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SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE
49th meeting
held on
Thursday, 6 December 1984
at 10.30 a.m.
New York

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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 49th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. DIALLO (Guinea)

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The meeting was called to order at 11 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 72: INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION IN THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE
(continued) (A/SPC/39/L.33)

- (a) REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE (continued)
- (b) IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SECOND UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE EXPLORATION AND PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued)
 1. The CHAIRMAN introduced draft resolution A/SPC/39/L.33 and said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that it was adopted without a vote.
 2. It was so decided.
 3. Mr. KOLOSOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) and Mr. SORZANO (United States of America) asked whether the resolution had been adopted without a vote, as had been stated by the Russian and English interpreters, or by consensus.
 4. The CHAIRMAN replied that he had indeed said "without a vote" but that actually it had been adopted by consensus.
 5. Mr. SORZANO (United States of America) said that the resolution was the result of intensive negotiations between delegations with very distinct points of view and interests. The consensus had been achieved only in specific areas, through neutral formulations intended to protect the interests of all Governments.
 6. The United States was disappointed that many of its concerns had not been taken into consideration; however, it hoped that its willingness to accommodate the interests of other States would lead those States to be more receptive, the following year, to the need to strengthen the scientific and technical orientation of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. The United States also recognized the concern of some members of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space to ensure a rational and just use of the geostationary orbit and noted that the resolution recognized the special function of ITU in that regard.
 7. The United States regarded the resolution as a first and modest step towards the return to the process of consensus, the only practical way of ensuring that the work of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space would make positive progress.
 8. Miss EMARA (Egypt), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77, said that the Group was not entirely satisfied with the resolution that had just been adopted because it did not take into account all of the Group's concerns. However the Group had joined in the consensus in order to strengthen the work of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its two Sub-Committees for the socio-economic progress of the entire world, above all, the developing countries.

9. Mr. MARIN BOSCH (Mexico) said that the rules of procedure made no provision for the adoption of resolutions by consensus. It should therefore be understood that the resolution had been adopted without a vote.

10. The content of resolution A/SPC/39/L.33 was very modest. It did not take into account the concern for the danger to the future work of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space entailed by the growing militarization of outer space or the concern about the impossibility of elaborating a series of general principles for the regulation of the rational and equitable use of the geostationary orbit, a limited natural resource. He was not convinced that the course followed was the correct one. The requests in paragraphs 4 (c) and 15 of the resolution could be regarded as a backward step.

11. Mr. SCHONHERR (German Democratic Republic) shared the hope of many that the resolution meant a new point of departure towards the solution of urgent problems of international co-operation for the peaceful uses of outer space. It was to be hoped that the statements made during the twenty-seventh session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and at the current session of the Special Political Committee would not be in vain and that the approval of a resolution by consensus would signify a success for the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. His delegation, like the great majority of delegations, was deeply concerned about the extension of the arms race to outer space and believed it urgently necessary to solve that problem.

12. On 3-4 December 1984, the Committee of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Warsaw Treaty had met in Berlin and, in its final communiqué, had stated that the militarization of outer space would greatly increase the risk of nuclear war and that bilateral or multilateral treaties on the exclusively peaceful uses of outer space should be concluded as soon as possible. The Ministers had also expressed the hope that all States would recognize the need to take measures to prevent the militarization of outer space, and had underscored the role of the United Nations in solving that problem.

13. Mr. RODRIGUEZ MEDINA (Colombia) supported the remark by Egypt that the resolution did not reflect all the interests of the Group of 77. Nevertheless, the consensus would permit all interested parties to participate in the negotiations. The technical planning of ITU in the field of the geostationary orbit was not sufficient, and Colombia had fought to obtain legal regulations that would take into account the needs of all equatorial countries. Colombia believed that the term "ways and means" was sufficiently broad for arrival at concrete regulations in the future that would favour its interests and those of the developing world. Colombia hoped that the return to consensus would overcome the difficulties that had impeded the work of the Sub-Committees.

14. Mr. De La BAUME (France) welcomed the consensus but wished to express his disappointment that some of his concerns had not been taken into account. Specifically, France had had difficulty in joining the consensus on paragraphs 13, 14 and 15 of the draft but had finally accepted them because it interpreted those provisions in a manner compatible with the mandate of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

15. Mr. KOLOSOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the resolution adopted reminded one of the first hesitant steps of a child learning to walk and that the USSR had joined in the consensus because the first step of a child was not an objective in itself but a stage at which it would increasingly advance with more firmness, and it hoped that the resolution would similarly strengthen the work of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its Sub-Committees.

16. Mr. GODSON (United Kingdom) said that his delegation had been pleased to join in the consensus on draft resolution A/SPC/39/L.33. It had been obvious from the beginning that the search for consensus on the draft resolution would be a momentous and difficult task. All delegations had been obliged to make concessions in order to reach an agreement so that the draft would be acceptable to all. Of course, his delegation was not pleased with some of the elements of the text and regretted that some of its concerns had not been taken fully into account. It was not the only delegation that felt that way, and that was due to the very nature of the work of achieving consensus on a draft resolution.

17. Finally, his delegation welcomed the return to the principle of consensus in the case of the resolution. Consensus reflected the firm support of the international community and was the best method of work for the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

AGENDA ITEM 77: ISRAEL'S DECISION TO BUILD A CANAL LINKING THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA TO THE DEAD SEA: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/39/142; A/SPC/39/L.34 and L.35)

18. Mr. McGRADY (Ireland),* speaking on behalf of the Ten States members of the European Community said that the Ten welcomed the report of the Secretary-General on Israel's decision to build a canal linking the Mediterranean Sea to the Dead Sea because it served to clarify the issues in the current debate. The Ten would have preferred further co-operation by the Israeli Government in assessing the impact of the proposed canal and wished to reiterate their position on that matter. They viewed with concern the proposed construction by Israel of a canal between the Mediterranean Sea and the Dead Sea because it would give rise to serious legal and political problems. Apart from the human, economic and environmental damage caused by the project, it would conflict with Israel's obligations under international law. With regard to the rights and interests of riparian States, Jordan would be affected and work would also be carried out in the Gaza Strip. Under international law, particularly the Hague Convention of 1907 and the fourth Geneva Convention, all of that would exceed Israel's rights as an occupying Power, which only had a temporary right of administration in respect of territory occupied by it. The construction of the proposed canal could in no way be considered an act of mere administration.

* A full transcription of this statement will be issued in document A/SPC/39/PV.49.

(Mr. McGrady, Ireland)

19. The project also had economic and ecological implications. The team of experts had concluded that it could have a negative impact on the infrastructure of the region, for example, in the sectors of agriculture, mineral production, tourism and health care facilities.

20. While reiterating their opposition to the project, the Ten noted with interest the recent press reports that the Israeli Minister of Energy had stated that Israel might abandon its plan to build the canal. The Ten took the present opportunity to urge the Government of Israel to take a decision to that affect.

21. Mr. ALLAGUI (Tunisia) said that his delegation supported the team of experts and the report which they had drawn up in accordance with General Assembly resolution 38/85. The international community was witnessing a new type of Israeli policy which created the most contradictory and ambiguous situations and scoffed at the most basic principles of mankind in its effort to establish peace and security. That new type of behaviour, which was based on arrogance and injustice, manifested itself amid the indifference of the international community.

22. Israel behaved as if it had forgotten that it was an occupying Power. The project, in its final phase, flouted the 1949 Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, which applied to all Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967, including Jerusalem.

23. There were many reasons for carrying out the project. The first was to exploit, as a source of energy, the 400-metre difference in the levels of the two seas. The canal would also be used for other highly important purposes: the cooling of nuclear power plants, the development of fishing, the establishment of solar energy plants and water diversion.

24. The construction of the canal would constitute a large-scale economic project which would require nine years in order to be carried out. It could not therefore be considered a temporary project. The economic and social situation resulting from the construction of the canal would have catastrophic effects for the Palestinians in the occupied territories: the confiscation of Palestinian lands, the displacement of the population and the loss of Palestinian camps, with dire consequences for all sectors.

25. Furthermore, the project was designed to create a natural barrier which would make it possible to flood vast areas of Jordan. The construction of the canal would divert water from the Mediterranean in order to flood the shores of the Dead Sea, in Jordan, and the West Bank under Israeli military occupation. It would also cause large-scale and irreparable damage to the mining industry of Jordan and its vital sector: potassium and phosphate.

26. Furthermore, the proposed canal would raise the level of the Dead Sea almost 10 metres in relation to the level of the Mediterranean Sea, which would have irremediable effects on the surrounding land since 660 hectares of irrigated land would be completely flooded, rendering them useless, and almost 2,000 additional

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(Mr. Allagui, Tunisia)

hectares would be lost owing to irregular flooding, lack of drainage and increased salinity. The losses for Jordan might be between \$US 7.9 million and \$US 15 million annually, in the agricultural sector alone.

27. The so-called geological investigations and the \$US 24 million invested in a programme of that type did not seem justified if they were limited to the scientific area only. That project was part of a large-scale political and economic programme: the changing of the ecological and demographic character of the occupied territories, the appropriation of the water resources and the perpetuation of the occupation, the installation of Israeli settlers, the usurpation of land and the forced displacement of some 3,000 Jordanians and Palestinians.

28. The construction of the canal would ruin the possibilities for establishing peace and achieving a just and lasting solution to the problem of the Middle East. The continuation of the activities relating to that project would constitute an additional obstacle to any progress in bringing about a just and lasting settlement of the conflict in the Middle East. No States, specialized agencies, governmental or non-governmental organizations should assist, directly or indirectly, in the preparation for and execution of that project.

29. Mr. SUDIRMA (Indonesia) said that, since its thirty-sixth session, the General Assembly had expressed its strong objection to Israel's unilateral decision to build a canal linking the Mediterranean Sea to the Dead Sea and had proclaimed that that project was illegal and constituted a direct violation of the 1949 Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, which, inter alia, prohibited any changes in occupied territories which would alter the way of life of the local population.

30. Although previous reports of the Secretary-General on that question in the past had dealt with the juridical, political, economic and ecological and demographic aspects, the current report focused on the pernicious effects of the canal on agricultural development and mineral production and the uprooting of thousands of people from their ancestral lands. The report also showed the losses in mineral production and the impact in other fields, such as recreational activities, tourism and health care facilities.

31. The findings of the experts commissioned to draw up the report revealed as false Israel's contention that the construction of the canal would benefit the population of the area. If Israel was convinced of that, there would be no reason for its obstinate refusal to permit the direct access of United Nations technicians to the area. The only conclusion which could be reached from the report was that Israel's objective was to expel the Arab population from its ancestral lands on the pretext of building the canal and then to attract more settlers to the zone as part of its persistent effort to illegally annex the occupied territories. For those reasons, his delegation felt that the General Assembly should support the draft resolution.

32. Mr. SHEHATA (Egypt) said that Israel's decision to build a canal linking the Mediterranean Sea to the Dead Sea constituted a further violation by that Government of international law and not only endangered the peace and security of the region but also the welfare and economic prospects of the peoples of the area. The project would cause serious economic damage to Jordan and was a violation of Jordanian sovereignty over the Dead Sea. The passage of the canal through the Gaza Strip was a violation of the right of the inhabitants of that territory to self-determination and showed that Israel had no intention of withdrawing from those territories but intended to impose a new illegal situation in order to reap the benefits of its aggression against the Arabs in 1967.

33. The report of the Secretary-General (A/39/142) provided details on the adverse consequences of those projects in the field of agriculture. Nevertheless, the report did not point out the legal and political aspects of the project, as had been requested in General Assembly resolution 38/35. That was a serious shortcoming in the approach followed in the report of the Secretary-General and should be remedied in future reports.

34. Professor Amitai Katz, Chairman of the Geology Department at the Hebrew University, Jerusalem, had analysed the adverse effects of mixing the Mediterranean and Dead Sea waters. His verdict was appalling. He concluded that the damage would be irreparable. Moreover, it was a violation of the rights of Jordan and of the rights of the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, because it would create a fait accompli preparing for the annexation of the Strip and the foreclosing of any prospects for the exercise of the right of self-determination by the Palestinian people in Gaza.

35. In short, legally and politically, the project constituted a flagrant violation of all norms of international law, in peace or in war. The position of Egypt regarding the Israeli project had been fully set out in a letter dated 13 April 1981 (A/36/187-S/14439). Egypt strongly objected to the project on the following grounds: it constituted a violation of the principles and provisions of Security Council resolution 242 (1967), which stipulated the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territories by war. It also constituted a violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention, which emphasized that the occupation of territory was a de facto situation, which could not in any way imply any right whatsoever for the occupying Power to dispose of the territory.

36. The project revealed the Israeli intention of annexing those portions of Palestinian territories through which the canal was to pass. It was bound to determine unilaterally the final status and future of the Gaza Strip in total disregard of the genuine interests of the Palestinian people and in outright denial of its right to self-determination and sovereignty over its national resources and wealth.

37. Egypt's position was that the Gaza Strip was an integral part of occupied Palestinian territories. It was not terra nullius nor open land which could be acquired or annexed by occupation or de facto domination. It was even part of the Arab State in the Partition Plan of 1947. It was totally illegal for Israel or any other party to the dispute to dispose of any portion of those occupied territories without the acceptance and free choice of its Palestinian population.

(Mr. Shehata, Egypt)

38. Unless Israel complied with the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly, his delegation would request the Secretary-General to report periodically on the progress made in the implementation of the project, in order to update the assessment of the economic and environmental damage which would be incurred by the Palestinians in Gaza and by Jordan in their part and share of the Dead Sea natural resources.

39. The specialized agencies, international or multinational enterprises, governmental and non-governmental organizations had already been urged not to assist in the preparation or execution of the project. If they did not comply with that obligation, they would stand accountable for the consequences. Similarly, if Israel did not stop the construction of the canal, it would be fully accountable, legally and politically, before the United Nations and the world community.

40. Mr. JESENSKY (Czechoslovakia) said that the data provided in the Secretary-General's report (A/39/142) revealed with sufficient clarity the negative effects that the canal would have on the region.

41. The raising of the level of the Dead Sea would interfere with the extraction of minerals along its shores and would involve the abandonment of the nearby cultivable land, whose inhabitants would be obliged to leave it. Moreover, the hydrological effects would have negative repercussions on tourism, health care, transport and archaeology. The problem would also have serious political and strategic consequences, which would make it even more difficult to achieve a peaceful settlement of the Middle East conflict.

42. Czechoslovakia supported all measures designed to end the dangerous policy being followed by Israel and stressed the need to eliminate the main cause: the illegal occupation by Israel of the Arab territories. Israel must immediately suspend all the preparations and measures related to the implementation of the canal project and all States members of the United Nations must avoid any co-operation with Israel with regard to the canal.

43. It would be impossible to achieve a negotiated solution of the Middle East problem until Israeli troops had withdrawn completely from the occupied Arab territories, until the right of self-determination of the Palestinian people was respected and until the right of all States in the region to an independent and secure existence within fully recognized international frontiers was recognized.

44. Mr. ABDULLATIF (Oman) stressed the adverse effects of the Israeli project to construct a canal joining the Mediterranean and the Dead Seas. The project was part of the broader objective of the Zionist ideology to depopulate the occupied territories through oppression, violence and faits accomplis, with a view to occupying those territories permanently and establishing Eretz Israel.

45. The project was already at an advanced stage. Of the \$24 million which had been allocated for the period 1983-1985, \$4 million had been designated for the building of an exploratory tunnel near the Dead Sea.

(Mr. Abdullatif, Oman)

46. The Secretary-General's report (A/39/142) described the adverse effects of the project on agriculture, mining, recreation, tourism and health establishments. In addition to the economic consequences, the project would entail considerable political consequences with world-wide repercussions.

47. It should be reiterated that the building of the canal constituted a violation of international law. The international community must again urge Israel to suspend the implementation of the project and all States, specialized agencies and transnational corporations must abstain from co-operating with Israel in its policy of faits accomplis and of building the canal.

48. Mrs. SHAKEEL (Pakistan) said that Israel's decision to build a canal linking the Mediterranean Sea to the Dead Sea had been deplored by the General Assembly in several resolutions since 1981. It was yet another instance of Israel's abuse of its status as an occupying Power and constituted a violation of a number of principles of international law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention.

49. In his report (A/39/142) the Secretary-General had stated that the planning of the project had reached an advanced stage and that \$24 million had been allocated for the period 1983-1985. Its implementation would have serious and irreparable repercussions on the legitimate and vital rights and interests of Jordan in the economic, agricultural and ecological fields.

50. Some experts had concluded that the Israeli project had military dimensions and that Israel planned to set up nuclear installations along the canal. Those intentions posed a grave threat not only to regional but also to international peace and security. It would also confirm the fear that the project was an effort on the part of Israel to entrench itself in the occupied territories by force and to establish a military corridor which would enable it to pursue its aggressive and expansionist policies with impunity.

51. It was imperative that the international community should urgently adopt measures to stop the project and to prevent the Israeli authorities from continuing to mock the fundamental principles of international law and conduct of nations, besides posing a grave threat to international peace and security.

52. Mr. BARROMI (Israel) said that document A/38/720 of the General Assembly, the experts' report annexed to the Secretary-General's report (A/39/142) and the UNEP report of 1983 were essentially negative. They focused only on the purported adverse effects of the canal project and recommended that it should not be built. What had been ignored by the authors of those documents was the existence of specific problems concerning the Dead Sea and the need to search for appropriate solutions. The study by the University of Jordan entitled The Mediterranean Dead Sea Canal and its Environmental Impacts, mentioned in paragraph 14 (figure 3) of the report of the team of experts, contained a comprehensive analysis of those problems and should be given an acknowledged status in the present debate because of its constructive approach. The study pointed out that any further drop in the level of the Dead Sea could not be tolerated. It would leave the tourist

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(Mr. Barromi, Israel)

facilities far away from the shoreline and reduce their value. It would also involve the use of pumps in the potash works, thereby increasing the cost of the product. The study recommended as the best solution the building of a canal joining the Mediterranean Sea to the Dead Sea, thus raising the level of the waters of the Dead Sea, which could be used for energy production and other purposes. It was also recommended that the water level be raised to no more than -395 metres to avoid flooding and other damage. The Jordanian experts warned that if the level reached -390 metres there would be flooding and a decrease in potash extraction because of the change in the water's composition. On the other hand, the Israeli experts affirmed that a water level in the Dead Sea of up to -388.5 metres could be tolerated without complications (A/38/502/Add.1).

53. In view of the joint interests of Israel and Jordan in the region, he wondered whether it would not be more logical for both countries to study the problem. The canal project was still at the feasibility study stage and the Government of Israel was ready to take any reasonable measure so as not to prejudice the legitimate interests of Jordan, with which Israel was ready to co-operate.

54. In his delegation's view, the project did not violate international law or the relevant Hague Regulations. The laying of underground pipes in the Gaza district would be effected in a way which avoided any prejudice to the farmers of that district. In any event, they would be entitled to compensation for any temporary damage, and, eventually, they would benefit together with the rest of the population from the general development of the region.

55. The canal project could bring economic and ecological benefits to Israel and to the entire area. The interested parties should study its consequences in a spirit of calmness, seriousness and good will, with no pressure or haste. The conflict-ridden atmosphere of a General Assembly Committee was most unsuited to the attainment of those ends. Indeed, the debate in the Special Political Committee had served no worthwhile purpose, as might have been expected in view of the terms of reference laid down by illogical and partisan resolutions. Lastly, his delegation expressed the hope that that vexatious item would soon be struck off the General Assembly's agenda.

56. Mr. BARRETT (United States of America) requested that, like the statement made by the representative of Jordan, a transcription of the statement made by the representative of Israel, which contained extremely useful information, should be issued.

57. Mr. ABDULLATIF (Oman) expressed his reservations regarding the transcription of the statement of the representative of Israel. In accordance with the principle of equity, he requested a transcription of the statement made by the observer for the Palestine Liberation Organization at the 47th meeting of the Committee.

58. Mr. HAMADNEH (Jordan) supported the representative of Oman and protested that the representative of the United States of America should place the Jordanian delegation on an equal footing with the delegation of Israel.

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59. Mr. CHAMMAS (Lebanon) expressed doubts regarding the usefulness of transcribing the statement made by the representative of Israel. Acceding to the request to study only the technical aspects would be tantamount to conceding to Israel a right which it did not have in its capacity as occupying Power.

60. Mr. SHEHATA (Egypt) agreed with the representative of Lebanon that it was not a question of the usefulness of the Israeli project but of its legality. The construction of the canal in the occupied territories would be an illegal measure, an act of aggression against the sovereignty of a Member State and a violation of the rights of the Palestinian people. It would, moreover, have far-reaching harmful effects for the Middle East. He pointed out to the delegation of Israel that, before speaking of regional co-operation, it was necessary to have a durable peace in the Middle East.

61. The CHAIRMAN recalled that the General Assembly had approved the recommendation of the General Committee that during the current session the Special Political Committee should again be authorized to receive, on specific request, transcriptions of the debates of some of its meetings, or portions thereof. Those transcriptions did not entail any additional budgetary expenses as they were prepared by verbatim reporters and typists from the tapes when the staff concerned were not otherwise occupied in servicing meetings normally provided with verbatim records. Consequently, they might appear at a later stage than the summary records which, as the official records, were complete records of the Committee's proceedings. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee acceded to the request made by the representative of Oman for the issuance of a transcription of the statement made by the observer for the Palestine Liberation Organization.

62. It was so decided.

63. Mr. TARASOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) endorsed the reservations expressed by the delegation of Jordan.

64. Mr. FARTAS (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) associated himself with the views expressed by the representatives of Oman and Jordan and reserved his position with regard to the request by the representative of the United States of America.

65. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee acceded to the request made by the representative of the United States of America for the issuance of a transcription of the statement made by the representative of Israel.

66. It was so decided.

67. Mr. HAMADNEH (Jordan) recalled that Israel sought to hold talks on the canal project with the Government of Jordan. However, as the proposed canal would originate in Palestinian territory, he suggested that, in the negotiations relating to the canal, Israel should address itself to the Palestine Liberation Organization, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. Jordan

(Mr. Hamadneh, Jordan)

was not prepared to hold talks with Israel on marginal issues while the central problems of occupation and the political aspects of the Arab-Israeli conflict remained unresolved.

68. Israel limited itself to the economic considerations of the project, when it was a well-known fact that the canal constituted an integral part of the Israeli nuclear programme. Israel wanted to be the sole nuclear power in the region, which was a particularly dangerous situation since that country had not signed the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. He stressed the role which Israel had played with regard to the fall in the water-level of the Dead Sea and the diversion of the River Jordan. By all those actions, Israel was contravening the provisions of the United Nations Charter and the norms of international law relating to water resources.

69. Mr. BARROMI (Israel), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, expressed his surprise at the fact that many delegations, in particular that of Jordan, were apparently not acquainted with the opinion of scientists from the University of Jordan. He stressed that the canal project was a feat of engineering which would benefit the whole area and resolve the problem of the fall in the level of the Dead Sea, which would be of particular benefit to Jordan, and, in that regard, he suggested the possibility that Jordan and Israel might make a joint study. The statement that the construction of the canal violated international law was an example of the politicization of non-political situations.

70. Mr. ABOUCHAER (Syrian Arab Republic) associated himself with those speakers who had previously expressed their reservations concerning the request of the United States of America, which left him perplexed. His delegation believed that it had heard that the United States had admitted that the Gaza Strip was Palestinian territory, covered by the fourth Geneva Convention, and he wondered if there had been a change in the position of that country. He pointed out also that the admission by the occupation authorities that work on the project had already begun constituted defiance of General Assembly resolutions 37/150 and 38/85.

71. Mr. HAMADNEH (Jordan) pointed out that the representative of Israel had not mentioned that the purpose of the project was not economic but the installation of nuclear reactors, as Israel itself had admitted in the report submitted to the United Nations. The diversion of the waters of the River Jordan constituted an act of aggression against the water resources of Syria and Jordan.

72. Mr. FARTAS (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) said that he considered the statement of Ireland on behalf of the Ten extremely positive and requested that it should be reproduced in extenso.

73. The CHAIRMAN recalled that the General Assembly had approved the recommendation of the General Committee that during the current session the Special Political Committee should again be authorized to receive, on specific request, transcriptions of the debates of some of its meetings, or portions thereof. Those transcriptions did not entail any additional budgetary expenses as they were

(The Chairman)

prepared by verbatim reporters and typists from the tapes when the staff concerned were not otherwise occupied in servicing meetings normally provided with verbatim records. Consequently, they might appear at a later stage than the summary records which, as the official records, were complete records of the Committee's proceedings. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee acceded to the requests made.

74. It was so decided.

75. Mr. BARROMI (Israel) took note of the statement by Jordan and expressed his surprise at the fact that Israel's use of the water of the River Jordan should be regarded as an act of war.

The meeting rose at 1.25 p.m.