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SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE
32nd meeting
held on
Thursday, 15 November 1984
at 10.30 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 32nd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. ABDULLATIF (Oman)

CONTENTS

AGENDA ITEM 71: REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE ISRAELI PRACTICES
AFFECTING THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE POPULATION OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES: REPORTS
OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.55 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 71: REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE ISRAELI PRACTICES AFFECTING THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE POPULATION OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES: REPORTS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/39/339, 501, 527, 532, 591, 620 and 665)

1. Mr. AL-ANSARI (Bahrain) said that the report of the Special Committee (A/39/591) provided irrefutable proof of the sufferings of the Arab people of Palestine, who were subjected to oppression and physical and psychological torture, in violation of the most elementary rules of morality, humanitarianism and social justice.

2. Murder, violence and terrorism had been the pillars of the Zionist philosophy in Palestine since the beginning of the century. Zionist ideology, aims and methods of action were those of a terrorist movement which had adopted the methods and trappings of a State to attain its ends. A careful study of its action in Israel led to the conclusion that there was no difference between the official terrorism perpetrated by the organs of the State acting through the police forces and the unorganized terrorism practised by other groups. It would be very naïve to imagine that the many-sided operations of a vast network of terrorist organizations bearing different names could be carried out without the knowledge or even without the help of the political or security services of the State. That was all the more true of an entity which prided itself on having security, intelligence and information services ranking among the most modern and most competent in the world.

3. The evolution of the terrorist movement in Israel had assumed new dimensions with the appearance on the political scene of Rabbi Meir Kahane. After the Haganah, Irgun and Stern Group had been integrated into the political and military apparatus of the State, new terrorist gangs had emerged, which operated in the West Bank, the Golan Heights and southern Lebanon. Their objective was to strengthen the settlement process by attacking the Arab inhabitants or preventing them from farming their land, intimidating students, attacking buses, educational institutions and refugee camps, carrying out excavations in holy places and destroying dwellings in order to provoke the exodus of the Arab population or discourage their "return to their homes". For them, the end justified the means.

4. According to official Israeli statements, those organizations presumably had no connection with State structures and were acting on their own initiative, but it was easy to see that that was not true. In its issue of 29 July 1984, for example, the magazine Time stated that Rabbi Meir Kahane, the leader of the Kach movement, who had been jailed several times in Israel, was trying to exploit his parliamentary immunity to flout Israeli justice.

5. In Jerusalem, the situation was tragic. It was in that holy city that the scope of the plot hatched by the Zionists to achieve their global dreams was revealed. Jerusalem had been the victim of a number of Judaization and Zionization measures in defiance of the principle of national sovereignty, had been declared the capital of Israel on 30 July 1980, after having been administratively annexed

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(Mr. Al-Ansari, Bahrain)

in 1967 in violation of all the international instruments and the resolutions of the international community. Israel was now attempting to eradicate all aspects of its Arab and Islamic character.

6. On 9 October 1984, the French Minister for Foreign Affairs had made a historic statement to the Special Committee against Apartheid, in which he had reaffirmed the need to promote the exercise of human rights, regardless of colour, race or religion and had denounced all forms of terrorism and torture. He had asked how it was possible to accept that man's dignity should be flouted, his body beaten, tortured, and reduced to nothing, his family threatened. How was it possible to tolerate that that should become common practice, even a legal rule, on the basis of an external sign, or could be provoked by the choice that that man or his parents before him had made in religion, language or place of refuge? If such discrimination was accepted somewhere, at whatever time, how could it be prevented from spreading, from later serving as a pretext and justification for other groups, which might also want to claim that a characteristic justified their domination? Bahrain believed that all human beings, wherever they lived - in South Africa, Asia, Europe, America or Palestine - should be able to exercise their rights and be given humane, and fair treatment.

7. On 2 October 1984, in the General Assembly, the Bahraini Minister for Foreign Affairs had explained his country's position with respect to the efforts being made to alleviate the tensions in that strategic and troubled part of the world. Those efforts were bound to fail because they did not attack the root of the Arab-Israeli conflict. At the heart of that conflict lay the need to grant the Palestinian people its fundamental and inalienable right to sovereignty and to the establishment of its own State in its homeland, under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization, its sole, legitimate representative.

8. Bahrain called upon the international community to condemn Israel's flagrant violations of human rights in the occupied territories, to combat the implementation of measures to judaize the Holy City and to bring pressure to bear on Israel not to carry out its terrorist policies aimed at driving the Arab peasants from their lands and preventing them from returning to their homes, and lastly to take practical steps to improve the human rights situation of the Arab population of the occupied territories.

9. Mr. ABOUCHAER (Syrian Arab Republic) said that the report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories and the full extent of the sufferings of those people under an oppressive, racist occupation only could be appreciated by understanding the essential nature of that occupation, which was one of the two great racist colonial movements of modern times, the other being that of the racist white minority in South Africa. Zionism and apartheid were both based on the idea of "exclusiveness", i.e. discrimination between people and the superiority of some because of religion in the first case and because of race in the second and, to achieve their racist ends, both resorted to the same practices and policies. In both cases, the victims were the original inhabitants of the country, who were uprooted, driven out, oppressed and relegated to remote regions of the country.

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(Mr. Abouchaer, Syrian Arab Republic)

10. His delegation had studied the report of the Special Committee (A/39/591) and appreciated the efforts made by that Committee and the accuracy and objectivity of its investigations, taking care, as stated in paragraph 29 of the report, to rely on information that had not been contradicted by the Government of Israel or that was commonly considered as reliable by that Government. Syria shared the concern of the Special Committee, expressed in the letter of transmittal of the report that the international community had so far been unable to adopt effective measures to improve the situation of the civilian population, and agreed with it that without meaningful and effective action, the international community would allow itself to get nearer to a situation which it would find increasingly difficult to resolve. On reading the report, it seemed inconceivable that the international community could remain silent before that interminable list of crimes, racist practices and acts of terrorism committed in the Arab territories occupied by Israel and by the Jewish terrorist groups it protected. How could the same people who had complained and were still complaining about the oppression they suffered and the crimes committed against them solely because they were Jewish justify those same practices when they were responsible and when the victims were the Arab inhabitants - Christians and Moslems - of the occupied territories, whose only crime was that they were not Jews?

11. The argument advanced by Israel to justify its boycott of the Committee and its refusal to co-operate with it or even to authorize it to visit the occupied territories, namely, the Committee's alleged partiality and the fact that the States members of the Committee did not maintain diplomatic relations with Israel was neither well-founded nor acceptable, since Israel adopted the same attitude towards the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People although the latter was composed of countries with which Israel did maintain diplomatic relations. The fact of the matter was that Israel's attitude would be the same towards any committee or body that tried to find out the truth. On the one hand, Israel defied the international community represented by the General Assembly and ignored its resolutions, and, on the other hand, it was afraid that the Committee might discover even more shocking truths about Israel's expansionist settlement practices and the situation of the Arab population in the occupied territories. His delegation fully supported the valuable and objective conclusions in chapter 5 of the report (paras. 325 to 339), which confirmed that Israel persisted in applying a policy contrary to the obligations it had assumed under the Fourth Geneva Convention, which stipulated that military occupation was a temporary, de facto situation giving no right whatsoever to the occupying Power over the territorial integrity of the occupied territories.

12. His delegation noted, however, that many important conclusions which had appeared in previous reports had been omitted although the Committee itself had recommended that, they should be reaffirmed and emphasized in every report. That was true, in particular, of the conclusions appearing in paragraphs 364-368 of the Committee's report to the thirty-fourth session (A/34/631), which stated that the fact of occupation itself constituted a fundamental violation of the human rights of the civilian population of the occupied territories; that the so-called "homeland" doctrine which envisaged a mono-religious State was a racist and

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(Mr. Abouchaer, Syrian Arab Republic)

expansionist policy which not only denied the inhabitants of those territories their right to self-determination but was also the root cause of continuous and systematic human rights violations. Only an end to the occupation could terminate the human rights violations and enable the Palestinian people to exercise its inalienable rights, and first and foremost, the right of return, the right to self-determination and the right to the establishment of an independent State in its national territory.

13. With regard to Israeli practices in the occupied territory of the Syrian Arab Golan, his delegation noted that although the report contained only a few paragraphs on that subject, annex II did contain the statement submitted to the Special Committee by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Syrian Arab Republic. Like the Chairman of the Committee, his delegation was deeply concerned by the harmful effects of the policies and practices adopted by the Israeli occupation authorities to perpetuate Israeli sovereignty over the Golan on the human rights situation of the territory's civilian population and, consequently, on peace and security in the region. There was very little information on the situation in the Golan mainly because since they occupied the territory in 1967, the Israeli authorities had driven out more than 90 per cent of the inhabitants, so that only four inhabited villages with a total population of, at most, 12,000 were left in the whole territory. Nevertheless, the report contained information on the repressive measures and inhuman pressures to which the population was subjected and which had been intensified since Israel's 1981 annexation of the Golan in violation of international law, which had been condemned by the Security Council in its resolution 497 (1981). Israel was seizing pastures and lands, diverting water resources for the benefit of Jewish settlements, prohibiting well-digging by the inhabitants, trying to impose Israeli nationality on Syrian Arab citizens, resorting to arbitrary detention, depriving workers who refused to accept Israeli nationality of their rights and withholding wages, changing school curricula to reinforce racial discrimination among groups, denying Arab inhabitants their property rights and arbitrarily dismissing teachers and workers. Those measures, whose real purpose was to goad the people into abandoning their lands and possessions, were being resisted by the Arab inhabitants who were reasserting that they were Syrian Arabs. Referring to that heroic resistance the Israeli newspaper Al Hamishmar in its issue of 1 July 1984 had stated that after the demonstrations in the village of Majdal Shams, the Israeli authorities were afraid that their policy of imposing Israeli nationality on the territory's inhabitants might arouse their national consciousness and strengthen their allegiance to their Syrian Arab fatherland.

14. The continuing Israeli occupation was in itself an aggression under the terms of United Nations resolutions and principles of international law. Its most dangerous aspects were the annexation of territories and the establishment of Jewish settlements in the very heart of those territories. Those policies were unanimously rejected by the international community, including traditional friends of Israel who had been forced to acknowledge that the establishment of settlements constituted a serious violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention and of the rights of the Arab inhabitants, an obstacle to the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the area and a violation of the principle of the non-admissibility of force as an instrument of territorial aggrandizement.

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(Mr. Abouchaer, Syrian Arab Republic)

15. That did not stop Israel from extending the scope of its colonizing activities. Besides the dozens of settlements already in existence, the Israeli authorities were openly encouraging Jewish racist extremist groups and terrorist groups such as Gush Emunim to establish settlements wherever they chose, proceeding on the principle that any Jew had the right to settle in any part of the territory of Israel as defined in the Torah. The danger of that policy was pointed out in paragraph 328 of the Special Committee's report, which stated that the policy had in fact led to an increase in the harshness of the sentences handed down against Palestinian civilians, a considerable increase in the occurrence of incidents involving violence and the discovery of large-scale organized Israeli settler groups whose purpose was to intimidate Palestinian civilians and to expand and consolidate Israeli settlement and annexation of the occupied territories.

16. That policy was carried out by a military régime which, through the army, the police and the Zionist settlers, maintained a reign of terror, repression and political oppression over the Arab inhabitants. That generalized terrorism assumed many forms and affected all aspects of the Arab inhabitants' political and social life. Mention had to be made, in particular, of cases of interference with freedom of movement, placing the inhabitants of whole towns and villages under forced residence, and the barbaric practices in Israeli prisons which were overflowing with Arab prisoners - men, women and teenagers - at the mercy of Israeli gaolers and torturers. Those practices had been reported by dozens of observers, journalists and even Israeli men of conscience and had been confirmed by many victims who had managed to escape from the hell of Israeli prisons. Therefore, the international community could realize the consequences of Zionist racist aggression and see the reality of a terrorism which could no longer be concealed.

17. The Committee had in each of its reports, provided the most irrefutable evidence, based on the testimony not only of the victims themselves, but also of many Israeli public figures whose conscience prevented them from remaining silent about the crimes committed by groups of Zionist Jewish settlers. Thus the report of the Israeli Deputy Attorney-General, Mrs. Y. Karp, which was mentioned in paragraph 331 of the report of the Special Committee, besides describing the practices of Jewish settlers with regard to the Arab population, confirmed that those practices were openly and officially encouraged. The Israeli authorities might try to make those reports seem unimportant to the international community, but everyone was currently aware that Israel had long been applying the policy described in the report. Similarly, the detailed report of the Israeli Centre for Peace in the Middle East, quoted by Ha'aretz on 14 December 1983, had reported many examples of violations of the human rights of the Arab population in the occupied territories, indicating that the Israeli authorities were flouting international law, depriving the Arab population of its fundamental rights and freedoms and systematically resorting to collective punishments and humiliations. Violations of the rights of the Arab population were even increasing, as noted in Ha'aretz on 28 November 1982 by the law professor and member of the Knesset, Amnon Rubenstein, who had stated that the judicial system oppressed the Arabs in that it was designed not to protect their rights but to defend the gains of the occupation and the interests of the settlers. Another observer, quoted in Ha'aretz on

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(Mr. Abouchaer, Syrian Arab Republic)

10 December 1982, had even compared Israel's policy to apartheid, adding that there were, in actual fact, two legal systems in the occupied territories, one relating to land and applicable only to Jews, and the other relating to people and applicable to Arabs, who were thereby deprived of their rights and relegated to particular areas, like the black majority in South Africa. It should be noted in that connection that the Israeli authorities were applying military law No. 378 of 1950 in the occupied territories, which was merely a new version of the defence laws enacted by the British mandate authorities. Those emergency laws, when applied to Zionists, had been considered, as stated by a former Israeli Minister of Justice, inhumane, unjust and without parallel in any civilized country or even in Nazi Germany, and contrary to the elementary principles of justice. Had those laws suddenly become just and humane because they were applied to Arabs?

18. A significant proportion of the repressive and terrorist activities of the Zionist authorities was directed against educational establishments in the occupied territories, in order to maintain the cultural and scientific backwardness of the Arab population, and thus provide the Israeli labour market with a supply of cheap labour deprived of civil and political rights. Apart from introducing changes and falsifications into school books and programmes, the military authorities were exercising strict control over educational establishments, in order to stifle any inclination to oppose the occupation authorities. The increase in the number of pupils and students was due to the increase in the population and to a greater social awareness and not, as claimed by the representative of Israel in a letter to the Secretary-General, to what he had called the educational policy of his country. That policy consisted in reality of setting up many obstacles, both qualitative and quantitative, to prevent the proper functioning of such educational establishments, obstacles which the report of the Special Committee had enumerated, and which included, in particular, measures aimed at removing Arab and foreign teaching staff from the universities, including French clergy teaching at the Al-Farir Faculty of East Jerusalem and at Bir-Zeit University, as well as some British and American teachers. On that subject the de Monde Diplomatique of July 1984 had published a summary of the report of a mission carried out in January 1984 at the Bir-Zeit and Al-Najah universities but two founding members of the French Centre for Co-operation with Bir-Zeit University, which indicated that even if the Israeli authorities would be given credit for open-mindedness in permitting the establishment of Palestinian universities in the occupied territories, those universities had never been able to function normally, because of problems connected with the occupation.

19. With regard to the impediments to freedom of the press, many paragraphs in the report of the Special Committee described the systematic measures taken to control and suppress press organizations and cultural scientific institutions, which could now be established only in Jerusalem: the constant closing down of newspapers, the placing of editors and journalists under house arrest and banning of the distribution, censorship and even permanent suppression of newspapers. A study made by the former Deputy Mayor of Jerusalem, Meron Benvenisti, published by the "Fund for Free Expression in New York" justified the conclusion that the general control, and the system of preliminary authorization required for any document

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(Mr. Abouchaer, Syrian Arab Republic)

intended for publication, went as far as censoring any mention of censorship and were intended to eliminate any form of expression which might encourage Palestinian national feeling, or suggest that the Palestinians were a nation which had a cultural heritage.

20. The Syrian Arab Republic was convinced that Israel would persist in its inhuman practices and continue to violate international conventions and international law and apply its policy of expansion, colonization, annexation and Judaization of the occupied territories, as long as the international community remained silent about the occupation and the United Nations continued to ignore Israel's flouting of the Charter and the relevant resolutions. The Syrian delegation therefore requested the General Assembly to adopt the following measures as a matter of priority: first, the General Assembly should request the Security Council to take appropriate measures to put an end to the occupation and ensure the prompt return of the Palestinian refugees and exiles to their lands; condemn the Israeli occupation as a flagrant violation of the human rights of the population of the occupied territories; declare null and void all Israeli decisions and measures aimed at annexing territories or establishing settlements, and firmly condemn all Israeli attempts to change the geography, the demographic structure or the legal, political or economic status of the occupied territories; secondly, the General Assembly should reaffirm that the violations of human rights in the occupied territories would cease only when the Palestinian people were able to exercise their right to self-determination and to the establishment of an independent State in their national territory and the Syrian citizens in the Golan Heights regained their rights as a result of unconditional cessation of the military occupation and withdrawal of all Israeli troops from the occupied Arab and Palestinian territories; thirdly, the General Assembly should condemn the persistent refusal of Israel to allow the Special Committee to visit the occupied territories and to co-operate with the Committee, and request Israel to desist from such refusal. The Syrian Arab Republic was prepared to give the Special Committee all possible assistance to enable it to carry out its task.

21. Mr. PAPUCIU (Albania) said that the situation in the occupied Arab territories had steadily deteriorated as a result of the policy of oppression practised by Israel. The barbaric crimes committed at Sabra and Shatila, condemned by the entire world, were by no means unique. The harassment of the civilian population by the Israeli occupation authorities took countless forms: persecutions, systematic searches and inspections, demolition of houses and entire neighbourhoods in villages and towns in the West Bank and Gaza Strip areas, were daily occurrences.

22. in order to force the Arab and Palestinian population to abandon their homes, such inhuman measures were taken as the cutting of the supply of drinking water, the destruction of crops and the systematic expulsion of the inhabitants, who were condemned to live in misery in isolated camps or in tents set up in the desert. Those expulsions were carried out with the aim of facilitating the establishment of new Jewish settlements and thus perpetuating the Israeli occupation by means of annexation.

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(Mr. Papuciu, Albania)

23. Judaization extended to all areas. Arab names were replaced by Hebrew names, and all books on ties between the Palestinians and their homeland were banned, as were maps showing the political and geographical boundaries of Palestine. The settlements bore Hebrew names and the original Arab place names had disappeared. Israeli school programmes were naturally designed to glorify Israel, and any reference to Arab history was suppressed.

24. With its policy of genocide towards the Palestinian people and of aggression against the Arab countries, and with its attempts to annex southern Lebanon, Israel constituted a permanent threat to peace not only in the Middle East, but in the world.

25. It was well known that Israeli forces were currently setting up installations in Lebanese territory that were intended to accommodate new Jewish settlements. Israel's objective in violating the sovereignty of Lebanon, in driving out a large number of Lebanese and Palestinian inhabitants and in installing Jewish settlers, was obvious: it was seeking to annex part of Lebanon, as it had done in the case of Jerusalem and the Golan area, applying what the leader of the Albanian people, Enver Hoxha, had called in his recent book on the Middle East, "A brigand's code of life".

26. Israel's policy had the support of the United States at every level. The American imperialists were supporting that country because it served their hegemonistic plans in the Middle East. Moreover, the Israeli Zionists were taking advantage of the policy of the Soviet Union which, while declaring itself to be "the sincere friend" of the Arab peoples, had allowed Soviet Jews to emigrate to Israel, and some of them were now living on Palestinian lands.

27. The Socialist People's Republic of Albania and the Albanian people had always condemned the criminal policy and inhuman practices of the Israeli Zionists towards the Palestinian people and other Arab peoples. Israel must be compelled to withdraw from the occupied territories so that the Palestinian people could live in their own territory free from all interference.

28. The Albanian people supported the Palestinian and Lebanese peoples and the other Arab peoples, and was convinced that their just cause would triumph.

29. Mr. AL-HAMADI (Qatar) said that it was evident from the report of the Special Committee that Israel was not content with occupying lands and expelling the inhabitants, but was violating the human rights of the population: murders, imprisonment, confiscations, torture, hostage-taking, restrictions on freedom of movement, the closing down of educational establishments, obstacles to freedom of worship, the destruction of housing, damage to movable and immovable property, burning of crops - the population was spared nothing.

30. Israel had persisted in establishing settlements on land belonging to the Palestinian people. It had had recourse to terrorism to instil fear in the population, in defiance of the provisions of the Charter and of the Declaration of

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(Mr. Al-Hamadi, Qatar)

Human Rights. It did not want the inhabitants of the occupied territories to complain or find any one to hear their case in international forums, as if it wished the world to remain in ignorance of everything that was happening there or that there should be no talk of what was happening, at least, while it continued to remind the world of the inhuman practices of which the Jewish people had been the victim during their recent history or distant past. Those practices had been retold in books, films, and television programmes, with abundant exaggerations not substantiated by facts. On the other hand, it attached no importance to the tragedy experienced by the heroic Palestinian people, which was depicted in reliable international reports, and not in writings that were mere fables.

31. The Israeli practices in the occupied territories were not fortuitous acts but an integral part of a plan intended to force the inhabitants to leave their lands so that the usurpers could take possession of them and settle the Palestinian question in their own way - which was also that of the countries which supported them. But the Palestinian people was resisting stubbornly, with the result that the occupiers were intensifying their oppression.

32. The harsher its treatment of the Palestinian people, however, the more Israel was despised by the international community, whose will was expressed in the international instruments, the rules of law and the resolutions that it adopted. Far from remaining silent about Israel's behavior, the international community had repeatedly condemned it and had adopted resolutions calling for recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. Israel, for its part, had always shown the utmost scorn for those resolutions. Needless to say, it could not defy the international community in that way unless it had the support of other countries. Those countries loudly proclaimed their concern for human rights and called others to account for not respecting them: but what rights were enjoyed by the Palestinian people, whose very existence they denied?

33. The occupied territories were subjected to an oppressive occupation, resulting from an invasion which nothing could justify. Yet, normally, occupation forces should conform more strictly to the provisions of international law than military forces involved in an active war. An occupier was expected to conform to the rules of international law, which forbade violation of the rights of civilian populations or the introduction of changes harmful to their way of life, which they should be able to continue as if there were no occupation.

34. Israel claimed that all those measures and practices were necessary to protect the security of the occupying forces and of Israeli citizens - whose presence was imposed on the Palestinian people. That was false reasoning because, as the delegation of Qatar had pointed out in the previous debate, the right to security was part of the right to exist, and the Israelis, whether civilian or not, having no right to exist in Palestinian lands, could not claim a right to security in those lands.

35. The Israeli occupation forces had placed themselves in a situation in which they encountered opposition from those whose lands had been confiscated and who had

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(Mr. Al-Hamadi, Qatar)

been divested of their national sovereignty. Those forces could therefore not use that situation as a pretext to oppress those populations, deny them their natural rights and turn their life into a hell.

36. His delegation reiterated what it had said on many occasions, that the only means of putting an end to that situation was the total withdrawal of the Israeli occupation forces from the occupied Arab territories. It requested the Committee to adopt a resolution condemning Israeli practices in the occupied territories, and once again asked Israel to withdraw its military forces from those territories. In the mean time, it was essential to reaffirm the need to respect the rights of the inhabitants, and Israel must undertake to comply with the provisions of the Charter, the Declaration of Human Rights and other relevant international instruments.

37. Mr. JOUSHAN (Afghanistan) said that the Zionist régime was continuing its inhuman policies and practices against the defenceless people of Palestine and the other occupied Arab territories, in complete violation of the Security Council and General Assembly resolutions and of the Geneva Conventions. The occupation was characterized by persecution and bloodshed, the closing down of schools and universities, repressive measures against Palestinian pupils or students and teachers at all educational levels, etc.

38. The Zionist authorities had forced a large number of Palestinians to leave their homes and had continued, by various measures, to change the legal status, geographical nature and demographic composition of the occupied Palestinian and Arab territories, in flagrant violation of the principles of international law and, in particular, of the provisions of the fourth Geneva Convention. The establishment of Zionist colonial settlements constituted the first step towards annexation of the occupied territories. Confiscations and expropriations had made Palestinians second-class citizens in their own country. The General Assembly, in resolution 38/79, had strongly condemned Israeli policies, in particular the annexation of parts of the occupied territories, including Jerusalem, the establishment of new Israeli settlements and expansion of the existing settlements on private and public Arab lands, and the transfer to those settlements of an alien population. Israeli practices constituted not only a flagrant violation of the Charter and of all the norms and principles of international relations, but were a grave threat to peace and security in the Middle East.

39. Israel's activities in south Lebanon were no different from its activities in the Gaza Strip, the Golan Heights and the West Bank. Israeli troops had been occupying a third of Lebanon for nearly two years, and it had still not been possible to implement resolutions 508 (1982) and 509 (1982) adopted by the Security Council when Israel had first launched its aggression.

40. The financial and military support that Israel received from the United States enabled it to continue to occupy Palestinian and other Arab territories and encouraged it in its expansionism.

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(Mr. Joushan, Afghanistan)

41. He condemned the criminal acts committed by Israel in the occupied territories, in flagrant violation of the Charter and other international instruments, particularly the fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, The Hague Convention of 1907 and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and recalled the message sent by Mr. Karmal, President of the Revolutionary Council of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, on the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. In that message, Mr. Karmal had said that the key to the solution of the Middle East problem was the unconditional withdrawal of Israeli troops from the occupied territories and the recognition of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). A peace conference should therefore be convened with the participation of all the parties concerned, including the PLO. The Soviet Union's proposal of 29 July 1984 could serve as a basis for negotiations.

42. His delegation was in complete solidarity with the just struggle of the heroic Palestinian people and the national patriotic forces of Lebanon against zionism and imperialism and for independence, freedom, peace and progress in the Middle East. The unity and solidarity of all Arab nations could guarantee the attainment of peace and stability in the region.

43. Mr. MATYKHIN (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that Israel's aggressive and expansionist policy and its stubborn refusal to recognize the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people were the root cause of the conflict that had triggered five regional wars.

44. The report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories (A/39/591) brought to light every aspect of that policy. The facts it revealed showed that the rate of Israeli settlement, was increasing in the usurped Arab territories and that the grip of the occupation régime was tightening steadily. It was now 17 years since the west Bank, the Gaza Strip and the Golan Heights had been occupied. In March 1983, Israel's former Prime Minister, Mr. Shamir, had said that the occupied territories were an integral part of Israel, and The Los Angeles Times of 24 July 1983 had reported Israel's Minister for Foreign Affairs as saying that Israeli sovereignty would be extended to the West Bank. The occupying Power was working feverishly to alter the legal status, geographical character and demographic composition of the occupied territories. Nearly 60 per cent of the land in the West Bank had already become Israeli property and more than 160 settlements had been established there; the figure was 200 if one included the Gaza Strip. It was planned to increase the size of the Israeli population in the west Bank to 1,300,000 over the next 30 years. The establishment of settlements was of course accompanied by the plundering of land and the exploitation of local resources to make up for the lack of Israeli resources.

45. The Committee's report also mentioned the arbitrary closure of universities and other educational institutions, the recruitment of teachers on the basis of their political views and the various obstacles which prevented Arab children and students from continuing their studies.

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(Mr. Matykhin, Byelorussian SSR)

46. Turning to Lebanon, was it necessary to recall that a third of Lebanese territory was occupied by Israel? The list of Israel's crimes was a long one: mass arrests, punitive operations - not to mention the massacre of civilians at Sabra and Shatila - torture, deportation, firing on demonstrations, etc.

47. Racist oppression and various forms of discrimination at all levels were an everyday reality for the Palestinian and Arab populations, in violation of a number of international instruments, particularly the fourth Geneva Convention, the Charter of the United Nations and countless United Nations resolutions. The Security Council, the General Assembly and other United Nations bodies had repeatedly condemned the actions taken in the occupied territories and declared them null and void. Security Council resolution 465 (1980), like so many others, remained a dead letter.

48. It was clear that Israel could not continue to defy the principles of international law in that way if it did not have the support and encouragement of the United States. That country provided it with arms, billions of dollars in financial aid and diplomatic and political protection. Had not the United States prevented the Security Council on several occasions from taking action to oppose Israeli policy in the occupied territories? The United States thus benefited from Israel's policies.

49. His delegation strongly condemned those who encouraged Israel in its expansionist policies. It pledged its solidarity with the just struggle of the Arab peoples for a comprehensive political settlement of the Middle East problem. Such a settlement would be possible only if Israel withdrew from all the territories occupied in 1967 and respected the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and to live on their own territory. The United Nations must work for the implementation of the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and the Security Council with a view to creating favourable conditions for solving that crucial problem. A conference should be convened to devise a settlement which was consistent with the vital interests of the peoples of the region and guaranteed their security.

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.