeated and wanton attacks against the very force of peace in the area. The manner in which brave, valiant servants of peace—Indian, Irish, Canadian and Brazilian members of the

United Nations Emergency Force—were murdered is, to say the least, deplorable. What more proof is needed of the arrogance with which Israel perpetuates its aggression? I think it is high time to learn from the horror of the past. To continue to uphold positions which have proved untenable in the light of the experience of the past twenty years is detrimental to the cause of peace and security in the world. Can we really and honestly forget the unjustified vivisection of the State of Palestine, which sent 1.5 million Palestinian Arabs into exile, misery, degradation and an uncertain future? This performance must for a long time remain a heavy burden on the conscience of the perpetrators of this act. It is not surprising that it was impossible for the Arabs to recognize this injustice and it is even less surprising that they warned of its dire consequences.

26. Justice, the rights of men, and freedom cannot and should not be sacrificed for the spurious value of so-called realism and other half-way and less than half-way measures.

27. What is important now is that aggression has taken place. That has been done by Israel. And what is more, this is not the first time Israel has been the aggressor. This is not the first time Israel has unleashed a major war and destruction upon the Arabs. And, of course, this is not the first time that Israel has arrogantly flouted the decisions of the United Nations and violated the elementary principles of human rights. Can the Israeli spokesman honestly think that the Assembly would accept the position that crime by Israel is the very essence of virtue?

28. We followed the events of the Middle East with deep concern and the deliberations in the Security Council with rapt attention. It was disappointing to note that, while peace talks were going on in the Security Council, Israel's premeditated designs upon the Arabs were proceeding unabatedly; while attempts in the Security Council were directed towards containing the issue and the Secretary-General was asking for a breathing spell, Israel, in spite of pious utterances to the contrary, unleashed massive air and ground attacks upon the Arab lands, thus facing the United Nations with another so-called reality—and another fait accompli. What followed and the manner in which it came about prove beyond the shadow of a doubt that the fears of the Arab countries adjacent to Israel of an Israel attack upon them had a firm foundation. The general international laxity and apathy, if nothing else, aided and abetted Israel in launching its massive surprise attack upon its neighbours. It was frustrating, to say the least, that the Security Council, the organ of the United Nations primarily responsible for peace and security in the world, could not come out with more tangible and concrete decisions than a cease-fire resolution that went unheeded until Israel consolidated its war gains and improved its territorial position to blackmail further not only the Arab countries but also the United Nations by presenting another fait accompli.

29. Had the Security Council succeeded in carrying out its responsibility in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, I am sure that it would not have been necessary to convene this emergency special session of the General Assembly. It is my fervent

hope and prayer that, in the face of this great act, in the horror of this naked aggression and mounting blackmail, the Assembly will succeed in carrying out its responsibilities in accordance with justice, honour and fair play, and in keeping with the principles embodied in the Charter of the United Nations.

30. The surprise premeditated and treacherous attack by Israel in 1956 on the United Arab Republic shook the conscience of the world. And, as a hopeful sign for smaller nations, the big Powers not themselves involved in the aggression took firm and immediate steps to rise to the occasion and undo the aggression. Is it too much to expect in 1967 a meeting of minds in regard to this gross violation of the United Nations Charter and challenge to the peace and security of the world?

31. The eyes of the world are upon the big Powers, expecting them to rise above narrow political considerations and realize their true responsibility to the United Nations, to justice and to the right of man and nations.

32. We were naturally surprised to note that, when a draft resolution was presented which demanded, among other things, the withdrawal of the Israeli forces behind the line at the outset of hostilities, the Security Council found itself unable to agree.

33. Stark, naked and clearly premeditated aggression has been committed. Territories of sovereign States have been occupied. Occupation of those territories continued while the Security Council was discussing inept draft resolutions for a cease-fire. And yet it was not possible to condemn the aggressor and make it cease its aggression. It is our hope that, in the light of its historical involvement and cultural and economic ties with the region, the United States Government will find it possible to do more than it did in 1956. This is what is expected from a country like the United States on the basis of all that is known as "American principles".

34. The draft resolution presented by the Soviet Union that is now before this Assembly would, in our view, lead to an appropriate solution of this tragic problem. We support it. We urge that it is of vital importance that the major Powers which are privileged Members of this Organization should prove their awareness of their responsibility and abide by their commitments to peace and security in the world and condemn aggression. Here I should like to remind the Assembly of the statement made by the United States representative:

"The United States is firmly committed to the support of the political independence and integrity of all the nations of the area.

"The United States strongly opposes aggression by anyone in the area in any form, overt or clandestine."^{1/}

This stand of the United States should not vacillate with circumstances.

35. We also hope that the delegation of the United Kingdom, as one of the major and privileged Powers

of this Organization, and as a country that has been deeply involved historically in the problems of that part of the world, will also fully support the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of the Israeli forces from the Arab world. It is satisfying to note that another major Power, France, came out clearly and unambiguously for ruling out the acceptance of occupation of territory of others by conquest or force of arms.

36. However, we think that the inalienable rights of peoples and nations should not be subject to conditions and bargains. To accept such a position would be tantamount to amending the Charter. The United Nations should compel Israel to put an end to its aggression forthwith and turn over the Arab lands to their rightful owners; that is, to liquidate the consequences of its aggression and immediately to withdraw its troops behind the armistice lines. This is almost the exact title of the item before this body.

37. Under any circumstances, this right is inviolable and stands on its own merits, independent of any one consideration. After the territories gained by aggression have been vacated, and after Israel has been condemned for its aggression against the Arabs, and after the agonizing destruction has been totally amended, it will be for the United Nations seriously and resolutely to undertake the study and disposition of the underlying causes of the recurring conflict in the Near East.

38. Humanity's conscience is indeed aware that, step by step, Israel has annexed Arab territory, and its acts have been sometimes tolerated and sometimes passed over unnoticed. It is inhuman to commit aggression, but it is abhorrent if its author is permitted to benefit from the fruits of his aggression. Is aggression becoming synonymous with rightful ownership? This would amount to a principle that aggression is rewarded. We are here to state that we resolutely oppose such a trend in international relations. We believe that history moves forward, and it is neither proper nor possible to run the wheel of history backwards.

39. It is impermissible that Israel should exploit the fruits of its aggression to blackmail its Arab neighbours. Is the world to be thrown into the law of the jungle where force is arbiter, and justice means the will of the victorious? Is this Assembly to agree that history should take a reverse course and military conquest be recognized as the basis of world conduct? Conciliation with illegality would be a violation of the United Nations Charter, and the end of the Organization itself.

40. The central issue before us is this: can a country invade and occupy the territory of another country and then dictate its own terms? This constitutes an historic challenge to the entire international community.

41. This Assembly has heard reports of a new wave of evictions by Israeli forces. Arabs in tens of thousands are being driven out of their houses while their dwellings are completely demolished, and they are left without any medical or humanitarian aid and care. The grave situation which has arisen from the new exodus of the refugees and their increased agonies in the newly occupied territories adds to the urgency

^{1/} Official Records of the Security Council, Twenty-Second Year, 1353rd meeting.

that has been repeatedly voiced in this Assembly that withdrawal be immediately implemented.

42. It is in such circumstances that we hear from Israeli spokesmen talk about the "self-reliance" of the "small nations which form the bulk of the international family". We are sure about one fact: world peace is threatened by Zionist expansionism, Israel is being sadistically employed as an instrument of psychological appeal to the small nations. The apparently "small" Israel is nothing indeed but a dangerous base of colonialist interests threatening the small countries of the Near East.

43. I should like to make a particular reference to the Israeli aims in connexion with the Holy Places. As far as more than half a billion Muslims are concerned, they will not tolerate their sacred shrines being occupied by a racist régime. I did not have any intention of mentioning this religious sentiment, but I have been compelled to do so by the statements of the Zionist elements in Israel and elsewhere.

44. Much has been said on several other occasions and on this occasion about all these subjects. I have tried to give an expression of the stand of my country, which is based on the principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter and is supported by the people of Afghanistan. At this stage, I think I should sum up what my Government and my people expect from the United Nations. Before this Assembly, where we have always maintained objective views, I should like to stress the points that should be a basic part of any decision which the General Assembly may take.

45. Aggression in general should be condemned, and in this case the particular aggression committed by Israel should be condemned. The consequences of aggression should be liquidated, beginning with the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all Israeli forces from all Arab territories. The problem of refugees and other issues of importance should be subsequently worked out within the framework of the just and undeniable rights of the Arab people. Above everything else, a favourable condition has to be created in order that headway may be made for a just and durable peace in the area. This could lead to constructive results in the interests of peace. These conditions cannot be created without immediate withdrawal from the occupied territories. On this particular aspect, the voice of Afghanistan is an appeal to the conscience of the international community. We should like to state clearly that without the first and most necessary step—the withdrawal of all troops—no other step can be taken.

46. This is how the world community will guarantee that aggression cannot and shall not be tolerated, and this is how humanity can halt the protagonists of the policy of war. This would strengthen the confidence of all peoples and nations in the United Nations and its mission to consolidate the peace and defend justice.

47. Mr. KISELEV (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) (translated from Russian): On the morning of 5 June the peoples of the Arab countries fell victim to a treacherous armed attack. Israel committed aggression against the neighbouring countries in accordance with a plan that had been worked out in advance.

48. As a result of vigorous action by socialist and other peace-loving States, and also of the resolutions adopted by the Security Council, a cease-fire has been achieved. However, a tense situation still prevails in the Middle East. The aggressor's armed forces are continuing to occupy the seized territories of the United Arab Republic, Syria and Jordan, where they have created an atmosphere of lawlessness and a reign of terror.

49. The reckless policy of the Israel military, who arrogantly refuse to withdraw from the areas they have seized from neighbouring countries, may lead to a new military conflict at any moment. This situation is rightly a source of concern to all those who cherish the cause of peace. It is no wonder that the overwhelming majority of the States Members of the United Nations promptly responded to the USSR proposal for the convening of an emergency special session of the General Assembly, which is faced with the task of condemning the Israel aggression, securing the withdrawal of troops, eliminating the consequences of the aggression and demanding reparation for the damages to the Arab peoples.

50. In the course of the present debate, the representatives of the Soviet Union, Syria, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, the United Republic of Tanzania, Afghanistan and other States, acting in accordance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, have strongly condemned the aggressor and demanded the immediate withdrawal of the Israel armed forces behind the Armistice Lines. This stand reflects the will and desire of all peace-loving peoples, which closely follow the proceedings of the General Assembly and look to it with hope.

51. Statements have also been made by the representative of the aggressor State and representatives of those imperialist milieux which assisted Israel in its reckless venture, one that is doomed to failure. The former sought to justify his country, while the latter in fact attempted to help him, callously trampling upon the rights of the Arab States to national independence and territorial integrity.

52. The Foreign Minister of Israel resorted to the aggressor's favourite and time-worn tactics—attempting to shift the blame to others. His statement matched in insolence the actions of his Government. He asserted that Israel was not the aggressor, despite the fact that Israel planes had started brutal bombings of Arab towns and villages, while their tank, artillery and infantry units had invaded other nations' territories, bringing with them death and destruction. According to the strange logic of the Israel Minister, in establishing the fact of aggression it does not matter who fired the first shot. He appears to believe that suddenly stabbing one's neighbour in the back is a matter of no importance.

53. Shedding crocodile tears, he assured us from this rostrum that the Israel Government was anxious to establish good relations with the Arab States. These assertions have been completely refuted by the aggressive actions of the Israel military, which have caused so much misery and suffering to the peoples of the neighbouring countries.

54. The representative of Israel represented these crimes as glorious deeds. Perhaps those who helped Israel and gave it their blessing to commit aggression agree with this appraisal. Speaking for my people, I wish to state that Israel has done a vile thing, for which it will have to answer fully.

55. The representatives of the United States and the United Kingdom asserted that their Governments had nothing to do with the Israel aggression and had played no part in unleashing it. However, it is clear to all that Israel would never have dared to attack the Arab countries without the assistance and support of certain Western States, primarily the United States.

56. In fact, we did not expect the representatives of the United States and the United Kingdom to censure the aggression. There is honour among thieves.

57. There has not yet been a case in the history of international relations when promoters of aggression have condemned an aggressor. Israel, for its part, does not condemn or call for an end to United States aggression against the Viet-Nameese people. We did not see Israel among those countries which defended the rights of the peoples of the Congo and the Dominican Republic, or which championed the freedom and independence of the peoples still languishing under colonial domination. In turn, the imperialist forces rendering assistance to Israel, using it to pursue their neo-colonialist policy in the Near East and to strengthen their positions in certain African countries.

58. During its short existence, Israel has made a number of armed attacks on neighbouring Arab States. Its Government, purportedly concerned with the survival of Israel, has made of it a consistent violator of peace and tranquillity in the Middle East.

59. One would assume that Israel, a State created by the United Nations, would scrupulously adhere to the provisions of the United Nations Charter; actually, it is one of the few States which have repeatedly, and in the most flagrant manner, violated the Charter.

60. It has been enabled to do so, in part, by certain imperialist Powers, which render Israel comprehensive assistance and support, viewing it as an instrument of their policy and using it as such. In so doing, those Powers are violating the United Nations Charter.

61. The facts show, irrefutably, that the imperialists have long been trying to aggravate tensions in the Middle East, just as they are doing elsewhere in the world, for example, in South-East Asia.

62. The escalation of the war in Viet-Nam, which the United States started, is increasing international tension and presents a threat to world peace. The unceasing provocations against independent States of Asia, Africa and Latin America, the repressive measures against national liberation movements in the Congo, the Republic of South Africa and the Portuguese colonies, and the recent developments in the Middle East are all links in one and the same chain—the aggressive policy of imperialism.

63. That policy is manifested in Europe as well. The peoples of the world cannot be indifferent to the revanchist and militarist policy of the Bonn Govern-

ment and to the revival of nazism in West Germany. The position of the Federal Republic of Germany in respect of recent events in the Middle East shows once again that wherever dangerous hotbeds of war may appear, it invariably sides with the forces of aggression. Bonn in fact supported the Israel aggression against the Arab countries. And this is not surprising, for the ruling circles of both West Germany and Israel are striving to extend their frontiers at the expense of other States.

64. One could not fail to listen with a feeling of indignation to the representative of Israel when he saw fit to draw a comparison between the Israel aggression and the heroic battle of the Soviet people at Stalingrad. Such a comparison is an affront to those who fought the fascist plague without thought for themselves, and thereby saved all peoples, including the Jewish population, from extermination and enslavement.

65. Today, as never before, it is particularly important for all States, great and small, to express resolute support for the policy of peace and peaceful coexistence, for the cessation of the current wars of aggression, for the strict observance of General Assembly resolutions on non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries and peoples, and for the implementation of our joint decisions on decolonization. We must press for agreements on the non-proliferation and prohibition of nuclear weapons, and on general and complete disarmament.

66. Under the United Nations Charter, the great Powers are vested with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of peace. Nevertheless, every State, however small, can make a substantial contribution to the implementation of the purposes and principles contained in the United Nations Charter: to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind, to practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours, to unite our strength to maintain international peace and security, and to settle our international disputes by peaceful means.

67. However, the imperialist circles of certain States are openly flouting the principles of the United Nations Charter and trying to arrest the independent progress of peoples. We can see this, in particular, in the Middle East.

68. In recent years, the peoples of the United Arab Republic and other Arab countries have achieved great success in their struggle for national independence and freedom. Social reforms have been introduced in these countries to wipe out the vestiges of colonial domination.

69. The freedom-loving peoples will not allow the forces of reaction to hinder the national development of the countries of the Middle East. In our age, when the forces of peace and progress have grown immeasurably, aggressive ventures will not go unpunished. This the rulers of Israel ought to know.

70. The whole world is shocked at the crimes being committed by the Israel invaders in the temporarily occupied territories of the United Arab Republic,

Jordan and Syria. The documents circulated by the Security Council, the reports published in the Press of many countries, and the statements of a number of representatives contain numerous facts of flagrant violations by the Israel military of the rules of international law and the provisions of the Security Council resolution [Res. 237 (1967)] dated 14 June of this year.

71. The invaders have established a reign of unrestrained terror in the areas they have occupied. They bring death to a peaceable population, evict the indigenous inhabitants from their homeland, commit acts of violence and plunder, inflict indignities on prisoners of war and shoot them *en masse*. These outrages of the Israel armed forces cannot but bring to mind the monstrous atrocities of the nazi executioners. We understand very well the feelings of the Arab peoples. During the Second World War the nazi criminals shot or tortured to death 2.2 million people in Byelorussia, that is, every fourth Byelorussian. History will never forget these evil deeds. Likewise, the peoples will not forgive the Israel invaders for their crimes in the occupied territories.

72. The United Nations demonstrated its attitude towards war criminals and aggressors at the very first session of the General Assembly, when, on the initiative of the Byelorussian SSR, it adopted a resolution calling for the extradition and punishment of war criminals. That document is a stern warning to any aggressor and to more recent war criminals, in whatever part of the globe they might commit their crimes.

73. Reaping the benefits of a sudden perfidious attack, Israel troops have seized a territory with an Arab population of 1.5 million, a territory which is almost four times the size of the State of Israel. Tel Aviv no longer takes the trouble to conceal its intentions. While in the first days of their aggression the Israel leaders, in an attempt to mislead world public opinion, said they had no territorial claims, they have now forgotten these statements. Thus the Israel Defence Minister has declared that his country will never give up the Gaza Strip or the western bank of the River Jordan. The only point of argument in Tel Aviv is whether to annex all the occupied lands or only a part of them.

74. The Israel Government has hastily established a Ministerial Committee to settle questions pertaining to the administration of the territories seized by the Israel army in the United Arab Republic, Jordan and Syria. This fact clearly shows that the Israel authorities do not want to leave those areas, but mean to rule them as they see fit.

75. The Press has carried detailed accounts of the Israel plans for the exploitation of oil deposits in the occupied territory of the United Arab Republic. According to the statements of Israel officials, the export of oil from those deposits to Western countries will increase Israel's total annual exports by 10 per cent. Thus, Israel functionaries are already making plans to extract oil belonging to the United Arab Republic. They have calculated that the daily receipts from the sale of that oil to the West will exceed \$100,000.

76. All these facts clearly show that the Israel aggressors have lost all sense of reality and have embarked upon the extremely dangerous course of territorial conquest.

77. This international brigandage must be brought to a halt without delay. The General Assembly should vigorously condemn the aggressor and demand that Israel should withdraw its troops immediately and unconditionally from the territories of the United Arab Republic, Syria and Jordan behind the armistice line and respect the status of the demilitarized zones as prescribed in the General Armistice Agreements. Only if this demand, which is in the interests of the peoples of the Arab States and Israel, is fulfilled, will it be possible to normalize the situation in the Middle East; only in this manner can we remove this most dangerous hotbed of war, which carries the threat of a world conflagration, with all its catastrophic consequences.

78. The delegation of the Byelorussian SSR has come to the fifth emergency special session with a clearly defined position. Our socialist State, which came into existence almost fifty years ago with the word peace on its lips, has been consistently and indefatigably pursuing a policy of peace and resolutely opposing aggression and the enslavement and oppression of one people by another. It is from this standpoint that we view the Israel aggression against the United Arab Republic, Syria and Jordan.

79. The General Assembly has met in an emergency special session, despite United States opposition, in order to condemn the aggressor and to secure the cessation of its occupation of territories seized from the Arab States. It is true that when it became obvious that the session would be convened even without its agreement, the United States decided to participate in the proceedings and its representative began to speak about a "reasonable, just and peaceful solution to the situation in the Middle East", naturally giving those words his own interpretation. But there can be no peace in conditions of military usurpation and violation by one country of the territorial integrity of other countries; there can be no talk of justice while Israel occupation and outrages continue; and there is nothing reasonable in a "solution" which requires flouting international law, the Charter, and the principles on which the United Nations was founded.

80. The draft resolution [A/L.520] submitted by the United States delegation attests to its desire to divert the General Assembly from its major and primary purpose. Instead of condemning Israel aggression and demanding that its consequences should be wiped out, this draft in fact encourages the aggressor to dictate conditions from a position of strength.

81. It is no wonder that such an approach to solving the question before us has provoked the indignation of many delegations here present. Indeed, discussion of the question of Israel aggression against Arab nations in the Security Council had already demonstrated that the attempts of the United States delegation to link the withdrawal of Israel troops from the territories they have seized with some other conditions, such as a so-called general settlement, were an obvious manoeuvre designed to help the aggressors

to consolidate their position in the occupied territories and gain certain advantages.

82. This is confirmed by the fact that both in the Security Council and at the present session, the United States has refused to support the proposal for the unconditional withdrawal of the aggressor's troops behind the armistice lines.

83. The General Assembly must do its duty. When an armed burglar has broken into someone's house no time must be lost. A continuing occupation by Israel invaders of the territory of the Arab countries cannot be tolerated. The General Assembly must act and act without delay. It must reject any attempts to impose upon the Arab States such conditions as might violate their lawful rights and interests. Otherwise, the aggressor may take it that he has been absolved of his crimes, while those planning aggression might gain the mistaken impression that they can engage in it with impunity.

84. The declarations of States that they are dedicated to the cause of peace and have faith in the United Nations, and also their ability to take a just and high-minded position, ignoring imperialist blackmail and pressure, are today being put to the test.

85. In order to carry out the will of the peoples the General Assembly must, as proposed in the USSR draft resolution [A/L.519], vigorously condemn Israel's activities and the continuing occupation by Israel of part of the territory of the United Arab Republic, Syria and Jordan, which constitutes an act of recognized aggression. The Assembly must demand that Israel should immediately and unconditionally withdraw all its forces from the territory of those States to positions behind the armistice demarcation lines, as stipulated in the General Armistice Agreements, and should respect the status of the demilitarized zones, as prescribed in the Armistice Agreements.

86. Taking into account that the Israel aggressors have inflicted immense damage upon the economy and the population of the Arab States, the Assembly must also demand that Israel should make good in full and within the shortest possible time all the damage inflicted by its aggression on the United Arab Republic, Syria and Jordan and on their nationals, and should return to them all seized property and other material assets.

87. The Assembly must appeal to the Security Council to take immediate effective measures in order to eliminate all consequences of the aggression committed by Israel.

88. The delegation of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic fully supports in its entirety the draft resolution submitted by the Soviet Union for the consideration of the General Assembly and, together with other peace-loving States, will do whatever is necessary to safeguard the legitimate rights of the Arab States, destroy the hotbed of war in the Middle East and restore peace in the area.

89. Mr. ÅSTRÖM (Sweden): The General Assembly has been called into session to pronounce itself on the

situation in the Middle East which has arisen as a result of recent tragic events. The challenge to the United Nations is a momentous one. In no other area of the world has the Organization been so intensively and so continuously involved. The history of the Middle East over the last twenty years is, in fact, to a large extent the history of the United Nations. A particularly heavy responsibility, therefore, rests upon all of us, Members of the United Nations, to act in the manner best suited to bring peace, justice and security to the peoples of the Middle East. Their right to live in freedom from fear and need must be recognized and their dignity fully respected. The outbreak of open hostilities should make us acutely aware of the urgency of this task. It has also reminded us of the close interrelationship between developments in the Middle East and peace everywhere in the world.

90. In the view of the Swedish Government, it is imperative that we let the Charter of the United Nations guide our steps in this situation of utmost complexity and of continuing danger. Without ignoring the deep historical roots of the present antagonisms, it can hardly be disputed that a fundamental reason why the situation in the Middle East has become so serious and more than once erupted into violence, is that obligations undertaken under the Charter of the United Nations have not been fulfilled. According to these obligations, Member States shall respect each other's independence, not to speak of each other's right to exist. They shall settle their disputes by peaceful means, they shall refrain from threats of the use of force and the use of force, and they shall live together in peace as good neighbours. To cite these provisions is to illustrate clearly what has gone wrong in the Middle East.

91. We do not feel that the General Assembly has to act as judge and to weigh the guilt and responsibility of those who are involved in the conflict. We think that such an attempt would be fruitless and would serve no useful purpose. It might, on the contrary, reduce the chances to create the right atmosphere for a just and lasting solution. For this reason, we do not believe in resolutions that condemn one or the other country.

92. At the same time, we wish to affirm emphatically our adherence to the principle that no right to occupy and no right to annex territory can be based on military conquest. Troops that are stationed on foreign territory as a result of military action must be withdrawn. This principle, which is based on moral, legal and political imperatives, must be unequivocally confirmed by the United Nations, which has an overriding responsibility in this respect, as well as by each single State Member of the United Nations. This seems to us to be one of the conditions for a constructive outcome of the deliberations of the General Assembly.

93. May I mention here that when the Government of the Soviet Union, a few years ago, suggested the conclusion of a special treaty to prevent territorial changes by the use of force,^{2/} the Swedish Government declared itself in favour of such an idea. That is still our position.

^{2/} See Official Records of the General Assembly, Twelfth Session, Supplement No. 16, annex II.

94. The General Assembly now has to look to the future. Our hope must be, in the wise words of the Minister of External Affairs of India:

"... that the return of peace to the area will be such as to guarantee that there shall be no recurrence of war again". [1530th meeting, para. 150.]

95. Practical arrangements to assure a lasting peace must include recognition of the political independence, respect for the dignity, and guarantees for the protection of the territorial integrity of all countries in the area, including perhaps some special system to provide mutual security against harassment across international lines. Freedom of shipping through international waterways must be assured in accordance with international agreements and international law. Free access to the Holy Places in Jerusalem to worshippers of all faiths must be guaranteed. If peace is to be durable it has to be based on the consent and co-operation of all parties. The United Nations cannot dictate any solution, nor can anybody else.

96. In our view, the General Assembly should at this stage indicate the general principles upon which solutions might be based and declare the United Nations ready to assist in the working out of the necessary arrangements. The methods to be used are exemplified in Article 33 of the Charter. They include negotiation, mediation, conciliation and judicial settlement. The Security Council would naturally have to play an important role. In particular, the Council might be requested to consider in what ways the United Nations could be helpful in keeping the peace in the area. It may be that the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization could be of use, perhaps strengthened and enlarged so as to provide a better service for observation, reporting and supervision. If this should be found desirable, my Government would willingly contribute additional Swedish personnel for such tasks. Finally, if lasting peace is to be achieved in the area, every effort must be made to come to grips with the politically pregnant and immensely tragic human problem of the refugees. Energetic measures to support economic development in the whole area should also be taken and Member States requested to participate on a world-wide scale.

97. I have referred to the general aspects of the situation in the Middle East with which we are faced today. But there is one particularly urgent problem to which, in my Government's opinion, we should direct our immediate attention, and that is the problem of the human suffering which follows in the wake of war. We consider it to be of the utmost importance that effective and speedy relief should be given, on an emergency basis and as a temporary measure, to the unfortunate people who have been driven from their homes as a result of the hostilities or who have otherwise come to suffer cruel hardship.

98. Without prejudice to the solution of the problem of refugees, we feel it to be a duty of the General Assembly to take urgent action to provide such relief and to facilitate the return of those displaced. An appeal should be directed to all Governments to make special contributions to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, as well as to the voluntary organizations active in the field, such as the Red Cross, the Save

The Children Fund, and so on. All those organizations are already doing vital and necessary work and they have to be supported by the world community in the name of charity and compassion.

99. The United Nations indeed has a heavy responsibility to assist in bringing about practical arrangements acceptable to the countries in the area. It is obvious that efforts towards this end will be successful only if other Members of the United Nations, in particular the great Powers, are willing to co-operate. Their policies must be directed to the attainment of genuine peace and to the building of new and more stable relationships between the countries in the area.

100. What is needed is a commitment by all the great Powers to respect and to support, without any discrimination, the independence and integrity of all the countries concerned, not to seek military advantages in the area and not to contribute to an arms race between the countries of the Middle East. The recent crisis has again demonstrated how vital it is that the great Powers should avoid being drawn into regional conflicts, with ensuing risks to world peace. Does not the sober voice of reason and enlightened self-interest now dictate to the leaders of the great Powers the need for an understanding on the limitation of arms deliveries to this sensitive area?

101. Two of the world leaders are meeting at this very moment as I speak. The hopes and good wishes of all of us go out to them.

102. What has happened recently in the Middle East must never be allowed to recur. The task now is to try to heal open wounds, to work with patience and moderation towards solutions acceptable to all. My Government earnestly hopes that a common language can be found and that it will be possible, through the joint efforts of all Member States, to place the full authority of the United Nations behind the endeavours to bring peaceful conditions to the peoples in the Middle East.

103. Mr. MARTIN (Secretary of State for External Affairs of Canada): For the fourth time in the history of this Organization, the General Assembly has been called into special session to deal with emergency conditions in the Middle East arising out of the conflict between Israel and its Arab neighbours. It was barely twenty years ago that the first special session of the Assembly found itself involved with this persistently difficult problem, arising from a conflict with a long and bitter heritage. It engages the anxious concern of the international community, the nations and the people of the world and, in particular, the adherents of three of the world's great religions. It is a problem, moreover, which could tarnish the name and weaken the influence of the United Nations unless we can control its immediate effects and remove its long-term causes.

Mr. Waldheim (Austria), Vice-President, took the Chair.

104. My country has been closely associated with United Nations efforts to mediate in Palestine. A Canadian served on the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine in 1947. Canada was associated with the negotiations which subsequently took place at the second session of the General Assembly and

which led to resolution 181 (II) of 29 November 1947. This resolution provided for the partition of Palestine into Arab and Jewish States and reserved a special status for Jerusalem.

105. We served on the Security Council in 1948-1949 when the Palestine question was among the most important to be considered and when the Armistice Agreements were arranged. We provided one of the early Directors-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency and, a little later, the Chief of Staff of the Truce Supervision Organization, to which we have contributed observers since 1954. The present Prime Minister of Canada, Mr. Lester Pearson, took an intimate part in the negotiations which led to the establishment of the United Nations Emergency Force. Canada supplied the first Commander, General Burns, and a sizable contingent to the Force. The United Nations Emergency Force was the first peace-keeping force to be established by the United Nations. I am convinced that its record of accomplishment and service will be a legacy upon which the United Nations will be able to draw in the future. This record will be far more important in the verdict of history than the current differences of opinion over the circumstances of its withdrawal.

106. I do not claim that these facts give my country any special insight into the Palestine problem or any special qualifications for solving it. They do help to explain, however, why the Canadian people and the Canadian Government have followed recent events with anxiety. We have no substantial interests to further. We have no claims to make other than those which arise from a deep and legitimate concern for peace and justice in the Middle East, indeed in the world, and for the good name and reputation of the United Nations, our membership in which has been largely instrumental in involving us in these problems.

107. The issues are too grave and the potential consequences of our actions are too significant for partisan controversy about the subject of our debate. I would hope that this special session will contribute to the search for a solution in the Middle East. This hope is shared, I know, by other countries, many of which are represented here by their Heads of Government and Foreign Ministers. The opportunity is present not only for debate but for consultations and negotiations. One of the purposes of our Organization is to act as a centre "for harmonizing the actions of nations". If this is our common purpose, then and only then can we be hopeful that diplomacy will take the measure of propaganda and that the common desire for peace will prevail.

108. I have been impressed in the days that I have been in New York by the value of the contacts among members of the Governments gathered here. Surely out of these private consultations may grow the elements of an approach to a solution of the problems of the Middle East which could command a more general support than the formal proposal now before us.

109. Canada, as a member of the Security Council, joined Denmark in calling the Council together on 24 May to deal with the deteriorating situation in the

Middle East. It is a sad misfortune that the Council was not able to act at that time. Nevertheless, it remains seized of the situation, and I note in this respect the references to the Council in the draft resolutions introduced by the Soviet Union [A/L.519] and the United States [A/L.520]. We contributed to the decisions of the Security Council calling for a cease-fire. The failure of a particular resolution should not have led, in our judgement, to the interruption of the Council's work. We had ourselves put forward the draft resolution relating to the implementation of the cease-fire and were in the process of revising that draft, in consultation with others, when this special session was requested. In our view, these consultations should continue. The Security Council should deal with the draft resolutions before it. As we have often been reminded, the Council has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of peace and security. Here, in this Assembly, I would hope that we could establish some guide-lines to assist the Council when it resumes its work.

110. The roots of this crisis go deep. Its development has been complex. No one Government, in our view, can be held wholly responsible for what has happened, and the impartial reports of the Secretary-General support this assessment. It was on the basis of those reports that we were concerned, first, to prevent the conflict, then to stop it, and now to find the basis for a just and lasting peace.

111. May I say to the Secretary-General that he is aware of the regard the people of Canada and its Government have for him. I want him to know that we are grateful for his untiring efforts in this difficult problem.

112. In 1948-1949 and in 1956-1957, the Canadian delegation in the Assembly emphasized that the peace and security of the Middle East depended primarily on the recognition of two facts. The first was that the new State of Israel had been born and that, in part at least, it owed its existence as a member of the international community to a recommendation of this Assembly, a recommendation which was approved by two-thirds of its Members; the second was the obligation of the State of Israel—to quote the Canadian representative speaking on 22 November 1948—to "place self-imposed limits on its demands". Mr. Pearson, then Secretary of State for External Affairs and now the Canadian Prime Minister, stated at this podium ten years ago:

"We cannot but agree that, if Israel has a right to live and prosper, free from the fear of strangulation from its neighbours, the Arab States also have a right to feel confident that Israel will not attempt to expand its territory at their expense." [660th meeting, para. 36]

113. These expectations, as far as we are concerned, remain valid. They must be the basis on which peace and security are built in the Middle East. We shall continue to do our part, both as a member of the Security Council and as a participant in the efforts of the United Nations to keep the peace in the area, to have them recognized and implemented. The international community has a right to expect that the parties to any dispute will make their best efforts,

as indeed they are required to do under the Charter, to find a peaceful means of settlement. At the same time, this Organization has a responsibility to offer its services and, if necessary, to point the way towards such a settlement. In any event, this is the context in which my Government will judge the specific issues before us.

114. The position of Canada remains the same on those issues as it was in 1957. On 18 January of that year, we stated in the Assembly that

"there must be no return, if we can avoid it, to the conditions which helped to provoke the initial military action". [640th meeting, para. 75]

115. On that occasion Mr. Pearson recalled an earlier intervention in which he was even more specific. This is what he said:

"What then, six months from now? Are we to go through all this again? Are we to return to the status quo? Such a return would not be to a position of security... but would be a return to terror, bloodshed, strife, incidents, charges and countercharges, and ultimately another explosion...". [562nd meeting, para. 306.]

116. So I think it must be clear that it follows that Canada cannot support the draft resolution which was introduced by the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Soviet Union on 19 June. That draft resolution would take us back to the same situation which led to the outbreak of war. It was only a few short weeks ago that Canada and other members of the Security Council attempted to convince the Council that it should appeal to the parties to exercise restraint and to forgo belligerence in order to afford time for a breathing spell. A resolution of that kind might have helped to prevent the outbreak of war. The failure to take action then contributed to the tragic events which have since engulfed the Middle East. We must do all that we can to prevent them from happening again. That is our main concern in this Assembly.

117. To this end, I would make an urgent appeal to all concerned to put the common interest of all the peoples of the Middle East in peace and a better life above all else. It is not by condemnation and vituperation that the United Nations can find a way out of the maze of hostility, suspicion and fear; it is by insisting that each party has the right to live in peace and security without fear of attack and by finding appropriate ways to guarantee this assurance. Military solutions to political problems are unacceptable. But one-sided political solutions are no solution at all.

118. We all seek, I assume, a peaceful and just solution. The chief responsibility for finding that solution must of course rest with the parties to the dispute. This Organization, however, must help them to find it, and I envisage two stages during which the United Nations might lend its assistance. Two United Nations bodies, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency and the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization, are still actively at work amongst the refugees and observing the cease-fire. They will continue to have an indispensable contribution to make. The United Nations Military Observers, to whom I wish to pay a special tribute, have already played a valuable role

in observing the cease-fire and in reporting to the Secretary-General. I would expect them to exercise a continuing responsibility as withdrawal of Israeli forces takes place, particularly if arrangements can be made for this withdrawal which will result in demilitarized zones on both sides of the borders.

119. Since the inception of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, the Canadian Government has consistently been among the highest contributors to that Agency. We have provided transportation facilities, food relief and funds for use by the Red Cross. The Canadian Government will be glad to consider the provision of further assistance to the Agency for purposes of rehabilitation and reconstruction when precise determination of needs becomes available.

120. Another United Nations body which is still extant is the Conciliation Commission for Palestine. The function of conciliation is bound to be a vital one during this first stage on the road to a permanent settlement. Whether or not the Commission is the right organ to perform this function without changes being made both in its mandate and in its membership, or whether a different procedure might be envisaged, perhaps in the form of a special representative of the Secretary-General, I do not now wish to say with certainty. Yet some United Nations agency or representative will be required, I believe, to maintain full contact with all the Governments concerned and to prepare the way for subsequent negotiations, looking towards a permanent peace. I may say that this might well be the most important thing that this Assembly could do: to recommend the appointment of such a representative.

121. I have been speaking of what are essentially means to an end. If peace and security in the area are to be assured, the withdrawal of the Israeli forces, vital as it is, must be related to the other basic issues involved. There are a number of requirements, essential to any enduring settlement, which have already been mentioned by a number of those who preceded me to this podium. I should like to emphasize certain general principles.

122. First, there must be respect for the territorial integrity of the nations of the area, including provision for the security and international supervision of frontiers. Second, the rights of all nations to innocent passage through international waterways must be assured. Third, there must be an early and just solution of the refugee problem. Fourth, international concern for the preservation of the special spiritual and religious interests in Jerusalem—Christian, Jewish and Muslim—must be recognized, perhaps by giving the United Nations an international supervisory responsibility for the protection of these interests; nor should there be any precipitate action which might prejudice them.

123. It may be asked whether the approach I have outlined is realistic and whether the objective of permanent peace in Palestine is still not as difficult or impossible of accomplishment as it was in 1947. There is no doubt in my mind that the permanent members of the Security Council must work together if any settlement is to be durable. I recall that twenty

years ago both the United States and the Soviet Union supported the Assembly resolution for the partition of Palestine. Events then took a different course. But there have been more recent examples of co-operation between the great Powers on this issue, most notably the five resolutions adopted by the Security Council early this month. Two of these great Powers are members of the Palestine Conciliation Commission. Indeed, it was the permanent members who were responsible for selecting the Commission. That is the kind of precedent which I hop will be followed again.

124. There are other possible areas of co-operation between the permanent members which remain to be explored. One would be an agreement to control the flow of arms to the Middle East. An all-important by-product of such an arrangement would be the application to economic and social development of some of the resources otherwise spent on maintaining substantial armed forces. It seems self-evident that shipments of food are more important than shipments of arms. The Canadian Government for its part will continue its policy and practice of not sending military supplies to the countries directly involved in this dispute.

125. A vital step forward in the achievement of durable peace and stability in the Middle East is to ensure that justice be done to the Palestinian refugees. Those people for too long have been losers in the tragic conflict of interests in the area. The problem is, however, of such magnitude that only a combination of methods can produce a solution. It would be an illusion, I think, to go on believing that the problem of the refugees will be solved simply on the basis of their return to Israel. Similarly, the Arab States could not be expected to shoulder alone the burden of resettling and integrating in Arab countries those refugees who might make this choice. An international effort in a United Nations context directed at regional economic development in the Middle East and related to resettlement is a prime requirement which Members of the United Nations have an obligation to consider. My country is prepared to play its part in such an international effort, as the Prime Minister of Canada has already indicated in the House of Commons at home.

126. The conclusion that I draw is that the stakes are simply too great, the danger too obvious for the international community and the great Powers, in particular, to let matters drift. I will not disguise my satisfaction that at this very moment, as we were reminded by the representative and Ambassador from Sweden, President Johnson and Mr. Kosygin, Chairman of the Council of Ministers, are meeting for the first time. Too much must not, of course, be expected from one such discussion. But the significance of this meeting between the Heads of the two most powerful Governments in the world, must be underlined and should not be underestimated. The incidence of violence in the world has already reached the limits of international tolerance. Those of us who do not bear the responsibilities of world power may urge those who do exercise this power to do so with restraint and with wisdom. In addition, I suggest that all nations have an obligation to act with restraint and in particular not to threaten or

take actions which carry the danger of widening a local conflict and of spreading the flames of war. If peace is indivisible then the highest loyalty is that which we owe to the welfare and security of the people of the world as a whole, and to the obligations we have solemnly contracted under the United Nations Charter.

127. One of the speakers at this podium a few days ago, I think it was the British Foreign Secretary, spoke of the circumstances that led to the disintegration of the League of Nations. He warned that what happened to that body could very well happen to this Organization. I participated as a delegate at the last Assembly of the League of Nations. I am aware of the dangers that attend the results of this Assembly to the peace of the area and possibly to the world. I am confident, however, that this concern and this appreciation is shared by all of us, and that we are going to use this Assembly at this time to try to develop a common approach so that we can resolve this problem once and for all, at least lay down the foundations for a solution that will be lasting.

128. I am sure that if our collective efforts at this Assembly and in our subsequent negotiations and deliberations are constructive, prudent and responsible, not only will we have helped to contribute to peace and stability in the Middle East, but we will have enhanced the great importance of this Organization as the indispensable instrument in this interdependent nuclear period for the peace of the world.

129. Mr. MAURER (Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Socialist Republic of Romania) (translated from French): This is not the first time that the situation in the Middle East has been the subject of international debate. On the contrary, few topics have appeared with such frequency on the agenda of the General Assembly and of other United Nations organs and few problems have been so deeply rooted in the past. More than once, events in this region have threatened serious consequences for international peace and security.

130. The recent resurgence of the crisis in a particularly acute form has caused deep anxiety in all countries, even those far removed from the theatre of military operations.

131. As we consider the facts, a number of questions spring to mind; are the conflicts between the States of the Middle East so permanent and irreducible that they cannot be solved by any means available to mankind at the present time? Are we to conclude that political instruments, the rules of international law and the procedures set out in the United Nations Charter are clearly inadequate to lead to their solution?

132. Let me say from the outset that the Romanian Government, for its part, has every confidence in the capability of nations to solve the most complicated problems facing them and to force events to follow a rational course. It has gone on record as favouring a procedure which, while taking into account the vital interests of all the States in the region, could lead to a viable settlement by peaceful means.

133. The history of the relations among the States of the Middle East in the past twenty years shows that,

far from being settled, their disputes have been growing and spreading, while complications have succeeded complications. It is high time, we feel, to put an end to that process. Relations among States must evolve in such a way that there will be a gradual lessening of tension, and that there will be brought about a climate favouring the adoption of fair and constructive solutions guaranteeing States the right to an independent existence and security and enabling them to turn their attention to economic and social progress.

134. It is the duty of all countries to contribute to such a change of climate by refraining from any act that might worsen the situation, intensify existing enmities, or lead to fresh collisions which would imperil international peace and security. If events are to take a turn for the better, the cease-fire must be scrupulously respected.

135. We believe that the use of peaceful means, and such means only, is one factor which might enable us to find rational and lasting solutions to the thorny problems of the Middle East. Prohibition of the use of force for the settlement of disputes between States is a principle which mankind, after long experience, has placed among the fundamental rules governing inter-State relations. In signing the Charter, States Members of the United Nations pledged themselves to "refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force."

136. Far from promoting solution of the problems of the Middle East, every armed confrontation and every act of violence only postpones the restoration of peace by increasing instability and insecurity in the region. Any attempt to use force in order to enable a right to be exercised runs the risk of setting a dangerous precedent and provoking a response in kind. Force does not create a right; it never leads to a viable solution. It cannot therefore substantiate any claim to territorial annexation.

137. In the light of these considerations, my delegation is in favour of the immediate withdrawal of Israel troops from the occupied territories and of all troops behind the frontiers which existed before the outbreak of hostilities. Equitable settlement of the disputes of the Middle East demands that Israel should give up all claims to territorial conquest by force of arms.

138. Romania has repeatedly stressed, with regard to the events in the Middle East, that the use of armed force, while causing injury and suffering to the peoples of the region, would benefit solely the imperialist circles interested in keeping focal points of tension alive in the world, and the forces of internal reaction. Before the hostilities began, Mr. Nicolae Ceausescu, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party, in a speech made on 1 June 1967, had stated that the entire Romanian people was convinced that an armed conflict between the Arab States and Israel would benefit neither side. He had also expressed the hope that the questions at issue would be settled by an accommodation among the parties and that they would be able to conclude reasonable and fair agreements taking into account the legitimate rights of the peoples concerned.

139. Romania has emphasized many a time that it was in the interests of the peoples of the Middle East

and of general peace that the countries of the area should establish co-operative relations in order to ensure their economic, national and social progress. Our view on how the disputes in the Middle East should be settled has been clearly expanded in the statement made on 10 June 1967 by the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party and the Government of the Socialist Republic of Romania.^{3/} The course of events has, in our opinion, confirmed what we had foreseen and has therefore strengthened our determination to use every means at our command to help to prevent resumption of the hostilities and bring the situation in the Middle East back to normal.

140. The second goal we must set ourselves if we are to achieve a rational solution is, in our view, the elimination of all foreign intervention in the affairs of the countries of the region.

141. The capacity of small and medium-sized countries, such as those in the Middle East, to accommodate themselves to the requirements of good-neighbour relations to reconcile gradually their fundamental interests and to cultivate respect for each other's identity and culture should not, we feel, be underestimated.

142. Instead of encouraging such a process, the colonial Powers have, over an entire epoch, practiced interference in their internal affairs in order to be able to dominate them and exert pressure on them in various ways.

143. These practices, in which they still engage, obviously cause serious detriment to the interests of the peoples concerned by creating focal points of tension and keeping alive local conflicts and wars. Intervention in their domestic affairs hampers the normal development of peoples and infringes their inalienable right freely to determine their destiny.

144. When it is practiced in any one part of the world, such intervention inevitably becomes a potential threat to the peace and poisons all international relations. The situation in Viet-Nam is a striking example of how world peace is endangered by such violations of international law as armed intervention and aggression. Romania firmly supports the right of the Viet-Nameese people freely to determine its own destiny. It is convinced that an end to the aggression against that people would have a salutary effect on international life as a whole, while its continuation and escalation serve only to encourage aggressive acts in other parts of the world.

145. Foreign intervention does not remedy the instability or solve the problems in the region concerned; on the contrary, it takes advantage of them to ensure permanent domination by foreign interests. Consequently, a prime prerequisite for the improvement and normalization of the situation in the Middle East, whose history is one of bitter competition among the economic, political and military interests of the colonial Powers, is the cessation of all foreign intervention in the affairs of countries of that region.

146. To my mind, the third essential element of a viable solution is respect for the fundamental interests

^{3/} Official Records of the Security Council, Twenty-second Year, Supplement for April, May and June 1967, document S/7972.

of every State in the Middle East, with due regard for its independent and sovereign existence.

147. Because this principle was not observed, complications and difficulties mounted until the point of explosion was reached. We believe that the question of the Arab refugees from Palestine must be settled in accordance with the resolutions of the General Assembly, and on the basis of human rights and the rules of international law. It will be remembered that in its resolution 194 (III), adopted at its third session, the Assembly decided that the refugees wishing to return to their homes should be permitted to do so and that compensation should be paid by the Governments responsible to those choosing not to return. Resolution 394 (V), adopted at the fifth session, stresses that the rights and property of the Palestine Arab refugees must be protected.

148. The population, which has once again been visited with indescribable suffering as a result of the recent hostilities, must be helped to overcome its difficulties, and humane treatment must be meted out to the victims of the conflict in accordance with international law. Romania which has offered such friendly aid as it could to certain Arab countries in the form of food, drugs and other goods, feels that today all States must grant substantial assistance to a population so sorely tried.

149. Respect for the independence and sovereignty of States is a pre-condition for any solution we may adopt. The historical process which in our time has culminated in the emergence of dozens of independent States has given added emphasis to the principle that such States must develop freely, in accordance with their legitimate desire to make progress and achieve national identity.

150. Being highly appreciative of the part the Arab peoples have played in this process, Romania reaffirms its complete solidarity with the just struggle they are waging against imperialism and neo-colonialism, in defence of their national independence and their democratic gains, and for the achievement of their national unity.

151. The Romanian people sympathizes with and supports the efforts of the Arab nation to develop its natural resources in its own interest, in order to promote economic and social progress. In exercising their right to determine their destiny in full sovereignty, the Arab peoples will be able to devote their energies to development and prosperity and add to their already invaluable contribution to the civilization and culture of the world.

152. Lastly, a method precluding the use of force, a method which can lead to a pacific reasonable and lasting settlement of the questions at issue is the method of negotiations and agreements. International problems, no matter how complicated, can be settled with due regard for the legitimate interests of the parties concerned, provided that they are approached with a clear mind, calmly, realistically, and in a spirit of mutual respect.

153. We believe that no effort from the outside could result in a genuine settlement such as the countries in a given region could achieve themselves for their common problems.

154. The only lasting solutions are those which stem from thorough knowledge and actual experience, such as the parties themselves have acquired. When there are circumstances preventing direct contact between the parties, it is for the international community to create a climate in which such a dialogue would be possible. A pre-condition for the initiation and conduct of all negotiations is that the parties must be placed on a footing of complete equality, no attempt to impose a solution or to take advantage of a favourable military position to that end being permitted.

155. The principles governing relations among States and the underlying ideas of international co-existence are a heritage common to us all, and can serve as basis for a peaceful process from which violent confrontations, with the loss of human life and property they entail, would be excluded.

156. The development of an international ethic, the recognition of rules based on respect for independence and sovereignty and designed to govern the behaviour of States and Governments in their mutual relations, and, lastly, strict observance of the basic principles of law and justice constitute, in our time, not merely one possible way of managing international affairs, but the only way to avoid disaster and annihilation.

157. Firmly convinced that respect for the rules of international law does valiant service to the cause of peace, Romania, jointly with other countries, is scrupulously discharging its duty of strengthening, by means of its foreign policy, the principles that should govern relations among States. The obligation incumbent upon every country to contribute to the formulation and consolidation of the principles governing international relations is in no way limited by the country's size or by its economic or military potential.

158. Respect for these principles is all the more in the interests of the States which have recently attained independence as it is a pre-condition for the successful consolidation of that independence and also for the development of their resources for the purpose of achieving material progress and spiritual growth. It is only when the principles of independence and sovereignty, of non-intervention in the affairs of others, of equal rights and mutual advantage are observed that States can devote all their energies to the uninterrupted progress of their people.

159. Like all crises, the events in the Middle East can now be expected to follow one of two courses. It is possible that the crisis will continue, and will claim an increasing number of victims and endanger world peace. It is also possible that the long series of conflicts in that region will have taught us a lesson that we can draw upon in arranging for a peaceful and lasting settlement.

160. In the latter case, these events would constitute not one of those sporadic incidents which weaken a region's potential and cause great suffering, but the last act of a tragedy which was far too long. That would depend primarily on how clearly the States of the region and also the States represented in this conclave can see what the lesson really is and what use they can make of the political instruments of co-existence available to them.

161. We feel that the wealth of experience for which the peoples in this region have paid so dearly—as peoples in other parts of the world have done—amply demonstrates the need for a fresh and constructive approach in international affairs. Countless victims, human suffering, vast destruction of property and paralysation of the resources essential for rapid economic development—these are but a few of the consequences of the hostilities in the Middle East.

162. In the historical perspective, no solution can be lasting that has been imposed by force, in disregard of a people's legitimate rights.

163. The patient search for a solution, respect for the particular personality of every State in a spirit of equality, and the maintenance by all States of a line of conduct based on the principles of international law offer, in our view, in the case of the Middle East as in other cases, a guarantee of a practical and enduring settlement which would bring peace and prosperity to the people of the region.

164. Romania for its part will spare no effort to help to bring about a settlement based on justice and wisdom and dictated by the over-riding interests of peace.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.