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President: Mr. Stanisław TREPCZYŃSKI (Poland).

AGENDA ITEM 21

The situation in the Middle East (concluded)*

1. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): We shall now hear representatives who wish to explain their votes before we take a vote on draft resolution A/L.686/Rev.1 and Add.1, sponsored by Afghanistan and 20 other countries.

2. Mr. FACK (Netherlands): In previous years the Netherlands delegation to the General Assembly, in its explanation of vote concerning the draft resolutions on the Middle East, has made no secret of its grave doubts on the political and constitutional advisability of such Assembly resolutions.

3. In 1970 the Netherlands representative observed:

"If... the Assembly, in view of the exceptional importance of the item under discussion... were to decide to disregard the precepts of Article 12 of the Charter and to formulate recommendations, I submit that such recommendations would, in order to carry weight, have to follow closely and carefully the decisions taken by the Security Council. Any undermining of the Council's authority by the Assembly would, in our view, have the gravest consequences for the United Nations role in the maintenance of international peace and security generally; in the particular case of the Middle East any divergence between Security Council and General Assembly would be highly undesirable."¹

My delegation then announced that it would not vote for the draft resolution presented to the General Assembly because the draft went further than Security Council resolution 242 (1967) and might therefore upset its balance or undermine its political purport.

4. Last year, the Netherlands delegation reiterated those general views. The Netherlands representative observed once again that there were constitutional difficulties and that a simple appeal to the parties to resume talks on the basis of resolution 242 (1967) would be the answer. He

* Resumed from the 2103rd meeting.

¹ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-fifth Session, Plenary Meetings*, 1896th meeting, para. 64.

added that on that occasion the Netherlands delegation would vote for the draft resolution before the Assembly because the text indicated "... that the only possible point of departure for a solution is Security Council resolution 242 (1967) in its entirety."²

5. This year, the Netherlands delegation has been unable to convince those who were instrumental in the preparation of the original draft resolution [A/L.686] of the danger involved in distorting resolution 242 (1967) by adding to its provisions or by upsetting its delicate balance. We have had many exchanges of view on the subject but our grave objections to a number of paragraphs have remained unheeded by the sponsors.

6. Fortunately, a number of our European partners have had more success. On their initiative, which we applaud, a number of significant improvements have been embodied in the original text, rendering the final result [A/L.686/Rev.1 and Add.1] more acceptable. I refer in particular to the addition in the preamble of a paragraph reading:

"Reaffirming that Security Council resolution 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967 must be implemented in all its parts".

7. I have been instructed by the Netherlands Government to state that that paragraph touches the heart of the matter before us: whatever this General Assembly recommends on the subject of the Middle East it cannot, in our view, alter in any way the delicate fabric of principles, rights and duties laid down in Security Council resolution 242 (1967) of five years ago.

8. Other paragraphs remain unsatisfactory. I shall not detain the Assembly by going through the entire text, but I wish to state here that my delegation considers operative paragraph 6 to be a one-sided text and would have preferred in its place an invitation to the parties to reaffirm their acceptance of Security Council resolution 242 (1967) in all its parts, in order to bring that paragraph into harmony with the preambular paragraph I have just mentioned.

9. In spite of the improvement achieved in the text of operative paragraph 8 we still entertain grave doubts on this point. We fear that some may interpret this paragraph, even as amended, as opening the road towards a form of enforcement action against one of the parties. The Netherlands delegation wishes to go on record as vigorously rejecting such an interpretation and to state that the

² *Ibid.*, *Twenty-sixth Session, Plenary Meetings*, 2106th meeting, para. 223.

Netherlands Government reserves its full freedom of action in this respect.

10. In addition, we have doubts about the wording of operative paragraph 9, which refers to rights of Palestinians. We have noted the explanation made by the representative of the United Kingdom in this connexion [2102nd meeting] and we subscribe to his statement, made on behalf of the five European sponsors, that nothing in the paragraph can add to, or subtract from, the corresponding text in resolution 242 (1967), which reads, "[The Security Council] Affirms further the necessity . . . (b) For achieving a just settlement of the refugee problem". We interpret operative paragraph 9 to mean just that and nothing else.

11. As will be clear from my previous remarks, my Government has had great difficulties with the text before us. On the other hand we appreciate the very considerable efforts made by our European friends and partners to arrive at an improved draft. The Netherlands delegation wishes to place that appreciation on record and to state that, in view of the results obtained and in spite of our lingering doubts, the Netherlands delegation will not withhold its affirmative vote on the amended draft before us [A/L.686/Rev.1].

12. Mr. ZAHAWIE (Iraq): Ever since the item entitled "The situation in the Middle East" was brought before the General Assembly at its twenty-fifth session, Iraq has abstained from participating in the voting on the draft resolutions submitted to the Assembly, for reasons which have already been explained by Iraqi representatives. Having carefully considered the text of draft resolution A/L.686/Rev.1, Iraq sees no reason to change its previous position, notwithstanding its full and unwavering support for the struggle of the sister Arab States to liberate their territories from Israeli occupation and of the valiant people of Palestine for the restoration of full national rights in their usurped homeland.

13. Mr. SHARAF (Jordan): Delegations which vote for the draft resolution before us will have made the right decision. The draft resolution is responsible, positive and balanced. It rests on the principles of the Charter and contains provisions that ought to enlist the support of all nations, regardless of their degree of involvement in the Middle East problem or the distance that separates them from the area geographically. Every nation in the world has a stake in the enforcement by the United Nations of the principle that the acquisition of territory through military conquest is inadmissible; that the territory of a State shall not be the object of occupation by another State through force; that the Geneva Convention of 1949 should be respected with regard to the conditions in areas under occupation; that peace, to be permanent and lasting, must be based on justice.

14. With specific reference to the Middle East, the draft resolution is equally of universal validity. It is based on the balance of obligation between commitment to a lasting peace and commitment to territorial integrity. It is an attempt to mobilize the broadest possible support behind the effort of the United Nations to defend and protect the integrity and rights of small and peaceful nations against violent encroachment by a superior force. It aims at the

establishment of peace in the Middle East by upholding the indispensable elements which are required for that.

15. A limited number of voices have expressed the fear that this draft resolution may be one-sided or lacking in balance. One has to define one's concepts and applications here. A balanced resolution is a resolution which contains all the valid and relevant principles affecting the situation it is addressed to. Balance in a resolution must not be artificial and mechanical. A resolution on racial discrimination cannot attempt to achieve balance by upholding the validity of the notions of racial superiority and of racial equality. A resolution addressed to a colonial situation cannot claim balance by recognizing in one paragraph the legitimacy of the colonial situation and saluting in another the movement of national liberation.

16. If two parties are engaged in a dispute where one party is encroaching upon the rights of the other and the second party is defending its rights without expressing any intentions of belligerency beyond claiming these rights, the United Nations cannot take a position in the mechanical middle in the name of balance. The present draft resolution is neither unbalanced nor one-sided in the true sense of those words. In the true sense it is both balanced and two-sided. It is so because it calls for an ultimate peace in the Middle East based on the territorial integrity of States, respect for the rights of the Palestinian people, which are at the root of the conflict, and guarantees for future security in the area. The draft resolution is based on unanimously adopted Security Council resolution 242 (1967). It expresses concern regarding the stalemated process of the implementation of that resolution. It tries in the meantime to stop activities on the ground which are undertaken within the occupied areas and which, if continued, would end up by destroying the physical and demographic integrity of those areas, thus making peace unachievable.

17. What element of imbalance is there in those provisions? If the reservations expressed by some delegations are dictated by the fact that one party to the dispute, Israel, is opposed to the draft resolution, then imbalance need not be invoked as an excuse. The United Nations must promote agreement among States without destroying the principles of the Charter. If one State is insistent on violating a cardinal principle of the Charter, like the territorial integrity of States or the non-acquisition of territory by force, the duty of the United Nations is primarily to its Charter. This is the *raison d'être* of the United Nations.

18. This draft resolution does not close the road to peace. It mobilizes international moral support behind an aggrieved party claiming its rights within a peaceful framework. The draft resolution may not be decisive in breaking the stalemate; but an accumulation of steps in the same clear direction, backed by the moral force of the United Nations, is our only alternative, and potentially an affective one, to paralysis and inaction.

19. Mr. SOLANO LOPEZ (Paraguay) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Because of the way in which some of the paragraphs of draft resolution A/L.686/Rev.1 are drafted, and in particular in relation to some of the provisions of the Charter and the division of responsibilities and obligations between the Security Council and the General Assembly,

my delegation will be compelled to abstain in the voting that will take place in a few moments.

20. However, I should be failing in my fundamental duties if I were not to express here and now the firm support of my delegation for some of the principles and ideas set forth in the draft resolution to which I have referred.

21. I remember the words of an eminent writer who said that in times of confusion it was better to reiterate the obvious than to try to elucidate what was obscure. The obvious in this case is connected with two of the ideas and principles contained in the document in question. The first consists of the sincere conviction of my delegation that the best and greatest prospects for achieving a just and lasting peace in the Middle East lie in the effective and faithful compliance by the States involved in the conflict with each and every one of the provisions and principles relating to the exercise of rights and compliance with the obligations set forth in Security Council resolution 242 (1967), which was adopted unanimously.

22. That resolution, in our view, is the juridical instrument that contains the essential elements which, if they are implemented in full, would give the Middle East and the countries in the area the just and lasting peace to which all of them and we ourselves sincerely aspire.

23. The second principle is the one connected with the non-recognition of the acquisition of territory through the threat or use of force or military conflict. The principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by these means is one of the cardinal principles underlying the international policy of my country. It is also one of the principles, in a broader framework, of the inter-American system. It is a principle that Paraguay has always accepted in the past, accepts now and will accept in the future in the most sincere, loyal and firm manner.

24. In making this statement, I am doing something more than explaining my vote: I am complying with an ineluctable duty towards our own national traditions in categorically reiterating a principle that is enshrined in the very history and is part of the lifeblood of the Republic of Paraguay.

25. Mr. ZENTAR (Morocco) (*interpretation from French*): The draft resolution on the situation in the Middle East which is about to be voted upon by the Assembly has, in the opinion of the Moroccan delegation, a serious gap which makes it, to say the least, incapable of meeting our desire for a just and viable solution of the crisis in the Middle East.

26. For almost a quarter of a century now this region has never known any real peace, first and foremost because one day in 1948 a grave injustice was committed vis-à-vis the people of Palestine. That people lost at one and the same time its sovereignty, its land and its international personality. We have seen the Palestinians expelled from one territory to the other and herded into camps of unimaginable poverty. They have been destroyed in their dignity and in their flesh. The Palestinian people might have even ceased to exist, or so many believe, had it not been for the periodic visits of Israeli aviation showering death and

bombs on these new ghettos, thus reminding us that at the heart of the Middle East crisis there is, first and foremost, the injustice committed against the people of Palestine who are still being hounded. This injustice was so revolting that 100 million Arabs, at a given moment, all felt themselves as one with the Palestinians, and still retain that same feeling today.

27. But the emotion provoked extended to Africa, then to Asia, then to part of Europe, and now to the international community as a whole. Voices from the least expected quarters have been raised loud and clear to say that without the restoration of the essential rights of the Palestinian people there is no hope for any lasting peace in the Middle East.

28. I should like to repeat here, in the name of the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco, that the political solution of the problem of the rights of the people of Palestine is an essential condition for the solution of the Middle East crisis. As long as there is a veil of modesty cast over this problem, there is no chance of returning to harmony and concord in this area.

29. It is of course possible, and even necessary, to erase the traces of the aggression of Israel of 5 June 1967. It was an aggression against the neighbouring Arab countries which had committed the crime of expressing active solidarity with the people of Palestine.

30. My delegation does not wish it to be said that it has not given its approval and support to a text which clearly calls for the immediate withdrawal of Israel from Arab territories occupied by Israel since June 1967, which calls on all States not to recognize the changes that have taken place and measures adopted by Israel in the occupied territories, and which invites Member States to refrain from supplying any aid to Israel that would consolidate its occupation of Arab territories. These are measures that must be broadly supported in our Assembly, and my country will of course support them.

31. But this Assembly cannot and ought not to consider that such a resolution, even if it is concretely to be implemented some day, is in fact something that will dispose of the question. The question in the Middle East is first and foremost the question of the restoration of the rights of the Palestinian people and their return to their land. That is the price of genuine and lasting peace. Israel is the first that has to understand this necessity, without which nothing can be considered as stable or definitive in the area.

32. Mr. TEKOA (Israel): The draft resolution the General Assembly is about to vote upon is a characteristic reflection of the failings and travesties of United Nations debates on the Middle East. One-sided and inequitable, backward-looking and detrimental, it echoes previous texts which, instead of assisting the parties to the conflict to achieve agreement, have created obstacles to peace-making.

33. An attempt has been made to cleanse the draft resolution of several harmful elements, but it remains an iniquitous document. The text is a symptom of the malady of sterile polemics and acrimonious resolutions—a malady

that has beset the United Nations for years and which the General Assembly has again been unable to overcome at this session. The resolution is a product of Arab negativism and short-sightedness, of an inadequate effort by certain delegations to eliminate some of its aberrations, and of a parliamentary situation in which those Member States which would have wished for a constructive examination of the Middle East situation find themselves engulfed by the sheer numbers of those who are not prepared to engage in a serious, meaningful process of peace-making. Israel cannot allow itself to be engulfed by numbers. The mechanics of voting cannot be permitted to overwhelm the interests of the search for real peace.

34. The draft resolution before us does not serve these interests. Israel will therefore vote against it and treat it in a manner befitting a spurious document. In accordance with the principle of the sovereign equality of all States enshrined in the United Nations Charter, Israel can be guided only by those texts on the conflict in which it is involved that are elaborated in consultation with it and give due consideration to its legitimate rights and interests.

35. Is there any benefit at all for anyone in the draft resolution before this Assembly? By now, the Arab Governments know that nothing can be gained from such a text. By now, the Arab peoples are aware that their hopes for peace are in fact undermined by resolutions of this kind. The nations of the Middle East are not interested in contests of oratory and parliamentary manoeuvres. They desire a genuine peace effort; they hope and pray for real progress towards peace. They deserve better of the United Nations than texts which increase friction between the parties and make the attainment of peace even more difficult.

36. Today, it is more evident than ever that only one road can lead the parties to the Middle East conflict towards peace—the road of dialogue and agreement. The sooner the Arab Governments join Israel on that road, the better the prospects of peace will become.

37. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): I call upon the representative of the United States, who wishes to speak on a point of order.

38. Mr. BUSH (United States of America): The United States delegation would like to request that the General Assembly take a separate vote on operative paragraph 8 of the draft resolution on the Middle East now before us [A/L.686/Rev.1]. We believe that the matter with which that paragraph deals is of considerable significance. The paragraph raises a number of issues that are indeed very important to my Government.

39. Since I am speaking on a point of order, I shall not go deeply into substance, but I wish to emphasize the point we have made to many delegations in consultations—namely, that operative paragraph 8 completely ignores the relationship established by Security Council resolution 242 (1967) between withdrawal from occupied territories and agreement between the parties on the terms of a just and lasting peace. Therefore, my delegation moves, under rule 91, for a separate vote on operative paragraph 8.

40. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): I call upon the representative of Senegal, who wishes to speak on a point of order.

41. Mr. FALL (Senegal) (*interpretation from French*): In the course of this debate we have said on several occasions that we were open to dialogue with all delegations and all the groups in our Assembly. It was thus that various contacts and discussions made it possible to make a number of amendments to our text which we consider to be definite improvements. No one here can say that we have been either close-minded or intransigent. We have discussed all ideas, considered all opinions. While we have not accepted everything, it is still true that all our opposite numbers have at least recognized our good faith and our willingness to co-operate.

42. In adopting such an attitude, we wanted to see this debate concluded in the dispassionate and effective manner it deserved. We owe that much to the members of our Assembly, but we especially owe it to the victims in all camps, victims of a stupid folly, victims whose memory we salute with respect. We also owe it to the widows and orphans who expect from us something other than sacrilegious and time-wasting acrobatics our Assembly truly should avoid.

43. We have now come to the end of our debate, and we wish our conclusions to emerge with clarity and dignity, with respect for the moral values that are the very foundation of our Charter. That is why we can yield not one inch to manoeuvres and diversions. Therefore, on behalf of the sponsors of draft resolution A/L.686/Rev.1 and Add.1, I must regretfully state that it is not possible for us to react favourably to the proposal for a separate vote just made by the representative of the United States. We have taken that decision on the basis of the provisions of rule 91 of our rules of procedure.

44. The sponsors of the draft resolution are all delegations of countries now customarily referred to as belonging to the third world. A personality who for many years was the most worthy of respect and in fact the most respected figure of our Assembly, U Thant, once said that the small nations are the quiet voice of conscience.

45. I am certain that today the great majority of the Assembly will heed that voice of conscience, which still vibrates for the cause of peace, justice and international morality.

46. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): A separate vote has been requested on operative paragraph 8 of draft resolution A/L.686/Rev.1. An objection to that request has just been raised by the representative of Senegal. Rule 91 of the rules of procedure provides that:

“... If objection is made to the request for division, the motion for division shall be voted upon. Permission to speak on the motion for division shall be given only to two speakers in favour and two speakers against...”

47. As no member wishes to speak on the motion for division, we shall proceed to vote on the motion for division in accordance with rule 91.

In favour: Argentina, Austria, Barbados, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Denmark, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Finland, Guatemala, Honduras, Iceland, Israel, Ivory Coast, Lesotho, Liberia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Sweden, United States of America.

Against: Afghanistan, Albania, Bahrain, Botswana, Bulgaria, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cameroon, Chad, Chile, China, Congo, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Cambodia, Guinea, Guyana, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Upper Volta, Uruguay, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zambia.

Abstaining: Australia, Belgium, Bhutan, Bolivia, Brazil, Burma, Central African Republic, Dahomey, Ecuador, Fiji, France, Gabon, Ghana, Greece, Haiti, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Laos, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Maldives, Malta, Nepal, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Thailand, Togo, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Venezuela, Zaire.

The motion for division was rejected by 64 votes to 25, with 34 abstentions.

48. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): I shall now put to the vote draft resolution A/L.686/Rev.1 and Add.1.

A vote was taken by roll call.

Cyprus, having been drawn by lot by the President, was called upon to vote first.

In favour: Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Dahomey, Ecuador, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gambia, Greece, Guinea, Guyana, Honduras,³ Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Nepal, Netherlands, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Peru, Poland, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Upper Volta, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia, Afghanistan, Argentina, Austria, Bahrain, Belgium, Bhutan, Botswana, Bulgaria, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cameroon, Chad, Chile, Congo, Cuba.

Against: Dominican Republic, Israel, Nicaragua, Uruguay, Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica.

³ The delegation of Honduras subsequently stated that it wished to have its vote recorded as an abstention (see *infra*, para. 107).

Abstaining: Denmark, El Salvador, Fiji, Gabon, Ghana, Guatemala, Haiti, Iceland, Ivory Coast, Laos, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, New Zealand, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Philippines, Singapore, South Africa, Sweden, Togo, United States of America, Venezuela, Albania, Australia, Barbados, Brazil, Canada, Central African Republic, China.

The draft resolution was adopted by 86 votes to 7, with 31 abstentions [resolution 2949 (XXVII)].

Mr. Gabre-Sellassie (Ethiopia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

49. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): We shall now hear those representatives wishing to explain their votes after the vote.

50. Mr. BORCH (Denmark): Our abstention in the vote on the resolution just adopted corresponds to our vote last year on a resolution which, in principle, followed similar lines, and our reasons for abstaining correspond to our explanation of vote in 1971.⁴

51. To my Government, which maintains and cherishes friendly relations with all the States in the area, it is a matter of profound regret that a solution has not yet been found to the serious and deep-rooted problems facing the Middle East and that all efforts to bring about a just and lasting peace in that area have so far proved unsuccessful.

52. We, for our part, understand and respect the anguish which this stalemate has generated. We remain in doubt, however, as to the advisability and realism of dealing with this serious situation in resolutions which, as clearly indicated, would tend to further separate the parties.

53. Rather, we had hoped for a text in which the membership would have put their united persuasion behind efforts to bring the parties towards a speedy settlement in conformity with Security Council resolution 242 (1967). That resolution remains the basis of the search for peace in the Middle East in accordance with the principles of pacific settlement of disputes as set forth in the Charter. It is therefore vitally important that the careful balance of that resolution, which does enjoy the acceptance of the main parties, be maintained and be confirmed in its entirety.

54. Despite the divisiveness of the vote just taken, it is our hope, indeed our expectation, that good and constructive efforts will be displayed in the coming months to activate the diplomatic processes in the direction of peace in the area. We expect the parties to co-operate actively and fully in such efforts.

55. In the United Nations it is of particular importance that we fully support the mission of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. We do, and we urgently call for the fullest co-operation with the Secretary-General and with Ambassador Jarring in their arduous task. We shall not give up the hope that eventually the efforts will prove to be rewarding.

⁴ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-sixth Session, Plenary Meetings*, 2017th meeting, paras.33-36.

56. Mr. BISHARA (Kuwait): I should like to explain the views of my Government on the resolution which was just adopted. The resolution is based mainly on Security Council resolution 242 (1967). My Government still maintains its reservations on that resolution, and believes that those reservations are valid for the following reasons.

57. First, resolution 242 (1967) links the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the occupied Arab territories to certain political-juridical requirements placed upon the Arab countries concerned. That means that the absolute obligation to withdraw is made conditional. In my Government's view, that constitutes a dangerous precedent in international relations, inasmuch as it rewards the aggressor and might encourage the resort to force, thus creating havoc in world order instead of harmony.

58. Second, my Government believes that operative paragraph 2 (b) of resolution 242 (1967), which reads "For achieving a just settlement of the refugee problem", is ambiguously worded and inadequate to fulfil the aspirations of the people of Palestine.

59. The General Assembly, at its twenty-fourth, twenty-fifth, and twenty-sixth sessions, and at the current session, has adopted resolutions which fully recognize the inalienable rights and the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people, including its right and aspirations to self-determination.

60. The General Assembly has emphatically declared that full respect for the inalienable rights of the people of Palestine is an indispensable element in the establishment of a just and lasting peace. It is only when it is interpreted in this context that the phrase "a just settlement of the refugee problem" can be acceptable to my Government. My Government believes that the problem of the Middle East will not be solved unless the Palestinians exercise their inalienable right to self-determination, in accordance with the aforementioned resolutions of the General Assembly. Peace will reign supreme in the area only when the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people are taken into account. Accordingly, the paragraph concerning the "just settlement of the refugee problem" is acceptable to my Government only when it means the self-determination of the Palestinian people.

61. My delegation cast an affirmative vote on draft resolution A/L.686/Rev.1, which is based on Security Council resolution 242 (1967), bearing in mind that my Government is not a party directly or indirectly involved in the process of the implementation of the resolution. Notwithstanding my Government's reservations on resolution 242 (1967), which are still valid, my delegation cast a favourable vote on draft resolution A/L.686/Rev.1 for the following reasons.

62. First, the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force is one which my Government strictly observes and respects. It is a principle which, if scrupulously maintained, will undoubtedly enhance international security and entrench the ideals of the United Nations Charter in the minds of present and future generations and set a criterion for solid and fruitful international relations. On this principle we cannot afford

to falter. In the understanding of the overwhelming majority of this august body, Israel should withdraw from all the territories it occupied after 4 June 1967.

63. Secondly, my Government believes that the Arab countries whose territories were flagrantly occupied in 1967 have the right to choose the means by which they can regain and restore their territories. Since these Arab countries still nurse the hope that their occupied territories can be restored by peaceful means through United Nations efforts, my Government would not object to this approach.

64. Thirdly, the encouraging new element in the resolution that has just been adopted is that it will be transmitted by the General Assembly to the Security Council for "its appropriate action". We maintain the view that the Security Council should enter into talks aimed at finalizing appropriate measures in accordance with Chapter VII of the Charter and applying them against States that challenge the will of the international community.

65. Mr. LONGERSTAEY (Belgium) (*interpretation from French*): As we said in our statement in the debate [2101st meeting] the Belgian delegation was afraid that the result of our work might not constitute an element likely to favour the peace efforts. Today our delegation supported the draft resolution that has just been adopted, although that text does not exactly represent what we would have wished. In fact, any document of our Organization which might appear to depart from Security Council resolution 242 (1967) may make the search for a lasting peace even more difficult.

66. But the amendments which we presented together with a number of our partners in the European Community [A/L.688] made it possible to highlight the primarily juridical and political character of this important resolution of the Security Council.

67. Finally, we wish to reiterate that paragraph 8 does not open the road to enforcement action against Israel. As regards paragraph 10, we should like to associate ourselves fully with what was stated by the representative of the United Kingdom [2102nd meeting]. That paragraph introduces no new element in what is set forth in resolution 242 (1967) in favour of the Palestinians. Belgium therefore, despite certain hesitations, supported the text because the sponsors of the draft resolution accepted the amendments submitted by us and because it is desirable to affirm once again our will to seek, on the basis of all the elements of resolution 242 (1967), the road to peace in the Middle East.

68. Mr. FRAZÃO (Brazil): Upon instructions from my Government, the Brazilian delegation abstained in the vote on draft resolution A/L.686/Rev.1. Brazil recognizes the highly constructive spirit demonstrated during the negotiations that took place at the current session of the General Assembly by the delegations that sponsored the draft resolution, as well as by many others directly interested in the grave question of the Middle East. We cannot but appreciate the efforts of the authors of the draft to revise it and to bring it more into accordance with the principles laid down in Security Council resolution 242 (1967), which we fully support. Brazil considers that, unfortunately, some

elements and expressions remain in the phraseology of the resolution just adopted which could be interpreted as not entirely in keeping with the careful and impartial balance established by resolution 242 (1967). Had it not been for those elements and expressions, we would have been glad to cast an affirmative vote on the resolution. We hope that in the year to come the political will to engage in conclusive negotiations will lead to fruitful diplomatic initiatives, affording the Assembly the opportunity to take positive steps towards the peaceful settlement of this very grave problem.

69. Mr. BOATEN (Ghana): My delegation's abstention in the vote on draft resolution A/L.686/Rev.1 was motivated by our sincere concern over the Middle East issue and our wish to see peace restored in that troubled and conflict-torn region of the world. That concern should be understood in the light of my country's general foreign policy, which has as one of its cardinal elements the pursuit of world peace and security, rooted in international understanding and co-operation. There is another factor which underlies my country's concern over the issue; this relates to the cordial and friendly relations which exist between Ghana and all the countries in the Middle East involved in the conflict. It was because of all those factors that Ghana fully supported the initiatives of the Organization of African Unity [OAU] aimed at assisting in the search for a solution to the issue. For the same reasons we supported the initiatives of the Secretary-General through his able Special Representative, Ambassador Jarring. Ghana will continue to support such activities in the belief that there is yet a hope of finding a lasting solution to the issue which not only will ensure the security of the region as a whole, but will also lead to useful co-operation among its peoples.

70. My delegation would like to affirm its opposition to any acquisition by any country of the territory of another country by force. That is why we cannot accept the Israeli occupation of Arab territories—the result of the June 1967 Middle East war—if this should become permanent. Equally, and as a corollary of this, my delegation cannot support any action by Israel within the territories occupied by it as a result of the June 1967 war which would indicate an intention to incorporate those territories into the State of Israel.

71. We are also anxious that the problem created by the Palestinian refugees should be solved as soon as possible to alleviate the suffering of those refugees.

72. My delegation, however, holds the view that in our attempt to find a solution to the complex issues involved in the Middle East situation nothing should be done which would have the effect of hardening the positions of the countries concerned in the issue and, in consequence, of making it impossible for a spirit of compromise and accommodation to emerge to pave the way to a satisfactory solution.

73. It is for that reason that my delegation continues to support Security Council resolution 242 (1967) as offering a satisfactory basis for a just solution of the issue. This resolution in its second preambular paragraph emphasized

“... the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war and the need to work for a just and lasting peace

in which every State in the area”—that is, the Middle East—“can live in security”.

74. The operative paragraphs of resolution 242 (1967) read as follows:

“1. *Affirms* that the fulfilment of Charter principles requires the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East which should include the application of both the following principles:

- (i) Withdrawal of Israel armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict;
- (ii) Termination of all claims or states of belligerency and respect for and acknowledgement of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every State in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force;

“2. *Affirms further* the necessity

“(a) For guaranteeing freedom of navigation through international waterways in the area;

“(b) For achieving a just settlement of the refugee problem;

“(c) For guaranteeing the territorial inviolability and political independence of every State in the area . . .”

75. If I have quoted Security Council resolution 242 (1967) at length it was not from any desire on the part of my delegation to be tedious, but for the sole reason that I wanted the difficulty which my delegation had had with regard to draft resolution A/L.686/Rev.1 to be fully appreciated and understood.

76. It is now nearly five years since that resolution was adopted as a basis for the settlement of the Middle East issue. Since then there have been various initiatives by the Secretary-General, by States Members of this Organization and by the OAU. In spite of those efforts the problem still continues to plague this Organization. In the view of my delegation, that is so not because of any inadequacy of resolution 242 (1967) but, primarily, because of the interpretations which have been placed on the resolution by the parties directly involved in the conflict, each of whom interprets it in a manner which satisfies its own position and emphasizes its concerns. My delegation sees this resolution as a package deal seeking a settlement which, while not providing advantages for any, nevertheless offers a solution which takes fully into consideration the concerns of all of the parties. My delegation's position on draft resolutions which have been submitted on this issue in the Assembly in the past, as well as on draft resolution A/L.686/Rev.1, has been guided by that interpretation of resolution 242 (1967). We have had to take that position in the hope that the door to a just settlement of the Middle East issue will be kept open and that the spirit behind the interpretation of resolution 242 (1967) will continue to guide our efforts in seeking such a solution.

77. Mr. RAE (Canada): The Canadian delegation abstained in the vote on draft resolution A/L.686/Rev.1, with the sincere regret that the debate on the Middle East did not lead to a resolution which brought the parties to the dispute closer to agreement. The Canadian delegation was unable to accept the retention of certain references in the draft resolution which, in the view of my Government, could be interpreted as derogating from the balance and integrity of Security Council resolution 242 (1967). However, in abstaining the Canadian delegation appreciated the fact that the sponsors had agreed to a number of suggested amendments to their draft resolution, which was thus substantially improved by the inclusion of important elements of resolution 242 (1967).

78. My Government continues to believe that Security Council resolution 242 (1967) constitutes the best available basis for negotiations aimed at a just, lasting and comprehensive peace settlement in the Middle East. It is the earnest hope of my Government that all parties to the dispute in the Middle East will now take all steps necessary to achieve such a peace.

79. As the representative of France stated in this hall yesterday [2103rd meeting], we would wish to see the Secretary-General and his Special Representative, Mr. Jarring, resume their interrupted contacts with the parties with a view to arriving at the accord which is the earnest desire of the international community. Efforts to promote increasingly substantive exchanges on the elaboration of a peace agreement must be pursued. Progress towards an agreed peace settlement is not, and certainly need not be, dependent on a particular outcome of proceedings in this Assembly. The framework for a peaceful settlement and ample machinery for elaborating its terms remain intact and at the disposal of the parties. There is, in the view of my delegation, no valid reason why the process of forging agreement should not be resumed in the wake of this debate. The renewed dedication of the parties to that task with the extensive help available to them could offer opportunities which ought not to be lost.

80. Mr. MARIN BOSCH (Mexico) (*interpretation from Spanish*): In order to understand the vote we have cast in favour of draft resolution A/L.686/Rev.1, one need only read the statement made from this rostrum by the head of my delegation on 3 November 1970.⁵

81. I wish only to add to what we stated then that the Mexican delegation hopes that its position might contribute to the acceptance in all its parts of Security Council resolution 242 (1967), which has been mentioned so many times in all debates, and that that acceptance might be substantiated by the consistent deeds of all Member States without exception.

82. Mr. WANG Jun-sheng (China) (*translation from Chinese*): The Chinese delegation has studied the draft resolution on the situation in the Middle East sponsored by Afghanistan and 20 other countries [A/L.686/Rev.1 and Add.1]. We support the just demand for the immediate withdrawal of Israel from the Arab territories it has

occupied since 5 June 1967 and the declaration that changes carried out by Israel in the occupied Arab territories in contravention of the Geneva Conventions of 1949 are null and void, and support the just demand that states refrain from providing Israel with assistance. However, we cannot but point out with regret that the draft resolution fails to condemn the Israeli Zionist aggression against the Arab countries and peoples, that it contains no explicit call for the restoration of the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people and fails to support the just struggles of the Arab peoples to resist aggression and recover their lost territories. Therefore the Chinese delegation abstained in the voting on the said draft resolution. The Chinese delegation reiterates that the Chinese people will, as always, stand by the peoples of the Arab countries and Palestine and resolutely support their just struggle against aggression. We firmly believe that victory surely belongs to the heroic peoples of the Arab countries and Palestine.

83. Mr. JANKOWITSCH (Austria): The Austrian Federal Government has repeatedly expressed its deep concern at the situation existing in the Middle East and its interest in a peaceful settlement among States with which Austria has always maintained and continues to maintain close and friendly relations. Guided by those basic considerations, my Government has supported all resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly which could be expected to bring about or at least facilitate a peaceful settlement in the area. It is for the same reason that my Government continues to give whole-hearted support to the mission of Ambassador Jarring, which we consider indispensable for achieving peace in the Middle East.

84. In this context I wish to emphasize in particular the importance of Security Council resolution 242 (1967), which, in our view, continues to provide the basis for a lasting, just and peaceful solution. In voting for the resolution the General Assembly has just adopted, my Government has been guided by the approach I have just outlined, as the resolution reaffirms resolution 242 (1967) and its essential provisions. The amendments that had been introduced to the previous draft by a number of European countries [A/L.688] would, furthermore, indicate Europe's interest in making a positive contribution to a peaceful solution of the problem.

85. At the same time, my delegation cannot refrain from stating that the resolution contains elements which, in the view of my delegation, are unlikely to prove conducive to the objective the international community seeks to attain—I am referring in particular to operative paragraphs 6, 8 and 9—especially as we feel that adequate provision has been made in resolution 242 (1967) and in other parts of the resolution just adopted to cover those aspects and to obtain the results which those operative paragraphs are intended to obtain. Therefore we have grave reservations about the wisdom of including them in this resolution.

86. In saying that, I should underline that my Government's main preoccupation continues to be that anything undertaken on behalf of the United Nations in dealing with the problem of the Middle East should not introduce or preserve elements of tension but should rather concentrate on all the factors that could be expected to contribute to a

⁵ *Ibid.*, Twenty-fifth Session, Plenary Meetings, 1895th meeting, paras. 1-15.

satisfactory solution. My Government hopes that the resolution we have just adopted will serve that overriding objective.

87. Let me say, in conclusion, that Austria will continue to express its interest in contributing in a positive way to a solution of the problem of the Middle East. It is in this spirit that my Government is proposing at the present preparatory talks in Helsinki concerning the agenda of the Conference on European Security and Co-operation inclusion in the agenda of an item concerning a European contribution to the establishment of peace in the Middle East.

88. Mr. NACO (Albania) (*interpretation from French*): The Albanian delegation set forth its position on the question of the Middle East in its statement yesterday [2103rd meeting].

89. As regards the resolution which has just been adopted, we wish to emphasize that, although it contains certain positive references, such as paragraphs 4 and 8 of the operative part, it still does not condemn the Israeli aggressors for their perfidious aggression committed against the Arab peoples and for the continuation of that aggression, and in particular, for the continuation of the occupation of Arab territories since June 1967, as well as for the monstrous crimes perpetrated against the Arab peoples. We consider that Israel must immediately withdraw all its troops from all the occupied territories and that the solution of the problem of the Middle East must include the solution of the Palestinian problem in accordance with the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to return to their homeland and their right to self-determination and to their Palestinian nationality.

90. In view of the defects we have referred to and certain references contained in draft resolution A/L.686/Rev.1, we regret that we were obliged to abstain in the vote on this draft. The attitude of my delegation is fully in accordance with the position of principle on this question we have upheld since the aggressors unleashed their perfidious attack on three Arab countries. We support and always will firmly support the struggle of the Palestinian people and the other Arab peoples for their just cause and we are convinced that through this struggle the Arab peoples will recover their occupied territories and bring about the failure of the diabolical plans of their enemies, be they overt or covert.

91. Mr. ALGÅRD (Norway): In comparison with last year's resolution on the situation in the Middle East—resolution 2799 (XXVI)—the resolution just adopted by this Assembly contains certain new elements, expressed in operative paragraph 8. The implications and consequences of these new elements are not quite clear to my delegation. In view of that, my delegation considered that it should abstain on the draft resolution.

92. Mr. CASTILLO-VALDES (Guatemala) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Once again the Guatemalan delegation expresses its concern over the situation prevailing in the Middle East.

93. In the course of the debate on agenda item 21, the positions of the parties directly affected were made crystal clear. Also, a large number of countries, Members of the United Nations family, who, as such, seek a just and rapid solution to the problem, expressed their positions.

94. In considering the situation in the Middle East, my delegation has noted with satisfaction some indications that seem to suggest the gravity of that situation is, to some degree, diminishing. Today, however, we regret that the content of draft resolution A/L.686/Rev.1, submitted by Afghanistan and other countries, does not, in the opinion of the Guatemalan delegation, represent a positive contribution to the achievement of a just and lasting settlement of the problem.

95. For this reason, and following express instructions from my Government, my delegation abstained in the vote that was taken a few moments ago concerning the situation in the Middle East.

96. Mr. IPOTO EYEBE BAKAND'ASI (Zaire) (*interpretation from French*): In the discussion in the general debate on the problem of the Middle East, the Commissioner of State for Foreign Affairs and Co-operation of Zaire stated:

“Despite the optimism which seems to pervade international relations within an atmosphere of a relative détente, we cannot shut our eyes to the ominous developments of the Middle East tragedy. We know, we must recognize, that this problem remains unchanged and is a matter of great concern.” [2044th meeting, para. 131.]

97. The debate on the question at this session of the General Assembly has shown that all attempts made so far to arrive at a peaceful solution have not been successful. The international community cannot remain indifferent and let the situation follow its course—a situation that has been going on for two years, in other words, a “no peace, no war” state of affairs.

98. Zaire, which maintains relations with the parties to the conflict—all the parties to the conflict—has always asked all of them to do everything they could to make possible the honest and total application of Security Council resolution 242 (1967).

99. The text that has just been adopted was an expression, to some extent, of the international concern, especially where it recalls the principles of the Charter of the Organization, and elsewhere calls for a peaceful solution of the problem—in this sense respecting the essential features of Security Council resolution 242 (1967), which had the advantage of being balanced, and indeed acceptable to the parties to the conflict.

100. Zaire voted for the draft resolution, thereby indicating the consistency of its views concerning the situation in the Middle East, which it wants to see settled peacefully at an early date.

101. Mr. BUSH (United States of America): We regret very much that the resolution which has just been adopted constitutes precisely the kind of resolution that we had so

much hoped could be avoided at this Assembly. This resolution, in our judgement, cannot really render constructive assistance to the processes of diplomacy. It cannot offer encouragement to the parties to reach a peaceful accommodation of their differences.

102. As we and others have noted many times before, Security Council resolution 242 (1967) is a carefully balanced text, whose provisions regarding the basic aspects of a settlement are integrally interrelated. Resolution 242 (1967) is designed to serve as a guideline for a peaceful settlement which meets the political, security and economic interests of all the peoples in the area. It is the only agreed basis for such a settlement and, as I said four days ago [2098th meeting], it is essential that we, and particularly the principal parties concerned, preserve the negotiating framework which resolution 242 (1967) provides.

103. Several paragraphs of this resolution appear calculated to upset the careful balance of Security Council resolution 242 (1967). The resolution ignores completely the relationship established by resolution 242 (1967) between the withdrawal from the occupied territories and the agreement between the parties on the terms of a just and lasting peace.

104. The United States was particularly concerned, as indicated in our intervention on a point of order earlier this afternoon, over the language of operative paragraph 8, notwithstanding the efforts of a number of delegations to tone down the more objectionable features of the original language. I wish to record here and now that had we been permitted to vote on that paragraph separately, as we indicated earlier, we would have voted "No". This paragraph is directly contrary to the United States policy on the matter of assistance, and cannot affect our attitude on this.

105. The Assembly cannot expect that by adopting such a resolution it can establish a new agreed basis for peace in the Middle East. Four days ago our Government urged the Members of this Assembly to ensure that our debate contributed directly to an improvement in the atmosphere

in the Middle East and to the prospects for peace-making or, at a minimum, to ensure that opportunities for diplomacy in the months ahead were not set back.

106. President Nixon said recently that the Middle East will have high priority in his administration, and only this week Secretary Rogers reaffirmed in Brussels the United States intention to be active diplomatically to encourage meaningful negotiations between the parties.

107. Mr. ARITA QUIÑONEZ (Honduras) (*interpretation from Spanish*): In the vote just taken my delegation's vote was mistakenly recorded as affirmative. It was my delegation's intention to abstain.

108. My delegation agrees with most of the terms and provisions of draft resolution A/L.686/Rev.1, voted on today, not half-heartedly but fully, especially with regard to those paragraphs that reaffirm the contents of Security Council resolution 242 (1967), where it clearly lays down the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force and the need to restore territories thus occupied.

109. However, my delegation objects to the terms of operative paragraph 8, in conjunction with operative paragraph 11. In fact, operative paragraph 8 calls upon States to avoid actions that could constitute recognition of occupation, without actually spelling out the nature of such actions. And operative paragraph 11, as we interpret it, leaves such a judgement to the Secretary-General and the Security Council, who automatically become supervisors authorized by the United Nations of the foreign relations of a sovereign State, namely Israel. We do not believe that to be appropriate, and that is why we abstained in the vote on the resolution.

110. Had those paragraphs been voted upon separately, we would have voted against them and in favour of the rest of the draft resolution.

The meeting rose at 4.55 p.m.