



President: Mr. Jorge E. ILLUECA (Panama).

Tribute to the memory of Mr. Bernardo Zuleta, Under-Secretary-General and Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Law of the Sea

1. The SECRETARY-GENERAL (*interpretation from Spanish*): It is my painful duty to inform the General Assembly of the death early this morning of Mr. Bernardo Zuleta, Under-Secretary-General and Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Law of the Sea.

2. Mr. Zuleta carried out the duties of this important post with exceptional efficiency for more than nine years. Both as the representative of Colombia in the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor beyond the Limits of National Jurisdiction and at the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, as well as in his capacity of senior officer of the Secretariat in that Conference, Bernardo Zuleta acquitted himself with exemplary brilliance and dignity.

3. Bernardo Zuleta came from a solid legal and diplomatic tradition. He was the son of the Chairman of the Preparatory Commission for the first General Assembly of the United Nations in 1945 which, one might say, predestined him to work in close co-operation with the Organization and to play the role that eventually became his in the drafting of one of the main achievements of the United Nations in international co-operation and the progressive development of international law, namely, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. Happily, he lived to see the completion of that great endeavour, to which he had contributed so much, and he was eager to continue with the noble task of putting into effect this new system, so full of promise.

4. The United Nations has lost in my esteemed friend, Bernardo Zuleta, a most distinguished public servant. I should like to convey to his wife and to his children, as well as to the Government of Colombia, my most profound and sincere condolences.

5. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Spanish*): It is with deep sadness that the General Assembly has heard from the Secretary-General of the death early today in New York City of Mr. Bernardo Zuleta, Under-Secretary-General and Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Law of the Sea.

6. The death of Mr. Zuleta is, without doubt, an irreparable loss for Colombia, Latin America and the international community, because statesmen of his moral and intellectual standing are not easily found in today's world.

7. Bernardo Zuleta was an outstanding Colombian public figure who performed valuable services for his country as a politician, a writer, a member of the judiciary, a constitutional lawyer, a diplomat and a university professor.

8. In the United Nations, he will always be remembered as a man of the United Nations through both family

tradition and personal vocation. As the proud heir of his father, Mr. Eduardo Zuleta Angel, who presided over the Preparatory Commission of the United Nations, which met in London in 1945, Bernardo Zuleta was involved in the work of the Organization as a representative of his country and a Secretariat official.

9. In the sphere of human relations, Bernardo Zuleta was particularly brilliant, displaying the mastery and elegance of superior men endowed with a natural vocation for dialogue, understanding and friendly co-operation. His universal vision of the United Nations won him friends throughout the world.

10. Mr. Zuleta's distinguished record as a diplomat was recognized by all, particularly during the initial phase of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, which won for this eminent Latin American the distinction of being appointed by the Secretary-General as his Special Representative to that Conference.

11. Thanks to his dynamic leadership, which was exercised within the framework of strict objectivity and dedication, the Conference was able on more than one occasion to find its way out of critical situations and to open up paths for negotiation and compromise which led it to a successful outcome.

12. The memory of Bernardo Zuleta will for all time be identified with the success of the Conference, crowned by the opening for signature in Jamaica in December 1982 of that monumental achievement which is the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

13. Before dying, he could say like Neruda in one of his *Cantos ceremoniales*:

"I said 'I am here'. Stripped in the light,
I let my hands fall to the sea,
and when everything took on transparency,
under the land, I was at peace."

14. As President of the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session, I wish to convey the condolences of the Assembly on the occasion of the death of Mr. Bernardo Zuleta to the Secretary-General, who has lost one of his most eminent associates, to the President of the Republic of Colombia, Mr. Belisario Betancur Cuartas, on the death of this distinguished son of Colombia and of Latin America and to Mrs. Pilar Jaramillo de Zuleta and her children, as well as to the entire family, on the death of a husband and father of such noble qualities.

15. Mr. ALBÁN-HOLGUÍN (Colombia) (*interpretation from Spanish*): On behalf of the Government of Colombia, the people of Colombia and the family of Mr. Bernardo Zuleta, I should like to express to you and to the Secretary-General our profound gratitude for the words you have uttered in connection with Mr. Zuleta's death.

16. He was a great Colombian because he was a public servant in a number of posts in our country, a great professional in the realm of law, a perfect gentleman and a great friend. He was, furthermore, a great Latin American, always concerned for the destiny of this part of the world so dear to all of us. He was a great humanitarian because when he came to the United Nations he devoted

himself to embodying in positive norms the rights of all people over the seas.

17. We in Colombia would like to express our gratitude also for the support always given to Bernardo Zuleta's work, which we believe to be ours, too.

18. We should like to thank the President and the Secretary-General for their words and to express our gratitude to all representatives present in this Hall who collaborated with Mr. Zuleta in his immense task in the United Nations.

On the proposal of the President, the members of the General Assembly observed a minute of silence.

AGENDA ITEM 33

Question of Palestine (*continued*):

- (a) Report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People;
- (b) Report of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine;
- (c) Reports of the Secretary-General

19. Mr. MOHD. AMIN (Malaysia): The question of Palestine has been recognized as one of the most acute and complex problems of our time. It was inherited by the United Nations at the time of its establishment. Today, more than ever before, an urgent solution to this question, which has been the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict, is essential. It requires a comprehensive, just and lasting political settlement that would encompass the aspirations, hopes and dreams of all peoples in the region.

20. During the year, we have deliberated countless times and made unswerving efforts to bring about peace and stability to all nations and peoples in the region, as well as to restore the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to self-determination and the right to the establishment of an independent State in Palestine.

21. Those untiring efforts at the various meetings in the past months, at Arusha, Managua, Sharjah, Kuala Lumpur and Geneva, have been fruitful. They have focused world attention on the gravity and complexity of the question of Palestine. They have indicated to the whole world that partial solutions to the problem were inadequate and any delay to seek a comprehensive settlement could only exacerbate tension in the region.

22. There must now be greater determination and efforts towards a new era and a truly comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the region. Such an era must encompass the realization of our hopes and dreams for stability and justice in the Middle East, as well as the creation of a new generation of peace where all peoples of the region would exchange the vengeance and conflict of the past for a future of peaceful coexistence based on mutual trust, respect and understanding.

23. The International Conference on the Question of Palestine, held at Geneva from 29 August to 7 September this year, has provided us with the framework for peace. It is now time for us, the world community, to act without delay to implement the principles and purposes of the Geneva Declaration on Palestine¹ and the Programme of Action for the Achievement of Palestinian Rights.¹ To delay any action on those two consensus instruments for peace and justice would deny us the opportunity to work for a comprehensive, just and durable settlement of the question of Palestine.

24. What indeed emerged at Geneva was the "spirit of Geneva"—a clear and universal convergence of views with regard not only to the gravity of the situation in the

Middle East but, more important, also to what needed to be done. It is now time for all concerned to work together towards a new era in which we can replace a generation of war by a generation of peace. This can only be achieved on the basis of security for the Palestinians within an independent and sovereign State of their own in the context of secure and internationally recognized boundaries.

25. In order to give effect to what we agreed by acclamation at Geneva, this body must declare that it considers it essential that an international peace conference on the Middle East be convened on the basis of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the relevant resolutions of the United Nations, with the aim of achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict, an essential element of which would be the establishment of an independent Palestinian State in Palestine.

26. This peace conference should be convened under the auspices of the United Nations with the participation of all parties to the Arab-Israeli conflict, including the Palestine Liberation Organization [PLO], as well as the United States of America, the Soviet Union and other States concerned, on a footing of equality.

27. To implement this process for peace, the Security Council has the primary responsibility for making appropriate international arrangements on the basis of the relevant United Nations resolutions in order to guarantee and carry out the accords reached at the peace conference.

28. These international arrangements are spelt out in part II, section A, of the Programme of Action. They are:

"(a) Taking measures consistent with the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force to ensure Israel's withdrawal from the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem, within a specific timetable;

"(b) Undertaking effective measures to guarantee the safety and security and legal and human rights of the Palestinians in the occupied territories pending the withdrawal of the Israeli forces from the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967, including Jerusalem;

"(c) Subjecting those territories, following the withdrawal of Israel, to a short transitional period, under the supervision of the United Nations, during which period the Palestinian people would exercise its right to self-determination;

"(d) Facilitating the implementation of the right to return of the Palestinians to their homes and property;

"(e) Supervising elections to the constituent assembly of the independent Palestinian State in which all Palestinians shall participate, in the exercise of their right to self-determination;

"(f) Providing, if necessary, temporary peace-keeping forces in order to facilitate the implementation of subparagraphs (a) to (e) above."

29. Today, more than ever before, we must shoulder our responsibility on the question of Palestine. By virtue of General Assembly resolution 181 (II) we have given the Palestinian people the moral, political and legal foundation on which to achieve their inalienable rights, including the right to independent Statehood. This responsibility remains unalterably ours, and in particular that of the members of the Security Council, which has the primary role of ensuring international peace and security. As such, it is our joint duty and responsibility.

30. At stake in the question of Palestine are international peace and security, liberty and human dignity,

justice and fair play; the restitution of those principles and values is a common responsibility and cannot be the monopoly of any one nation. The tragedy of Palestine is indeed a tragedy of all mankind and not one which concerns a few only. We should now act together promptly to give effect to the Geneva Declaration on Palestine and the Programme of Action and to achieve their objectives.

31. Mr. AL-ALFI (Democratic Yemen) (*interpretation from Arabic*): We have heard with great regret and sorrow the news of the death of Mr. Bernardo Zuleta, Under-Secretary-General and Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Law of the Sea. On behalf of my delegation and on my own behalf, I should like to take this opportunity to convey our heartfelt condolences to the Secretary-General and to the bereaved family of the deceased.

32. The question of Palestine has throughout the years commanded the priority attention of the United Nations and of world public opinion. This is not surprising, particularly since the suffering, displacement and terrorism the Palestinian people have experienced stem from General Assembly resolution 181 (II), which partitioned the territory of Palestine. Israel was the first State to be established by a United Nations resolution. Hence, the responsibility of the United Nations for solving the question of Palestine and guaranteeing the legitimate, inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people is affirmed by United Nations resolutions, which have yet, however, to be implemented.

33. The importance of the question of Palestine lies in the fact that it is the crux of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Unless there is a solution to this problem based on recognition of the legitimate, inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to return to their homeland, to self-determination and to establish an independent State under the leadership of the PLO, their sole legitimate representative, the tension in the Middle East will continue to escalate, and this will have adverse effects on peace in that delicate region of the world and jeopardize international peace and security.

34. All the Israeli practices in the occupied Arab and Palestinian territories confirm Israel's expansionist policy designed to tighten its control and to perpetuate its occupation and annexation of the territories and to displace the Palestinian people. In fact, this policy is the logical result of the true nature of Israel from the very outset—that is, a settler, expansionist State in the heart of the Arab homeland. Israel has usurped the territory of Palestine and annexed Jerusalem and the Golan Heights. It has been building settlements in the occupied Arab and Palestinian territories, in flagrant violation of Security Council resolution 465 (1980), which affirmed the illegality of the Israeli settlements policy, the various forms of racist oppression of the Palestinian people and the confiscation of its land, water resources and property; Israel seeks to intimidate, displace and even annihilate it, as well as obliterate its character, cultural and historical landmarks.

35. The express statements of the rulers of Israel have proven categorically that Israel's policy is directed against the Palestinian territory and the Palestinian people, and indeed extends to large parts of the territory of other Arab States. The talk about the so-called "security of Israel" has no geographical limits; it is a mere pretext for justifying the racist, settler expansionist nature of that policy, in the implementation of which Palestinian and Arab territories have been seized by force and the Golan Heights and Jerusalem have been annexed. Preparations are under way to annex the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and other occupied Arab territories. The Israeli invasion

of Lebanon in the summer of 1982 and Israel's rejection of Security Council resolutions 508 (1982) and 509 (1982), calling for Israel's immediate and complete withdrawal from Lebanese territory, without any conditions, were but further evidence of the Zionist expansionist designs.

36. The Israeli policies and practices are designed to depopulate Palestinian territory, intimidate the Palestinian people and force them to give up their territory so that Israel can confiscate it in an attempt to prevent the Palestinian people from exercising their right to return to their homeland and their right to self-determination and the establishment of their own independent State. These terrorist practices and policies have recently assumed a new dimension: they have been extended to a large number of Palestinian towns and villages. There has even been a dangerous escalation in attempts to annihilate the Palestinian people. Organized terror has also been used against them. In its aggression against Lebanon last year, Israel used all kinds of lethal weapons, including those internationally prohibited, against the Lebanese and Palestinian peoples. It perpetrated the massacres at Sabra and Shatila, which claimed the lives of defenceless Palestinian old people, women and children. This year the towns of the West Bank have been subjected to deliberate military operations by Israeli soldiers, which have caused the death and wounding of many Palestinians.

37. This continued Israeli intransigence, supported by the United States and its allies, against the rights of the Palestinian people, and the determination to consolidate Israel's occupation of the occupied Arab territories will lead to an escalation of tension in the Middle East and to a broad threat to peace in that region and in neighbouring regions. Israel could not have defied the international community and persisted in its policy of expansion and aggression had it not been for the unlimited support of the United States, support whose magnitude increases with every act of aggression committed by Israel against the Arab and Palestinian peoples. The United States stands firmly at the side of the aggressor, Israel, and protects it in its expansionist designs. The United States military and political identification with Israel has become clear, especially because the hostile policy towards the Palestinian question by Israel and its ally, the United States, has gone hand in hand with a series of aggressive military manoeuvres and activities in the Middle East region.

38. Mr. Ali Nasser Mohammed, the Secretary-General of the Central Committee of the Yemeni Socialist Party and Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme People's Council and Prime Minister, stated the following in the message he sent on the occasion of the commemoration of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People:

"The United Nations has a vital duty with regard to the delicate situation in the Middle East region. It must continue to deploy various efforts to force Israel to implement United Nations resolutions concerning withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories and to recognize the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. That is a *sine qua non* for the establishment of overall stability and security in the Middle East region and for enabling all its nations and peoples to live in peace—and this includes the independent State of Palestine."

39. Peace is indivisible. The International Conference on the Question of Palestine, held at Geneva this year, affirmed that the question of Palestine is the core of the conflict in the Middle East and that there can be no comprehensive, lasting and just peace without complete withdrawal by Israel from the occupied Arab and Palestinian territories, including Jerusalem, and the exercise

by the Palestinian people of their inalienable national rights. The Geneva Declaration on Palestine¹ calls for the convening of an international peace conference on the Middle East, under the auspices of the United Nations, with a view to achieving a lasting, just and comprehensive solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict. Among the basic elements of such a solution must be the establishment of an independent Palestinian State in Palestine. All the parties concerned, including the PLO, should participate in the conference, on an equal footing with all other participants, and with equal rights.

40. With a view to finding a just settlement of the question of Palestine, the General Assembly has adopted a host of resolutions, beginning with resolution 3236 (XXIX), which placed the question of Palestine in its proper political context and defined the inalienable legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. More recently, the Geneva Declaration on Palestine¹ and the Programme of Action for the Achievement of Palestinian Rights¹ defined the framework for the settlement of this question, under the auspices of the United Nations, and the prerequisites for such a settlement.

41. In this connection, I should like to repeat what our Minister for Foreign Affairs said in his address to the thirty-eighth session of the Assembly, on 10 October 1983:

“Democratic Yemen calls for the implementation of the numerous resolutions adopted by the international community to deter Israeli aggression and put an end to the suffering of the Palestinian people. It demands the imposition against Israel of the sanctions provided for in Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, and the ending of Israel’s contemptuous attitude towards the international community.

“This attitude is encouraged by the United States, which gives unlimited support to Israel’s attempts to subjugate our Arab peoples and uses the results of Israeli aggression to try to impose partial settlements.”
[26th meeting, paras. 105 and 106.]

42. We call upon the United Nations to shoulder its responsibility and to put an end to the injustice inflicted upon the Palestinian people. We endorse the Geneva Declaration on Palestine, in which the Conference affirmed the importance of the time factor in achieving a just solution to the question of Palestine. The Assembly is today faced with a grave challenge by Israel, which has been declared by the international community to be a non-peace-loving State, a State supported by its allies, foremost among which is the United States of America. In order for the Assembly to meet the challenge, it must prove that its resolutions can be implemented. By so doing, it will restore the confidence of all the Arab peoples, foremost among which is the Palestinian people, in its ability to deter Israeli aggression and to discharge the functions of the United Nations in maintaining international peace and security in the Middle East region, which is considered one of the most volatile in the world.

43. Mr. KULAWIEC (Czechoslovakia) (*interpretation from Russian*): The history of Palestine, as well as the consideration of the question of Palestine, which has gone on in the United Nations for the last 10 years, makes it clear beyond doubt that the Palestinian question is the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

44. Czechoslovakia vigorously rejects attempts to avoid a just settlement of the question. We also condemn the abuse of the Palestinian question for the purposes of promoting selfish interests. The Palestinian question, because it remains unresolved, is the prime source of the ever-increasingly explosive situation in the Middle East and is creating a direct threat to international peace, as

well as having a far-reaching negative effect on the development of international relations as a whole.

45. The seriousness of the situation in the region was stressed by Czechoslovakia in the course of the official visit of friendship made in April this year to Czechoslovakia by the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization, Mr. Yasser Arafat, when he was received by our highest representatives.

46. The conduct of those who prate about peace in the Middle East while at the same time stubbornly rejecting a just settlement of the Palestinian question is nothing but an attempt to preserve a historic injustice and thereby to promote their own imperialist interests. Approaches of this kind are characteristic both of the Government of the United States and of the Government of Israel. The peoples of the Arab countries have already had enough experience to understand that the path to a settlement in the Middle East lies not through separate deals, which are inimical to the legitimate interests of the Arab people of Palestine, but through the unconditional withdrawal of Israeli troops from all occupied Arab territories, the recognition of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including its right to self-determination, and the creation of its own independent State. The path towards this settlement could open up the way to peace talks within the framework of an international conference on the Middle East, with the participation of all interested parties, including the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, the PLO.

47. Czechoslovakia views the PLO as the representative of a sovereign independent people and for this reason its representatives in Prague this year were granted, upon the decision of the Czechoslovak Government, the status of a diplomatic mission. The colonial policy pursued by Israel in the occupied territories, particularly in the West Bank, poses a very serious danger both for the restoration of the lawful rights of the Palestinian people and for a settlement of the Middle East crisis as a whole.

48. The human conscience cannot countenance the tragic plight of the Palestinian people, which has fallen victim to the unbridled Zionist and imperialist policy of expansion and aggression. No State can escape its share of responsibility, because this is a flagrant violation of the fundamental principles of international law, of the Charter of the United Nations and of the resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council.

49. Czechoslovakia categorically opposes the so-called final solution to the question of Palestine put forward by Israel, which also provides for the alternative of the systematic destruction of the Palestinian people. Similarly, we reject any attempts to bring about a partial or unprincipled solution, such as, for example, the Kissinger step-by-step policy, the Camp David accords and the Reagan plan.² Solutions of that kind could lead only to the deterioration of the situation in the Middle East and to worsening the already hopeless plight of the Palestinian people. Furthermore, there can be no doubt that they are entirely in keeping with Israel’s expansionist plans.

50. Events in Lebanon are a direct consequence of the policy which is aimed against the legitimate demands of the Palestinian people and is a concrete manifestation of the true goals pursued by the Camp David policy and its variants, which include the so-called Reagan plan. The international community must immediately take effective measures to prevent the occupation of any further Palestinian territories, which would force the Israeli Government to comply with the norms of international law and the decisions of the United Nations.

51. Czechoslovakia is ready to continue to offer its active support to any efforts aimed at bringing about a

just solution to the question of Palestine. In order to bring about a just and lasting settlement in the Middle East, what is necessary is sincere and collective efforts on the parts of all interested parties. A fundamental pre-condition for such a settlement, Czechoslovakia believes, would be the cessation of all acts of aggression, the unconditional withdrawal of Israeli troops from all occupied Arab territories, the genuine exercise by the Arab people of Palestine of their inalienable rights, including the right to found their own independent State, and confirmation of the right of all States in the region to a secure existence.

52. Czechoslovakia views the decisions adopted at Fez in September 1982 by the Twelfth Arab Summit Conference³ as constructive and realistic. The authoritative nature of those decisions stems from the fact that they were adopted unanimously by the representatives of States and peoples directly involved in the Middle East question.

53. The Soviet proposal for a settlement of the Middle East crisis put forward on 15 September 1982⁴ is based on an analysis of the true causes of this crisis and is a signpost pointing the way to the solution of the problem in all its aspects. The comprehensive proposal for a settlement of this longest and most dangerous conflict is contained in the Political Declaration adopted at the session held at Prague on 4 and 5 January this year of the Political Consultative Committee of the States Parties to the Warsaw Treaty [A/38/67 and Corr. 1, annex]. It remains our conviction that the solution to the Palestinian problem should be sought exclusively through the honest collective efforts of the interested parties. Without the participation on an equal footing of the PLO, as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, there is no prospect for a successful conclusion to those negotiations.

54. An important role in these efforts belongs also to the United Nations, which can proceed directly on the basis of the results of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, which was held earlier this year at Geneva. The Conference demonstrated that a perceptible and necessary change has occurred both in world public opinion and in the policies of a number of Governments. Whereas in June 1967, at the time of the aggression, Israel could skilfully but dishonourably manipulate the facts, posing as a country whose rights were, it claimed, threatened, and which accordingly bore no responsibility for the bloody war it unleashed, today, on the other hand, it is obvious that in the world as a whole the approach to the current question of lawful Palestinian rights and also to the substance of the Middle East crisis has become more sensible, more complex and more objective.

55. In the final documents of the Conference, the Geneva Declaration on Palestine¹ and the Programme of Action for the Achievement of Palestinian Rights,¹ there is an important conclusion concerning the kind of machinery that would be most appropriate for the earliest possible settlement of this problem. Such machinery would be constituted by an international peace conference on the Middle East under the aegis of the United Nations, and that should no longer be deferred. We must never have a repetition of what happened at Sabra and Shatila.

56. As was pointed out in the congratulatory telegram sent by the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, Mr. Gustav Husák, to the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization, Yasser Arafat, on the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, Czechoslovakia is firmly convinced that, because of the concerted and determined

efforts of all progressive, democratic and anti-imperialist forces in Arab countries and throughout the world, the people of Palestine will ultimately prevail in its just struggle for the attainment of the noble goals of the Palestinian revolution.

57. Mr. WASIUDDIN (Bangladesh): It was in September this year that the international community assembled at Geneva for the International Conference on the Question of Palestine and adopted the Geneva Declaration on Palestine¹ and the Programme of Action for the Achievement of Palestinian Rights¹ with a view to the successful resolution of the long-outstanding Palestinian problem. In fact, the situation, instead of improving, has further deteriorated. It is therefore of the utmost importance for this body to deliberate on the gravity of the situation in that region.

58. A just resolution of the question of Palestine is the crucial element in a comprehensive, just and lasting political settlement in the Middle East. In order to consider the core of this problem, we have before us the report of the Secretary-General [A/38/458], the report of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine,¹ the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People [A/38/35] and the report of the Preparatory Committee for the International Conference on the Question of Palestine [A/38/46]. My delegation is satisfied with these reports, as they are detailed, balanced and incisive, and for this we should like to commend the Secretary-General and Mr. Sarré, Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.

59. The question of Palestine is a political problem. It concerns the struggle of the people for their inalienable national right, to determine their own destiny. Despite the total and unflinching support extended by the majority of the international community, it is to be regretted that this reality was not at first recognized and attempts were made to treat the problem not as a political matter but as a humanitarian one. The General Assembly, after a long period of deliberation, agreed in its resolution 3236 (XXIX), adopted in 1974, to deal with the question of Palestine in all its manifestations.

60. In that resolution, the Assembly unambiguously spelt out the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to self-determination, national independence and sovereignty and to return to their homes and property from which they had been forcibly evicted. In the same resolution, the Assembly ensured the right of the Palestinian people to present their own cause and participate in any peace negotiation through their sole legitimate representative, the PLO.

61. The tragedy of Palestine, the agony, the suffering and the never-ending injustice inflicted on the Palestinian people have been the subject of debate in the Assembly for over three decades. During that period, the membership of the United Nations has increased threefold. The principle of self-determination has been vindicated and upheld over and over again. The process of decolonization is nearly complete. Yet, while so many of us have gained our independence and have been able to take our places here in the Assembly as sovereign independent States, there are in our midst our brethren, the heroic freedom fighters of the PLO, who have yet to take their rightful place in the Assembly alongside us rather than occupying a position at the side of the Hall.

62. A large number of preceding speakers have already given a detailed and comprehensive account of the explosive situation that prevails in the Middle East region. This is the sole creation of Israel, a State which came into existence through the virtual imposition of an alien people

on the Arab world. Israel, since its creation, has been pursuing a policy of relentless expansion and unabated aggression against its Arab neighbours and a ruthless design to liquidate the Palestinian people. Israel continues to occupy territories, including the Holy City of Jerusalem, and even undertakes to change their basic Arab character. All United Nations efforts, through the Security Council and the General Assembly, to bring justice to the suffering Palestinian people have been thwarted by Israel, which has deliberately and arrogantly rejected one resolution after another and openly flouted the voice of the international community.

63. Bangladesh's stand on the question of Palestine is unequivocal and consistent; it is not based on political expediency. Our consistent position stems from our firm belief in the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations; it is founded on an ever-enduring commitment to the cause of oppressed people all over the world struggling to free themselves from the bondage of colonialism, aggression and exploitation. We firmly believe that no solution in the Middle East can be envisaged which does not take fully into account the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people.

64. No discussion on Palestine would be complete without consideration of the Palestine refugee problem. The report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East [UNRWA] draws our attention to the continuing seriousness of UNRWA's financial position [see A/38/13, para. 20]. The entire refugee problem is an issue that is political in nature, and no humanitarian measure, however effective, would be adequate to eliminate the refugee problem unless a just and lasting solution were found for the entire question of Palestine. The refugee population must be settled in their own homeland, from which they have been uprooted.

65. The delegation of Bangladesh agrees with the observation made by the Secretary-General in his report that the "developments in the Middle East during the past year have given little cause for hope that the problems of that region are nearer to solution" [see A/38/458, para. 39]. He also observed that "Preoccupation with the events in Lebanon has tended to overshadow the consideration of major aspects of the Middle East problem . . ." [ibid.] and that "the time has come to take a searching look at the actual state of affairs in the Middle East" [ibid., para. 41].

66. In conclusion, I wish to reiterate that Bangladesh's involvement in the freedom struggle of the Palestinian people is total. We have always condemned Israeli acts of aggression in no uncertain terms, and will continue to do so. The head of Government of Bangladesh, General H. M. Ershad, issued a message on 29 November 1983, on the occasion of the observance of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, in which he said:

"The question of Palestine continues to be the crux of the problem in West Asia. It is a major challenge to the credibility of the international community in its efforts to uphold the principles and objectives enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. No other problem has evoked so much thought and unleashed such a high degree of indignation in recent times as this issue—the tragedy of a dispossessed nation.

"The political entity of the Palestinian people and their right to establish a State of their own in their homeland are an established fact under international law and jurisprudence. To ignore this factor would be to discount a reality recognized by an overwhelming majority of the world's nation-States. The recognition

of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination and the establishment of a State of their own must be the fundamental element of any durable, permanent and lasting peace in West Asia.

"Bangladesh has always taken keen interest in and endeavoured to uphold the just cause of the Palestinian people in all international forums, especially the United Nations. From the very outset Bangladesh has actively advocated the establishment of the rights of the Palestinian people as a nation."

67. The Government of Bangladesh pledges once again that it will stand with our Palestinian brethren in this difficult period. At the same time, we join hands with the international community to compel Israel to end its sinister designs and intransigence and to obey the decisions of this body, in the greater interest of international peace and security.

68. Mr. JAMAL (Qatar) (*interpretation from Arabic*): In the dense darkness surrounding the future and fate of the Palestinian people, whose suffering and plight have lasted for too long, there is a glimmer of hope—that is, without a doubt, the firm support of world public opinion for the just cause of the Palestinian people and their inalienable and historical national rights. This support was manifested two days ago in the celebration of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People and, in particular, in the expression by a large number of heads of State or Government throughout the world of their full support for and solidarity with the struggle of the Palestinian people, their recognition of the full political rights of those people as endorsed by the international community and embodied in the resolutions of the United Nations and of other international bodies, and their denunciation of Israeli policies of expansion in the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, the Holy City of Jerusalem and other occupied Arab territories.

69. That International Day was the most eloquent, practical evidence of universal support for the rights of the Palestinian people and their bitter struggle throughout the years to exercise their rights, under the leadership of the PLO, their sole legitimate representative. It was also a universal condemnation of Israeli occupation and an incontestable verdict in favour of the ostracization of Israel until it complies with the will of the General Assembly by implementing its resolutions, which, *inter alia*, recognize the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and to establish their own independent State in Palestine.

70. Unfortunately, it seems that despite this world-wide unanimity the sentence will remain suspended, thus leaving the criminal free and out of reach of justice and punishment, as long as it continues to enjoy the protection of the veto of one permanent member of the Security Council. Under the protection of that veto, Israel has managed to treat with contempt the resolutions of the United Nations, including Security Council resolutions supported by the United States itself. Israel has also continuously violated the principles of the Charter, international law and, in particular, the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949.⁵

71. Under this special protection, Israel has managed to continue its occupation of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and the Syrian Golan Heights from 1967 to the present.

72. In the absence of any effective international deterrent, Israel proceeded to implement its expansionist scheme step by step. It annexed Arab Jerusalem and declared it to be its eternal capital—as the Israeli officials arrogantly

and intransigently put it. Afterwards, it annexed the Syrian Golan Heights. Then came the invasion of Lebanon, which epitomized the Lebanese tragedy, with the forging of a chain of bloody human and political events to which there is no foreseeable end.

73. The Sabra and Shatila massacres, the savagery of which shook the international conscience, were but one of the links in this bloody chain, which started with the massacre of Deir Yassin in 1948 at the hands of the Irgun gang and is continuing on every inch of the Arab territories occupied by Israel, as well as in the Palestinian refugee camps, which have become fixed targets for Israeli bombers and artillery.

74. It is clear to the international community that the political objective of the mass killing being openly carried out is the destruction of the Palestinian revolution and the permanent stifling of the voice of free Palestinians so as to enable Israel ultimately to deny the existence of the Palestinian people. Thereafter, there would be no ground for calling for the exercise of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. In implementing this scheme, Israel depends upon a sinister tactic which the development of events in the Middle East has proved successful so far.

75. This Israeli scheme is based on extension of the conflict, the continual opening of new fronts and the dragging of other Arab parties into the heart of the conflict, not just as defenders of the rights of the Palestinians but as true parties to the conflict, in the hope that the Palestinian question will fade away and gradually lose its identity, recognized by the whole world, as the crux of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Therefore peace cannot be achieved in the Middle East without a just and lasting solution to the question of Palestine that guarantees the restoration of the legitimate, inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

76. Moreover, this scheme gives Israel time which it uses for the creation of a new *fait accompli*. At a time when the international community is faced with hotbeds of tension and local clashes which threaten to expand the conflict to the point of confrontation between the two super-Powers, the Israeli occupation authorities are proceeding with the establishment of Jewish settlements in the West Bank. In the period from 1967 to the present, Israel has established a belt of settlements around Arab Jerusalem in which about 100,000 Israelis are living. At present, three Jewish cities are being built in the West Bank, near Jerusalem. By August of this year, the number of Jewish settlements in the West Bank had reached about 100. At the same time, Israel controls practically two thirds of the West Bank area, either through the Jewish settlers or through the Israeli occupation forces. The ultimate aim of the programme of the Israeli Government is the establishment of 110 settlements, which would accommodate 1 million Israelis by the year 2000. It is not difficult to sum up this expansionist settler programme in one sentence: that is, Israel does not intend to return the Palestinian territories it occupied in 1967 to their indigenous owners, namely, the Palestinian people, which were forced in 1948 to pay for the sins of the Nazis by the expropriation of half their homeland for the settlement of Jews from Europe who did not belong to the region. Today, Israel is devouring piece by piece whatever is left of the soil of that Arab Palestinian homeland, while the world is faced with sudden crises, wars and local clashes, which Israel continually foments in order to achieve this far-reaching, long-term objective.

77. It is important to unveil the true intentions of Israel, to implement the first paragraph of the Programme of Action for the Achievement of Palestinian Rights,¹

adopted by the International Conference on the Question of Palestine which was held at Geneva from 29 August to 7 September 1983, and to heed the warning of the Secretary-General in his report to the General Assembly [4/38/458] to the effect that any delay in getting to the roots of the Middle East problem will not serve the cause of peace in the long term. In the light of all these elements, the time factor is of vital importance in frustrating Israel's expansionist schemes and solving the problem of Palestine, which is the core of the Middle East crisis according to the relevant United Nations resolutions which provided the basis for the Geneva Declaration on Palestine,¹ together with the decisions adopted at Fez in September 1982 by the Twelfth Arab Summit Conference.³

78. Those resolutions and decisions affirm, first, the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, including above all their right to return to their homeland, their right to self-determination, and their right to the establishment of an independent State of their own in Palestine. Secondly, stress is laid on the need to end the Israeli occupation of the Arab territories, including the occupied Palestinian territories and Jerusalem, in accordance with the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force. Thirdly, all illegal Israeli laws pertaining to the expropriation of property and land are declared null and void. Fourthly, the Security Council is invited to take effective action to ensure the exercise of their legitimate rights by the Palestinians in order to solve the Arab-Israeli conflict, which is deeply rooted in the question of Palestine.

79. The solution to the question of Palestine needs no further study; for the past 35 years it has been the subject of more than enough study and consideration. The solutions are not unattainable. The international community has already referred to all these solutions in detail in a large number of United Nations resolutions, in particular General Assembly resolution 3236 (XXIX). The only thing that prevents us from breathing new life into these resolutions is the lack of the political will and good faith that are essential if we are to secure justice for the Arab Palestinian people in accordance with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

80. It is undeniable that the international community has never ceased condemning the Israeli aggression against the Palestinian people and territory, and has never hesitated to reaffirm the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, but it is being crippled by the right of veto, which is being used by a permanent member of the Security Council in support of the illegal policies and practices of Israel. Unless this situation is rectified, which unfortunately is hardly likely in view of the recently announced strengthening of military, economic and strategic co-operation between the United States and Israel, the Middle East will not know peace and this region, afflicted with the Israeli presence, will remain as one of the most dangerous hotbeds of tension, jeopardizing world peace and security.

81. Mr. SHIHABI (Saudi Arabia) (*interpretation from Arabic*): There is no question for which the United Nations bears a more fundamental responsibility than the question of Palestine. The question of Palestine is one of the despoiling of a people and a land, the denial of justice and law and the violation of all ethical standards and moral commitments. Perhaps the gravest aspect is that the situation is now deteriorating even further: Israel is intensifying its oppression with apparent immunity, violating all the rights, laws and obligations which the United Nations has a duty to uphold.

82. For some time now, Israel and the Zionist movement have been waging a relentless campaign of vilification

throughout the world, particularly in the United States, against the United Nations and the international community, castigating them with the vilest accusations. Why? Because the United Nations has ceased to be a tool to be manipulated for the purposes of Zionist aggression, and a convenient vehicle for Zionist racist oppression. We all know the unethical devices employed by the Zionist forces and their supporters in 1947 to secure votes in support of the establishment of their aggressive Zionist entity in the land of the Palestinian people, at the expense of that people's legitimate rights. This entity has become a source of danger to the countries of the Middle East and a threat to the security of the region and of the whole world.

83. The question of Palestine involves the life and existence, the rights and the homeland of the Palestinian people and the stability of the Middle East; this situation is the responsibility of the United Nations as an Organization and as a body of Member States, and is the touchstone by which the United Nations must justify its existence, and test its prestige and effectiveness. Most of the criticism of the United Nations centres on its inability to forestall or settle armed conflicts, and its failure, or rather the failure of its Member States, to implement its resolutions.

84. However, the originators of such criticisms seem to forget that the question of Palestine was the first instance in the history of the Organization when it failed to implement its resolutions. Its failure continues and has, in fact, increased year after year. Most of the criticisms levelled at the United Nations come from Zionists and Zionist sympathizers who first deceived the Organization with regard to the partition resolution, and now want this body to forget its Charter and its fundamental principles and further support Zionism or pass over the crime in silence. Israel forgets that the only resolution which it has purported to accept since 1947 has been General Assembly resolution 181 (II) of 29 November 1947, which, under the influence of Zionist fraud, recommended the partition of Palestine, the country of the Palestinian Arab people. I say purported to accept, because Israel did not abide by this resolution, but proceeded to violate it step by step. It occupied by force the portion of the land of Palestine which the resolution allocated to the Palestinian State. Zionism has transformed the resolution into a series of tragedies in Palestine, including the exodus of hundreds of thousands of its Palestinian citizens.

85. The Israeli entity continues to reject United Nations resolutions and operates against their provisions. It continues to practise terrorism, to acquire Arab lands and to establish Jewish settlements. It continues to arrest, imprison or detain tens of thousands of Palestinians without charges or trial. It continues to inflict collective punishments, to dissolve municipal councils and to hatch conspiracies for the assassination of elected mayors. The Israeli authorities have had no scruples about launching armed attacks against the Holy Places and places of worship or even against schools and universities, closing them for long periods and banning hundreds of textbooks. Those authorities also use all means of inducing Zionist settlers to move from the areas occupied by Israel before 1967 to those territories that fell under Israel military occupation after 1967. They also resort to all means of terrorism to compel the Arab population, which is the indigenous people, to migrate. Their arbitrary and oppressive measures have reached the stage of depriving the Palestinian inhabitants of all natural resources and the means and opportunities of production. The purpose is to deprive them of the opportunity to live in their homes.

86. The rulers of Israel have not hesitated to declare their intentions openly with regard to the occupied Arab territories. They no longer feel any sense of shame and have discarded the slogan of peace and coexistence which they have used in the past. They announced the annexation of Jerusalem in defiance of the will of the Arab and Islamic world, and, indeed, of the will of the whole of the international community as expressed by the General Assembly in resolutions 2253 (ES-V) and 2254 (ES-V), adopted at its fifth emergency special session. This was also in defiance of the Charter of the United Nations and of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949.⁵ Israel's terrorist leaders have not, in their repeated pronouncements, concealed their opinion that the West Bank and the Gaza Strip are part of what they call Eretz Yisrael and that they have no intention of relinquishing control over those territories. They behave as though the country has no people and the land has no owners. A statement by a high-ranking Israeli official last August called for the annexation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and for the granting of Israeli nationality to the Palestinian population of those territories. He forgot that he could not erase the Arab character of these people, regardless of the regulations he promulgates. This reflects the intentions of the Israeli authorities, which they declare on every pretext—and even without any pretext—and which further endanger the situation.

87. It is no secret that they are planning to settle more than 1,300,000 Zionist immigrants in the West Bank. They are now even ashamed to state that the intensive settlement in the West Bank is the best guarantee for securing permanent colonial settlement and domination over its Arab population. They are now proceeding to finalize the establishment of 57 new settlements by 1987, in addition to all the settlements they have already established in violation of all existing international resolutions. Their plan is to bring the number of West Bank settlements to 165. They are currently constructing hundreds of miles of new roads to connect all these colonial settlements.

88. In their multifaceted campaign of terror, the Israeli authorities spare no effort to compel the Palestinian Arabs to migrate and to deny them the means of livelihood and conditions of stability. The population of the West Bank alone has been reduced from 850,000 to 750,000 in the past 10 years as a result of the economic, social, political and police terrorism practised by the Israeli authorities. They have blocked all work opportunities for the Palestinians except for unskilled labour in Israeli factories and in the Israeli construction industry. Opportunities for university graduates or entrepreneurs to stay and work in their country no longer exist. More than 65 per cent of the land in the West Bank has already been confiscated. The Israeli authorities continue to apply pressure both directly and through their encouragement of the Zionist settlers to commit the worst acts of terrorism against the Arabs. This does not include all the acts of terrorism and political, human and economic crimes intended to crush the morale of the Palestinians, to increase their despairing yearning for freedom in their own country and to frustrate the exercise of their rights as citizens and as human beings. Israel has introduced laws in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip that limit the living opportunities of the Palestinian citizen and deny him all means of livelihood and stability. In its issue of 18 August 1983, *The Christian Science Monitor* reported that the Israeli authorities have enacted more than 1,000 laws, regulations and orders in the West Bank covering all aspects of life of the Arab population and not limited to security. The newspaper stated:

“The legislation ranges from how many eggplants a farmer can grow, to how much money an individual can bring in from Jordan, to myriad rules governing confiscation of West Bank land for Israeli settlement.

“Palestinians have little say since there are few checks and balances to legislation by military order.

“Palestinian West Bank municipalities are limited to local functions. Moreover, they have been cut off from outside Arab Government or private development funds by Israeli military orders which sharply limit the amount of money that can be brought in from Jordan. Israel currently provides minimal development funds for Arab towns.”*

89. It seems that the Israeli authorities believe that by enacting legislation they can confer legitimacy on their illegal measures. The rulers of Israel are well aware that these laws are devoid of legality because they are based on the authority of aggression and occupation. This basis is illegal and does not confer rights, irrespective of how many guns and tanks the aggressor possesses.

90. Many regions of the world have experienced foreign colonial rule in past centuries and decades, but the worst of these experiences never reached the degree of criminal behaviour and oppression practised by the Israeli colonial settlers in Palestine, which commenced at a time when the era of colonialism had ended in most parts of the world. This method of colonialism does not merely aim at exploiting the colonized people, it has striven and continues to strive relentlessly to annihilate the Palestinian people and confiscate the whole of their country in broad daylight and in full view of the General Assembly, the Security Council and the international community as a whole. Perhaps the international community has forgotten that the Palestinian people were acknowledged by the League of Nations to be ready for independence at the beginning of the British Mandate in 1922, in accordance with Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations. Despite the struggle of its people for freedom and independence, Palestine was placed under a Category A Mandate. That category was used for communities that “have reached a stage of development where their existence as independent nations can be provisionally recognized subject to the rendering of administrative advice and assistance by a Mandatory until such time as they are able to stand alone”.

Mr. Ali (Singapore), Vice-President, took the Chair.

91. At the time, the Jewish community in Palestine did not exceed 50,000. Now, after 61 years, the Palestinian people finds itself under a dreadful Zionist colonial rule, imposed on it by immigrants from all parts of the world who dominate the country and its people. The Palestinian Arabs, whose country it really is, have become strangers in their homes and in their own country, denied the exercise of any of their human rights. This oppression, with its causes and consequences, must end, and right and justice must prevail as the basis for a just solution.

92. Having explained some of the critical factors involved in the question of Palestine, I wish to state that this question is the core of the conflict, the basis of instability and the source of great dangers in the Middle East region. The Palestinian people is the principal party to the solution of the question of Palestine. This is a fact admitted by all. It must be repeated until it is appropriately addressed. The international community has accepted this fact but Israel and its supporters continue to ignore it. By doing so, they are deluding themselves and dragging themselves towards a sombre fate. They are incapable of assessing the pernicious consequences of

such disregard, both in the short and in the long term, despite all the agreements they have concluded and all the support they receive, and despite their aggression with regard to the rights of the Arab people. It is our duty once again to call attention to the necessity of returning to the right path, to the principles of right and justice, and to legitimacy in international conduct, especially with regard to the pressing question of Palestine and the rights of the Palestinian people. Every delay in this respect will lead to a further undermining of the precepts of the United Nations and to a loss of hope that peace and security can be restored to the region, and thereby to the world.

93. We demand of the United Nations, and of the States which are concerned with maintaining the United Nations as an instrument and framework for a just and balanced international order based on just rights and obligations, that they employ the most effective means to stop the deterioration of the situation in Palestine and, furthermore, if the Israeli entity persists in rejecting United Nations resolutions, that they decide on appropriate sanctions against Israel as provided for in the Charter.

94. We wish to remind those gathered here, particularly those who support the Israeli entity unreservedly, without considering the serious consequences of so doing, that justice and right are the only road to permanent peace and that the repressive measures applied by Israel will only increase its isolation and its exposure to the greatest dangers. Right will prevail, however long may be the life of the oppressive State.

95. Mr. NGUYEN THUONG (Viet Nam) (*interpretation from French*): This year, we are discussing the question of Palestine in a particularly tense atmosphere, fraught with explosive danger as a result of the policy of intimidation and intervention pursued by the present United States Administration. My delegation will revert to the whole problem of the Middle East in due course.

96. With regard to the question of Palestine, the fundamental axiom here is that the people of Palestine is entitled to its own independent national State. In the vast, turbulent, irresistible process of the national liberation of peoples, the people of Palestine has just as much right as any other to the full enjoyment of that right, if not more so. A distinguished representative has said: “The Arab nation of Palestine has given a great deal to human civilization, including the culture of love, equality, fraternity and justice. The history of its people is full of examples of constant resistance to all kinds of invasions and occupations of its homeland. With its deep-rooted humanistic heritage, the people of Palestine is fighting for peace and justice—a peace that cannot be attained while its fundamental national rights are being usurped”.

97. Ever since the first resolutions on the question were adopted by the United Nations, the decision has always been that an independent Arab State should be created in the land of Palestine, then under international mandate.

98. From a historical point of view, therefore, and from the point of view of international morality and legality, the first axiom and the final objective must be the establishment of this Palestinian national State. To deny that right or oppose it is tantamount to espousing annexation and colonialism; it is in contradiction with the trends of our age and is therefore doomed to failure. For the facts have proved and continue to prove ever more each day that the process of the liberation of peoples is irreversible.

99. However, notwithstanding all the efforts that have been made for several decades now, both inside and outside the United Nations, the people of Palestine continue

*Quoted in English by the speaker.

to be denied their national State, to be exiled from their homes and to be refugees in their own land. This flagrant injustice has continued because the State of Israel has found an ally and protector in the major imperialist Power. Since the decline of British influence and the take-over of that influence by the United States, the State of Israel has constantly escalated aggression and expansion, combining war with political and diplomatic trickery, in increasing collusion with the United States. The role of the present United States Administration is obviously that of the instigator, the one who draws up the plans and takes an ever-increasing direct part in the implementation of the plans, despite official denials meant to deceive the public.

100. The opposition to the Palestinian national State and, as a corollary, the refusal to recognize the PLO derive essentially from the United States Administration. The piratical attacks against Lebanon, including the genocide at Sabra and Shatila, and other crimes which equal the crimes of nazism, the deliberate continuation of the establishment of Jewish settlements in the occupied territories, and particularly in the West Bank, the efforts to undermine the economy and culture of Palestine, the brutal denial of the most elementary human rights to the Arab peoples, the changes imposed on the geography, demography and status of the Holy Places: all these policies and practices of Israel in defiance of the relevant resolutions of the United Nations have the green light, if not the actual blessing of the Government in Washington. Chairman Arafat, in his speech before the recent International Conference on the Question of Palestine, held at Geneva, mentioned no less than eight cases of actual violations of the peace by that great Power. He denounced their attempts to exterminate the PLO, their efforts at division, their pressure exerted—but in vain—on certain Arab States to make them break away from the Palestinian cause, the use of the big stick and the carrot to win support for the United States plan² and scuttle the Arab peace plan for the Middle East, adopted at Fez³—in other words, all these attempts to block the establishment of an independent national Palestinian State. The PLO is quite right to reject this United States policy, which actually calls on the Palestinian Arab people to capitulate to Israel and to renounce its national identity and its right to an independent State. The Meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs and Heads of Delegation of Non-Aligned Countries, held in New York from 4 to 7 October 1983, correctly recalled the Political Declaration of the Seventh Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at New Delhi from 7 to 12 March 1983 [A/38/132 and Corr.1 and 2, annex, sect. 1], which condemned the United States and called upon the international community to take appropriate measures not only against Israel, but also against those countries—foremost among them the United States—which support and protect it.

101. The international community can bear witness to the exemplary bravery of the Palestinian fighters in Beirut; my delegation wishes to express its admiration and respect for their heroism. They have written the most glorious pages in the history of the Arab national liberation movement, and all peoples which cherish freedom and justice are proud of them. They have thwarted the United States-Israeli plan aimed at decapitating and eliminating the PLO; their struggle has earned the PLO unprecedented prestige and mounting support from the international community. Evidence of this is found, for example, in the striking success of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, held at Geneva, in the face of all the intrigues against it.

102. The Palestinian people and its vanguard organization need, more than ever before, all their forces, united and in solidarity with the entire Arab nation, in order to develop and intensify, in unity and with co-ordinated action, their just struggle until victory is finally achieved.

103. The solution of the question of Palestine is the essential and inseparable element of a comprehensive settlement by peaceful means of the problem of the Middle East. The Meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs and Heads of Delegation of Non-Aligned Countries, in which Viet Nam participated, gave its full support to the Geneva Declaration on Palestine¹ adopted at the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, and called for its speedy implementation. It reiterated its support for the struggle of the Palestinian people, under the leadership of the PLO, by all the means at its disposal and welcomed the determination of that people, expressed by its leaders at the Conference as follows: "Our valiant people . . . rose angrily and forcefully in a spirit of firm determination and total unity . . . in defence of the future of their children and their coming generations and their right to live in dignity and freedom in their free and independent land"¹.

104. In connection with multifaceted support for the struggle of the Palestinian people by all the means at their disposal, the Meeting urged States "to work for a boycott of Israel in the diplomatic, economic, military and cultural fields and in the sphere of maritime and air traffic in accordance with the provisions of Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations". [See A/38/495, annex, para. 53.]

105. The Geneva Declaration on Palestine set forth the guiding principles, as an indivisible whole, for the solution of the question of Palestine. However, my delegation believes that the touchstone of the seriousness and effectiveness of any settlement plan is the approach to the crucial question of the creation, as quickly as possible, of an independent Palestinian State, which requires participation by the PLO on an equal footing in the entire process of negotiation and implementation. No solution which is not comprehensive and does not incorporate this essential component can ever be equitable or acceptable. Objectively speaking, it can only promote United States and Israeli plots and intrigues and further prolong the conflict, with all the attendant risks of conflagration.

106. The Arab peace plan for the Middle East, a most reasonable measure, was supported by the PLO, the heads of State or Government of non-aligned countries and all the Arab and Islamic States. That nearly unanimous support of the international community for the Arab peace plan was also reflected in the Geneva Declaration on Palestine. It could be the basis of a settlement of the Middle East problem and of the question of Palestine, once the United States and Israel realize that their aims are unrealistic. The most recent Meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs and Heads of Delegation of Non-Aligned Countries reiterated the conviction that "a just and lasting settlement would ensure the right of all States in the region, including the independent Palestinian State, to existence within secure and internationally recognized boundaries" [*ibid.*, para. 56]. That presupposes the unconditional withdrawal of Israeli troops and administration from the occupied Arab territories, particularly Palestinian territory.

107. As to the modalities for such a settlement, these cannot be the monopoly of the United States. The International Conference on the Question of Palestine, taking up an idea put forward by the PLO, called for an international peace conference on the Middle East under the auspices of the United Nations, with the participation of

the PLO on an equal footing with the Soviet Union, the United States and other countries concerned. The Meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs and Heads of Delegation of Non-Aligned Countries supported that approach and stressed the primary responsibility of the Security Council concerning appropriate arrangements for guaranteeing and implementing any agreement resulting from that international peace conference on the Middle East.

108. In common with the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries as a whole, the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam regards the Palestinian cause as its own. It has taken part in United Nations and other efforts to support the just struggle of that brother people and to promote the just solution of this unfortunate problem. Among other things, a ministerial delegation from my country participated in the work of the recent International Conference on the Question of Palestine.

109. In his message to the Secretary-General and to the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People on the occasion of the recent International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, the President of the Council of Ministers of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam stated that he "valued that Day as a source of great encouragement and support for the people of Palestine, which has suffered so much and made so many difficult sacrifices, but which continues its struggle with courage and determination against occupation by the Israeli aggressors". He reiterated the unswerving, resolute support of the people and the Government of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam for the people of Palestine and for its sole legitimate representative, the PLO, in its just and inevitably victorious struggle for its sacred, fundamental, national rights, including the right to self-determination, the right of return and the right to establish its own independent, sovereign State in Palestine. His message concluded with these words:

"Today, when the imperialists and the Israelis are doing their utmost to divide, isolate and weaken the resistance of the Palestinian people, denying the PLO its role and imposing solutions detrimental to the interests of the peoples of Palestine and of other Arab States, Viet Nam believes that it is more necessary than ever before that the forces of peace and justice throughout the world must strengthen their solidarity with and support and assistance for the Palestinian people and other Arab peoples in their struggle against intervention and aggression in the Middle East by the United States imperialists, and for the peace, independence and security of the nations of the region and of the whole world."

110. Mr. AL-QASIMI (United Arab Emirates) (*interpellation from Arabic*): May I at the outset express my thanks to Mr. Massamba Sarré, Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, for the report of the Committee [A/38/35], which is important, and for his efforts to lead the Committee to success. I also convey my thanks to Mr. Victor Gauci, the Committee's Rapporteur, for his excellent statement on the deliberations and achievements of the Committee. I cannot fail here to express particular appreciation to Mrs. Lucille Mair, the Secretary-General of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, which was held at Geneva from 29 August to 7 September of this year. Her continued efforts contributed greatly to the success of that Conference.

111. The consideration of the question of Palestine at this session is of special significance because it is taking place after the convening of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine. My Government had, not

only the honour of participating in that Conference, but also the honour of acting as host to the preparatory meeting of the member States of the Economic Commission for Western Asia. Despite the boycott of the Conference by some Western countries, it still succeeded and achieved its objective: that is, the adoption by 117 States of the Geneva Declaration on Palestine¹ and the Programme of Action for the Achievement of Palestinian Rights.¹

112. The fact that the Conference was held and was crowned with success, despite the efforts of some Western States to derail it, is enough evidence of the interest of the international community and the peace-loving countries in the world in the settlement of the question of Palestine in a just manner, based on enabling the Palestinian people to exercise their inalienable national rights, including the right to return to their homes, the right to self-determination, and the right to establish their own independent State on the soil of Palestine.

113. As a result of the unjust policies of the super-Powers, the Palestinian people has suffered for years from displacement, dispersion and genocide, since the Balfour Declaration to this very day.

114. A colonial Power, namely Great Britain, promised to give the homeland of that people to the Jews, who were scattered all over the world, with no regard for the rights of the Palestinian people. That colonial Power opened wide the doors of immigration for the Zionist aliens. It enacted legislation and created the conditions necessary for them to live in the land of the Palestinian Arabs. It also armed the Zionists and trained them to use their weapons against the unarmed Arab citizens. Suddenly, it shunned its responsibility for the administration of Palestine, leaving it to the Zionist invaders who were armed to the teeth.

115. Subsequently, the tragedy was compounded by the role of the United States, which resorted to every possible means and pressure to get the General Assembly to partition Palestine and to grant the larger part of it to the Zionist minority and to establish a so-called State of Israel, in total disregard of the right of the Arab majority to self-determination.

116. Israel, dependent on massive United States military, financial and diplomatic assistance, continued to pursue a policy of occupation and expansion until it occupied all the Palestinian territory. It is now implementing a complete scheme to Judaize the occupied territory in order to annex it. It is doing so through the confiscation of Arab lands, the establishment of Israeli settlements therein, the imposition of mass sanctions on Palestinian villages and cities, thus depriving Arab citizens of their means of livelihood, including the imposition of curfews for long periods, the banning of meetings, prohibiting the movement of Palestinian leaders from one city to the other and exiling some of them, the closure of schools and universities, and the shooting of students.

117. Faced with this tragic reality, it is naïve to imagine that Israel will in future desist from these unjust practices and from its continuous defiance of the resolutions of the United Nations. On the contrary, the reality proves that Israel will continue even more strongly in its challenge and defiance of international resolutions. Why should Israel implement those resolutions if it is certain that a super-Power, member of the Security Council, would oppose them? Why should Israel comply with the international will if it knows in advance that the United States Administration will always be on its side, even rewarding it sometimes for its acts of aggression and for its breach of the Charter and international law?

118. Was not Israel rewarded recently with military and strategic co-operation and with the cancellation of its debts, while its forces are still occupying southern Lebanon, the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and the Golan Heights? Was not Israel rewarded recently through further supplies of cluster bombs while the bodies of hundreds of Lebanese and Palestinian men, women and children, who were killed as a result of the use of these bombs, are still decomposing?

119. We call upon the Government of the United States, as a member of the Security Council, with responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, to realize that the question of Palestine cannot be solved except on the basis of forcing Israel to implement the resolutions of the United Nations, not by encouraging and rewarding it for defying those resolutions.

120. The Geneva Declaration on Palestine and the Programme of Action for the Achievement of Palestinian Rights have defined a serious realistic objective and complete approach for the settlement of the question of Palestine in a durable and just manner.

121. While my country is committed to the letter and spirit of this approach, it urges the Member States of the United Nations to accept and adopt this approach as well. We also call upon reluctant States in the Western world to be guided in their evaluation of this approach and their position on it by justice and equality, as well as by the principles of the Charter and international norms. This will give them a chance to deal with the Palestinian people like other peoples and alleviate the severe injustice which is inflicted on the Palestinian people as a result of the past support of these countries for Israel, or their turning a blind eye at its practices against that people. They would thus help to stop another war, the consequences of which would not be confined to our borders but would extend to the rest of the world.

122. Before I conclude, I must express the dismay of the United Arab Emirates—its President, its Government and its people—at the fighting between the militant brothers of the PLO. We sincerely hope that brotherly feelings will rise above discord and that decisions will be taken through dialogue and constructive discussion. We are confident that what has happened is merely a passing storm, that the organization will be strengthened in unity and that its work will continue until the objectives of independence and freedom for the Palestinian people are achieved.

123. Mr. MOUMIN (Comoros) (*interpretation from French*): Thirty-six years have elapsed since Palestine disappeared from the maps, Palestinian society was dismantled, displaced and dispersed, and the Palestinian people was scattered among foreign countries.

124. For 36 years, peace- and justice-loving people, the free countries of this world, individually and collectively, in regional or world-wide organizations, have sought and proposed solutions to what has come to be known as the problem of the Middle East.

125. For 36 years now, we have faced this problem, 36 years of nightmares for the people deprived of their homeland but also 36 years of difficult and bitter struggle, but an effective and worthwhile one because today nobody can deny the soundness of the Palestinian claims. No one can deny the legality under international law of its claim, nor the legitimacy of its right, to create a Palestinian State of its own, like all other peoples in the world. The feeling of profound sympathy and fraternal support which the plight of the Palestinians has aroused in the other peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America, in particular, and the great interest shown by those

peoples in a just, comprehensive and lasting solution to the Palestinian problem by all possible means reflect the natural and understandable reaction of those peoples who, themselves, at various times in history have suffered the vicissitudes and injustices of colonial domination.

126. Although Arabs and Jews have long coexisted in Palestine, history nevertheless teaches us that one cannot speak of a Jewish presence in this region before 1260 B.C. At that time, Moses signed a coexistence pact enabling the numerous tribes, including the Hebrews, to live under the Egyptian protectorate and to travel freely to a prosperous Palestine, itself under Egyptian control. But it was not only in the Middle East that the Hebrews lived. The plan of the Marshal of Saxony in 1749 aimed at creating a Jewish State, of which he would be king, and which would be established in South America, clearly illustrates this thesis. With the flourishing of capitalism in the nineteenth century and because of the rich artistic, cultural and economic wealth of the Middle East, that region aroused envy from all quarters, and the "Jewish State" of Theodore Herzl in 1897 launched the Zionist political movement, the goal of which was "to create for the Jews in Arab Palestine a homeland guaranteed by public law". In the same context, there was also the notorious Balfour Declaration, named after the British Foreign Secretary of the time, providing for "the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people".

127. Since that time, Zionists of all types have been constantly engaging in provocations against the Palestinian people, trying to bring in Jews from all parts of the world to Palestine. Thus, on 14 May 1948, the Zionists unilaterally proclaimed "the State of Israel", while the General Assembly, at its second session, adopted resolution 181 (II) of 29 November 1947 on the "partition of Palestine". That resolution, which provided for the creation of two States in Palestine, an Arab State of 11,000 square kilometres and a Jewish State of 14,000 square kilometres, had no basis in law or history but could be explained solely by the balance of forces, and hence by the dominant political philosophy of the time. Of course, the Arab masses denounced that resolution which they described as null and void.

128. It follows from what I have said that the State of Israel was born of a combination of circumstances at a time when the political climate was favourable in a prosperous area of its own choosing, in a territory acquired by a people which, from the very first hours of its life, thus openly, with the complicity of other States, disregarded the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. Indeed, "the State of Israel" could have been set up anywhere—in South America, for example—if the place in question had offered the attractions and the resources of the Middle East and its artistic, cultural and economic wealth. In fact, "the State of Israel", warmongering and expansionist by nature, has no territory and, because of this fact, has no juridical existence because, under international public law, there can be no State without territory.

129. What is worse, in defiance of international public opinion and shrinking from no act of barbarism, the Zionists, not content with having built a State on the territory of another people, began driving the Palestinians from their homeland and mounting a series of acts of increasing atrocity. First of all, they occupied 20,700 square kilometres, then an additional 65,000 square kilometres of Palestinian land, thus reducing more than 1 million Arabs to the status of refugees. Since then, they have never ceased their provocations, deliberate acts of aggression and massacres without number against all the Arab peoples, particularly the Arab people of Palestine.

The massacres of Sabra and Shatila are too recent for me to have to remind the Assembly of them.

130. However, from the very first hours of occupation, the Palestinian masses rose up against the invader and used every method of opposing him. Enjoying the support of the other Arab peoples, and that of the whole world, they acquired the necessary means successfully to wage a resistance struggle by establishing the PLO in 1964 and launching their just armed struggle for national liberation. The united Palestinian resistance has gone from victory to victory, sweeping away the obstacles in its path, holding aloft the torch of justified armed struggle for national liberation. It has foiled all the plots and eluded all the traps set by various parties and has concentrated all its efforts on fighting the enemy.

131. All these victories to the credit of the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, were won thanks to the determination of all concerned and particularly to the unity of the Palestinians and their unfailing solidarity as embodied in the PLO. This is all the more important in that it constitutes an enormous source of encouragement for all Palestinian militants and fighters and even for all those who are fighting for any such just cause as the defence of territorial integrity or the self-determination of a people. Hence, the vital interest of the Comoros in the cohesiveness and vigilance of the PLO in the face of the enemy. If it is true that we cannot conceive of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East without a solution of the Palestinian problem, it is equally true that no lasting solution can be brought about without a united, strong PLO. That is why the Comoros is worried that internal problems within that organization may be weakening it, thus playing into the hands of the enemy by diverting the PLO from its immediate concerns at a time when it should be closing ranks and bringing to bear all its resources in the right direction.

132. But we believe in the militant capacity of the PLO to resolve its own problems in a proper way and to strengthen its resistance. The PLO bears a historic responsibility in the national liberation struggle, to which it must give priority over all other considerations. To this end, we call on the Palestinian fighters to close ranks and to work together actively and rapidly for the solution of what we believe to be the kind of internal difference that is not insuperable and that is inherent in any military organization such as the PLO.

133. The Twelfth Arab Summit Conference, held at Fez, proposed, on 9 September 1982, a peace plan³ which constitutes an excellent and important basis for negotiations with a view to bringing about a complete and lasting peace in the Middle East. This plan contains the most realistic solution to the general problem of the Middle East and constitutes the most fundamental and best contribution to peace in recent times. It takes a comprehensive view of the whole problem in all its aspects and of all the data. This plan could be clarified and complemented by the Geneva Declaration on Palestine¹ and the Programme of Action for the Achievement of Palestinian Rights,¹ adopted by the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, held at Geneva from 29 August to 7 September 1983.

134. I should like to take this opportunity to state that my country fully endorses those Conference documents, which are a logical extension of the Arab peace plan, which the European Council declared on 22 March 1983 were a step towards peace in the Middle East [see A/38/124]. These documents are entirely compatible with

the recommendations of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. That is why my country is in favour of the establishment of a united front on these proposals, so that they may be put into effect to make Israel give way and to end this conflict, the prolongation of which has turned some people into sceptics.

135. Mr. VONGSAY (Lao People's Democratic Republic) (*interpretation from French*): The question of Palestine, which has been before the United Nations since 1947, by virtue of the passions which it arouses and the complications it generates year after year, seems to be still far from being resolved. Each time it comes before the General Assembly it is preceded by some grave event. Last year, when it was being dealt with at the thirty-seventh session, the international community was still recovering from the shock of the terrible massacre of defenceless Palestinian refugees in the Sabra and Shatila camps, at Beirut. This year we are considering the matter at a time when the situation in the Middle East remains explosive. Lebanon, which is still under Israeli occupation, is now the object of direct United States intervention under cover of the so-called "multinational peace-keeping force", and the Palestinian refugees in that country continue to fall to the bullets of the aggressors, or to be the innocent victims of fratricidal fighting.

136. In the occupied Palestinian territories, while the establishment of settlements is proceeding at full speed, in violation of international law and relevant United Nations decisions on the matter, the Arab population continues to suffer acts of violence of all kinds at the hands of the Zionist settlers and the Israeli military authorities. The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, in its report [A/38/35], gives a figure of 153 Israeli settlements illegally established in the West Bank and in East Jerusalem by the end of 1982. It also states that the Israeli Government approved, on 16 January this year, the establishment of four new settlements in the occupied West Bank. The number of inhabitants of these settlements had risen to 140,000 in 1982 and Israel intends to settle 400,000 people from other countries in the settlements in the next five years and 1.4 million Jews in the next 30 years. It is clear that Israel intends to alter the demographic composition and disrupt the geographic, economic and social unity of the occupied Arab territories.

137. This policy has given rise to discontent among the Arabs, who have been demonstrating increasingly against the occupation. This has led to reprisals on the part of the occupying authorities. Mass arrests, torture, the closing of Arab universities and schools, the deportation or forced transfer of the indigenous population from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, the dismissal of democratically elected local officials, the destruction of Arab houses, and so on, are everyday events.

138. It is clear that these barbarous practices have contributed to poisoning feelings and thus aggravating the situation to the point of seriously threatening international peace and security.

139. If Israel has dared in this way to violate international law and United Nations decisions with impunity, it has done so because it knows it can count on the protection of the United States Administration. This protection has manifested itself in the United States veto in the Security Council whenever the Council has tried to impose sanctions against Israel. Worse still, after each sinister exploit of the Tel Aviv Government against the Palestinians or Arab countries, Washington has increased its economic and military aid to Israel. This is not surprising,

because through its "strategic co-operation", as it is called, Washington has made Israel the spearhead of its imperialist policy in the strategic region of the Middle East.

140. The international community, increasingly concerned at this steadily worsening situation, has from the outset sought the means for a settlement. It has recognized that the question of Palestine is the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict. In fact, this question involves the following facts. First, the Palestinians were driven from their homes and their lands, which have been occupied by the Israelis. Secondly, almost the entire Palestinian nation has been forced to live in exile, and those of them that live under Israeli occupation have to suffer all kinds of extortion, harassment and degrading and inhuman treatment designed, in the last analysis, to drive them out of their homes. Thirdly, the Palestinian people are denied their most fundamental and inalienable rights, particularly the right of return and the right to self-determination, to independence and to national sovereignty. Fourthly, all the States of the region desire to live in safety and independence.

141. Consequently, any just and lasting settlement of the question of Palestine, and accordingly of the Middle East conflict, must take account of all those facts.

142. The Soviet Union has proposed a plan for a settlement⁴ based on the following points: the withdrawal by Israel from all the Arab territories occupied by it since 1967, including Jerusalem; the exercise by the Palestinian people, under the leadership of the PLO, its sole legitimate representative, of its inalienable fundamental rights, including the right to establish an independent Palestinian State in Palestine; the participation of the PLO in any discussion of a settlement of the question of Palestine and of the Middle East, on an equal footing with the other interested parties; the right of all States of the region to live in safety within secure and internationally recognized boundaries; the ending of the state of war and the establishment of peace between the Arab States and Israel; and the drafting and adoption of international guarantees for a peaceful settlement.

143. The Twelfth Arab Summit Conference, held at Fez, also adopted an Arab peace plan³ similar to the preceding plan, which was endorsed by the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, held at Geneva from 29 August to 7 September this year. This plan emphasizes in particular the need to end the establishment of settlements, which constitute a major obstacle to peace in the Middle East, and the importance of not recognizing the changes made in the character and status of the Holy City of Jerusalem.

144. Moreover, in order to put into effect the principles outlined in the Arab peace plan, the International Conference on the Question of Palestine considered that it was essential to convene an international peace conference on the Middle East, under United Nations auspices, in order to arrive at a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict, a conference in which all the parties to the conflict would participate on an equal footing, including the PLO, as well as the United States, the Soviet Union and the other States concerned.

145. The Geneva Declaration on Palestine¹ and the Programme of Action for the Achievement of Palestinian Rights¹ contain some very positive and realistic principles which could well lead to a just and lasting solution of the Palestinian problem. These principles have already been endorsed by the PLO; but that organization has also declared that in its struggle for the attainment of its inalienable and fundamental national rights it holds an olive branch in one hand and a gun in the other. Which-

ever of those two the PLO has to use for that purpose, it will in any event be able to count on the unflinching support of my country.

146. Mr. LUNDAVIK (Sweden): Three months ago, the International Conference on the Question of Palestine took place at Geneva. Sweden was represented at that Conference in spite of reservations with regard to the manner in which the decision to hold the Conference was taken by the General Assembly in its resolution 36/120 C. The outcome was favourably received by my Government, which views the Geneva Declaration on Palestine¹ adopted by the Conference as an encouraging step towards responsible and realistic treatment by the Assembly of the question of Palestine. The United Nations provides the appropriate machinery in the search for a solution to this problem. The Assembly can make a constructive contribution to this effort if its pronouncements are balanced and realistic.

147. The Geneva Declaration on Palestine identifies a set of guidelines for international efforts to resolve the conflict. We find that these guidelines represent, in essence, the principles that Sweden has advocated as a suitable and realistic basis for a comprehensive, just and lasting solution. Allow me to elaborate this point a little further.

148. Sweden bases its position on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). My Government's understanding of the essential thrust of these resolutions is that, as a result of negotiations, Israel would withdraw from the territories occupied in 1967. Israel's neighbours and other States in the region would give full recognition to Israel's right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries. These basic elements are reflected in the Declaration's guidelines.

149. Absent from resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) is an explicit reference to the rights of the Palestinians as a people. They are referred to as refugees and, one must assume, indirectly as one of the "parties concerned" mentioned in resolution 338 (1973). In the view of my Government, both justice and political realism demand that the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people—including their right to a State of their own—should be recognized as a fundamental premise for negotiations towards a comprehensive settlement of the conflict.

150. The Declaration identifies the rights of the Palestinian people in a manner we find to be consistent with our own view.

151. In the period since the International Conference on the Question of Palestine took place, the situation of the Palestinian people and the prospects for the eventual realization of Palestinian national aspirations have suffered severe setbacks. The continued Israeli policy of illegal settlements and various repressive measures directed against the Palestinian population in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip give rise to grave concern and must be condemned by the international community. In the occupied territories, Israeli actions have continued to disrupt the political structures that had developed. The primary aim of such actions is apparently to eliminate the PLO as the leading political force. Those Israeli attempts have certainly been helped by developments in Syrian-controlled parts of Lebanon in recent months. Conflicts within the PLO are exploited by other parties and threaten to eliminate the PLO as an independent organization.

152. My Government regards such policies as harmful to the prospects for a lasting peace in the region. The national aspirations of the Palestinian people cannot be stifled.

153. For any settlement of the conflict to be lasting, it must have the support of the Palestinian people. Such support will not be forthcoming unless the Palestinians participate in negotiations leading up to a solution and unless their representatives at such negotiations are generally recognized and supported by the Palestinians themselves. In our opinion, the PLO enjoys the kind of support needed for that role. Recent manifestations among the Palestinians in the region have underscored the support still enjoyed by the PLO and its political leadership. We believe that the PLO will continue to enjoy such support, as long as it is seen to represent no other interests than those of the Palestinian people.

154. Fratricidal fighting by Palestinians and indiscriminate shelling—reportedly also by Syrian artillery—have inflicted a new wave of suffering and misery on the Palestinian refugees in northern Lebanon and on the Lebanese population of that area. The safety of civilians, Palestinian as well as Lebanese, seems to have been given very little consideration by any of the parties to the fighting. The Syrian Arab Republic cannot escape responsibility for the welfare of the civilians living in areas under Syrian control. In the past, when it was Israel that resorted to indiscriminate bombing and shelling of Beirut and other populated centres, my Government condemned such acts. Similar acts in Tripoli and its surrounding areas must similarly be condemned, whether they are perpetrated by Palestinians or by Syrians.

155. The efforts by the Red Cross, by UNRWA and by other organizations to bring assistance to the afflicted civilian population of the Tripoli area deserve all possible support.

156. A cause for concern continues to be the situation of Palestinian refugees in southern Lebanon. Deprived of adequate protection, civilians in and outside the refugee camps have been subjected to numerous instances of harassment and intimidation. Responsibility for the safety of these people rests for the moment with Israel as the occupying Power.

157. When the withdrawal of foreign troops from Lebanon takes place, the responsibility for the protection of civilians will be assumed by the Government of Lebanon. Should the Government of Lebanon seek assistance in order to fulfil its obligations in this regard, the international community should, in the view of my Government, consider it its duty to render such assistance as may be possible.

158. There is broad international consensus concerning the elements that must form the foundation of any lasting solution to the conflict in the Middle East. Mutual recognition by Israelis and Palestinians of the national rights of the other party is a prerequisite for such a solution. The terms of a settlement can be defined only in negotiations with the direct participation of the principal parties, including Israel and the PLO, as well as those Arab States which are directly affected. The strategic realities of the region make it indispensable that the major Powers should also be party to such negotiations. The Geneva Declaration on Palestine recognizes this fact in its call for an international peace conference on the Middle East with the participation of the parties, the two super-Powers and other States concerned. My Government believes that the holding of such a conference would be in the real interest of the parties concerned.

159. Mr. ROA KOURÍ (Cuba) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Rarely has history witnessed a more abominable crime than that which was perpetrated against the Palestinian people in their own homeland by Israeli Zionists.

160. As a consequence of the expansionist and exclusivist policy of Israel, the Palestinian nation has been deprived

of its ancestral lands, persecuted, compelled to seek refuge in neighbouring countries and deprived of the exercise of its inalienable rights. It has been converted, in short, into a wandering nation.

161. Hence, the justice of the Palestinian people's historic struggle, the reason behind their rejection of any alleged solution which does not fulfil their right to self-determination, to return to their homes and to establish their own State in Palestine—no more, but no less.

162. It has been stated on many occasions that the question of Palestine is the core of the Middle East problem and, indeed, that is so. Therefore, it is not possible either to conceive of or to achieve a solution in that region without also solving the Palestinian problem.

163. In the three decades that have elapsed since the partition of Palestine and the establishment of the Jewish State, Israel has, gradually and illegally, annexed almost the entire territory and occupied by force other Arab territories, including the Holy City of Jerusalem, which it attempts to turn into its capital.

164. In flagrant violation of United Nations resolutions, Israel continues to expand its illegal settlements in the occupied territories in the West Bank of the Jordan and Gaza, while it adopts measures to alter drastically the demographic, cultural, social and geographical characteristics of those territories.

165. Its policy of aggression extends to the Syrian Golan Heights, which it has also occupied, and to southern Lebanon, where it keeps its troops and its camps to this day, after the criminal invasion ending in the massacres of Sabra and Shatila.

166. All that is made possible solely and exclusively by the military, economic and political support afforded Israel by the United States—support that became a "strategic alliance" after the assumption of office by Mr. Ronald Reagan, along with a small group of reactionary adventurers who today govern the destiny of the most important imperialist Power.

167. That is nothing less than an attempt to make a reality of the old Zionist dream—the creation of Eretz Yisrael, an intolerant, exclusivist, anti-Arab entity—with the money and arms provided by North American taxpayers, while Uncle Sam manipulates its puppets in the region in quest of the strategic and economic objectives of a so-called "peace" which would serve only its own interests in the Middle East.

168. This unholy alliance, which is clearly directed against the Arab peoples, especially against the Palestinian revolution, was strengthened by the recent visit of Minister Shamir to Washington and the agreements arrived at, while at the same time Lebanon has been pressured to join in the surrender and the separate peace with the Israeli occupiers.

169. We are fully familiar with the position of the overwhelming majority of Member States on this subject. The recommendations of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People concerning the achievement of a comprehensive, just and lasting solution of the problem of the Middle East, which are endorsed by the General Assembly, and the outcome of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, held this year at Geneva, constitute a clear-cut, unequivocal mandate for the international community. There is also great clarity in the resolutions and statements adopted in this connection by the Seventh Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at New Delhi in March 1983, the meeting of the Parliamentary Association for Euro-Arab Co-operation, held at The Hague, the International Conference on the

Alliance between South Africa and Israel, held at Vienna in July 1983, the Second World Conference to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, held at Geneva in August 1983, and regional seminars working on various aspects of the Palestinian question, held in Asia, Africa, Europe and Latin America before the International Conference on the Question of Palestine took place.

170. Cuba, which took part in most of these events and which has always affirmed its unswerving solidarity with the Palestinian people in their just cause, also endorses the draft resolutions submitted to the Assembly for consideration, and we particularly support the holding of an international peace conference on the Middle East with the participation of all the parties to the Arab-Israeli conflict, including the PLO and the United States of America, the Soviet Union and other States concerned, on an equal footing and with equal rights.

171. This conference, which will have to take place under the auspices of the United Nations, must be based, *inter alia*, on the following guidelines established in the Geneva Declaration on Palestine,¹ adopted at the International Conference on the Question of Palestine: the attainment by the Palestinian people of its legitimate inalienable rights, including the right to return, the right to self-determination and the right to establish its own independent State in Palestine; the right of the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, to participate on an equal footing with other parties in all efforts, deliberations and conferences on the Middle East; and the need to put an end to Israel's occupation of the Arab territories, in accordance with the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, and, consequently, the need to secure Israeli withdrawal from the territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem. This, together with opposition to and rejection of Israeli policies and practices in the occupied territories and recognition of the need to declare null and void all legislative and administrative measures taken by the Zionist State, will make it possible to achieve once and for all the comprehensive, just and lasting solution to which we, the peoples of the United Nations, aspire.

172. Cuba wishes the General Assembly and the Security Council to apply the measures provided for in the Charter of the United Nations so that Israel and its "strategic allies" have to abide by their resolutions and cease illegal and aggressive action in the Middle East.

173. Finally, we appeal to all our Arab friends and to the PLO firmly to consolidate their unity and turn all their weapons against the common enemies, Zionism and imperialism, which are preparing to strike a new blow against the Arab peoples.

174. In the absence of Mr. Massamba Sarré, Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, and in my capacity as acting Chairman of that Committee I should like now to introduce to the Assembly draft resolutions A/38/L.36 to L.40, on the question of Palestine.

175. Draft resolutions A/38/L.36 and L.37 are similar in essence to resolutions adopted earlier by the General Assembly.

176. In connection with draft resolution A/38/L.37, I might add that subparagraphs 3 (a) and (b) emphasize contacts with the mass media and non-governmental organizations. The need for this was especially stressed at the meeting of the Committee held on 28 November, at which a request was made that the Division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat arrange symposia and meetings for these non-governmental organizations.

177. Draft resolution A/38/L.38 is based on the Programme of Action for the Achievement of Palestinian

Rights,¹ adopted by consensus at the International Conference on the Question of Palestine. I believe that the importance of finding a comprehensive solution to the problem of Palestine without delay is something on which we all agree. All attempts to find a partial solution to this difficult problem or one outside the framework of the United Nations have failed and are doomed to failure in the future. The fact that the proposal to hold an international peace conference was accepted by consensus at the International Conference on the Question of Palestine reflects the sense of urgency attributed by the international community to this question. We therefore hope that the Assembly will give this draft resolution similar support.

178. Draft resolution A/38/L.39 is also related to the action taken by the International Conference on the Question of Palestine. A similar draft resolution, contained in document A/C.2/38/L.24/Rev.1, has already been adopted by the Second Committee, at its 39th meeting, by an overwhelming majority of 131 votes in favour and only 2 against. The text that we are now submitting to the Assembly for consideration contains only one element that was not in the draft resolution. It gives us guidelines which we believe must be borne in mind.

179. In draft resolution A/38/L.40, which is also based on the Programme of Action, the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat is asked to give greater attention to this most important question, the question of Palestine.

180. With these brief comments, I hereby submit to the Assembly draft resolutions A/38/L.36 to L.40. I believe that the adoption of these draft resolutions would be a contribution to the quest for peace, stability and co-operation in the Middle East.

181. It is hardly necessary to repeat that the United Nations, in keeping with its Charter, has the imperative duty and responsibility to help re-establish peace in the region. I hope that Member States will be able to give almost unanimous support to these draft resolutions.

182. Mr. BLAIN (Gambia): May I first pay a well-deserved tribute to the outstanding work carried out over the past year by the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, under the distinguished Chairmanship of my friend and brother, Mr. Massamba Sarré, of Senegal. The dedication and commitment of the members of this important Committee are fully attested to by the report [A/38/35] submitted to the General Assembly.

183. The question of Palestine rightly remains one of the most serious preoccupations of the international community at large and the United Nations in particular. Although the ramifications of this issue are of considerable complexity, the core of the problem is devastating in its simplicity. At issue here is the continued denial by Israel of the fundamental and inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination and national independence.

184. Today, a total of 2.5 million Palestinians, representing more than 60 per cent of the overall Palestinian population, have been reduced to the status of refugees. Driven from the land of their birth and dispersed throughout a dozen Middle Eastern and other countries, an entire generation of Palestinians has grown up in refugee camps, which remain an enduring symbol of the Palestinian experience. The brutal genocidal massacres in the Sabra and Shatila camps last September thus epitomized the immense human tragedy inherent in the question of Palestine.

185. There is a broad international consensus on the unacceptability of this state of affairs. This consensus

has been unequivocally expressed in the successive resolutions adopted by the Assembly and other competent United Nations bodies, reaffirming the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and denouncing the policies and practices of Israel. The authorities of Tel Aviv, however, have defiantly ignored these repeated pronouncements and have instead relentlessly pursued their systematic efforts to destroy the Palestinian identity.

186. Inhabited by a little over 1 million Palestinians, the occupied West Bank and the Gaza Strip represent the last vestiges of the Palestinian Arab State provided for by the General Assembly under its fateful resolution 181 (II) of 29 November 1947. Today, the international community is witnessing the final manoeuvres of a strategy aimed at the total absorption of these territories into a so-called "Greater Israel".

187. Already, jurisdiction over these territories has been transferred from the original Military Governor to a new Civil Administrator. In official Israeli pronouncements, moreover, these territories are now referred to as Judaea and Samaria, which, it is claimed, formed an integral part of the Biblical Eretz Yisrael. My delegation does not intend to dignify such spurious claims to territory by discussing them in any detail. It must, however, be categorically affirmed that this annexationist policy is in flagrant violation of the cardinal principle regarding the non-acquisition of territory by force.

188. With cynical brutality, Israel has attempted literally to terrorize the Palestinian inhabitants of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip into submitting to the annexation of their homeland. All sectors of the Arab population thus remain subjected to a systematic campaign of harassment and intimidation, under which even innocuous gestures of protest have met with the most violent repression. The Israeli armed forces have been routinely deployed to suppress Palestinian student demonstrations, with the result that during the past two years more than 40 Arab students have been killed while over 100 have been wounded in such confrontations.

189. This campaign of repression, intended to stamp out any vestiges of Palestinian nationalism in the occupied territories, has been especially directed against the leadership of the Palestinian community. The last two years have thus witnessed the summary dissolution by the occupying authorities of the overwhelming majority of Palestinian town councils. As a result, Bethlehem is today the only major city in the West Bank still administered by its originally elected municipality.

190. At the same time, the economy of the occupied territories is being strangled by similarly repressive measures. The monopoly of Israeli banks in these territories has ensured that credit facilities are routinely withheld from Palestinian businesses. Over the last year, the situation has been aggravated by the imposition of an Israeli military decree prohibiting remittances of foreign currency to these territories. In the agricultural sector, meanwhile, Palestinian farmers are even denied access to vital water resources through the systematic refusal by the Israeli authorities to issue the necessary permits for digging wells. The cumulative impact of these various measures has driven an increasing number of Palestinian enterprises out of business, resulting in the progressive proletarianization of the Palestinian population. Indeed, a significant proportion of the Palestinian population is now compelled to migrate to Israel in search of employment.

191. The linchpin of Israel's annexationist strategy remains the illegal settlements policy, which has been universally denounced. Suggesting a purely temporary abode, the term settlement is in itself a misnomer. It conceals the real nature of the urban developments which

Israel has constructed in the occupied territories, on lands expropriated from the indigenous Palestinian population. These are, in fact, towns to which the settlers are then lured by a generous package of concessionary housing loans, grants and subsidies. In the time-honoured tradition of colonialism, the policy is designed to swamp the indigenous Arab population with Jewish settlers.

192. In practice, these settlers have tended to develop an aggressive "frontier mentality", reminiscent of the Wild West. Permitted by the occupation authorities to carry weapons, settlers have established paramilitary vigilante groups which have played a leading role in the harassment and intimidation of unarmed Palestinian villagers, who have been kidnapped, assaulted and often murdered with total impunity. On several occasions, these brutal outrages have been tinged with the ugly overtones of racism and religious intolerance. In April 1982, the international community in general and the Muslim world in particular reacted with horror and outrage to the murderous and sacrilegious attack on worshippers at the holy Al-Aqsa Mosque at Jerusalem, by the settler Alan Harry Goodman. A little over a year later, a brutal machine-gun attack upon the Hebron Islamic College killed three students and injured a total of 33 others, arousing universal condemnation.

193. The combined force of these repressive measures has, however, failed to extinguish the flame of Palestinian nationalism. Even in the face of such oppressive adversity, the Palestinian population has remained resolutely committed to the goal of a free and independent Palestine. These hopes and aspirations have found organizational expression in the PLO which remains the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. I wish at this point to reaffirm the unqualified support of the Government and people of the Gambia for the heroic struggle being waged by the Palestinian people under the leadership of the PLO.

194. It is perhaps axiomatic to observe that the question of Palestine lies at the heart of the wider Middle East conflict, for the continued denial of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people has had the gravest consequences for international peace and security in the region, which is permanently endangered by Israel's aggressive and expansionist tendencies.

195. Today, Israel continues to occupy by force vast areas of the sovereign Republic of Lebanon which it overran during its criminal invasion of that State over a year ago. At the same time, it has maintained its illegal occupation of Jerusalem, as well as of the Syrian Golan Heights, in stubborn defiance of the repeated appeals of the international community. My delegation condemns these flagrant violations of the Charter of the United Nations and of international law.

196. It is imperative that the long-standing question of Palestine be resolved promptly. The essence of a solution will, of necessity, involve the full exercise by the Palestinian people of their legitimate and inalienable rights. In this connection, my delegation considers that the Geneva Declaration on Palestine¹ and the Programme of Action for the Achievement of Palestinian Rights¹ adopted by the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, held at Geneva from 29 August to 7 September this year, provide the appropriate framework for a just and lasting settlement.

197. Mr. PRADHAN (Bhutan): Let me begin by conveying the heartfelt condolences of the Bhutanese delegation to the bereaved family of Mr. Bernardo Zuleta, Under-Secretary-General and Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Law of the Sea. Mr. Zuleta's

valuable contribution to the international community will be long remembered.

198. The overwhelming majority of the international community has recognized that the question of Palestine lies at the heart of the problem in the Middle East. This question has been the focus of our attention for over three decades, almost since the inception of the United Nations. Although we have debated this question for so long, a solution to the problem continues to elude us and the just and legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people remain unfulfilled.

199. We are again considering the question of Palestine, but at a particularly critical juncture—a time when developments are taking place rapidly and many uncertainties exist as to what the immediate future holds for Palestinians. We continue to observe with great concern the split within the Palestinian leadership and the recent factional fighting. This development has been very unfortunate and is a definite set-back to the cause for which Palestinians have been struggling. My delegation hopes that unity will soon prevail within the ranks of the PLO, which we have recognized as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. In this respect, we appreciate the efforts being made by some of the Arab States and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries to assist and help the PLO to mend its own fences.

200. Despite the developments that are taking place, the international community cannot lose sight of the suffering of the Palestinian people and their displacement from their homeland. Serious international efforts must be made, now more than ever, so that their inalienable rights—to self-determination, to return to their homes and properties and to establish a sovereign, independent State—are achieved and not diluted in any manner. In order to accomplish this, Israel has been constantly called upon by the international community to relinquish its hold over all Palestinian and Arab territories, including Jerusalem, which it has occupied since the 1967 war. The peaceful coexistence of all States in the area can be achieved only if the problem of Palestinian statehood is resolved. The use of force to settle disputes and acquire territories will only embroil Israel in one conflict after another with its Arab neighbours.

201. Just recently, in August and September, the International Conference on the Question of Palestine was held at Geneva. Though several members of the international community were unable to participate, there was still an overwhelming number of direct participants and many observers. The Conference, after thoroughly debating and examining all the issues in respect of the question of Palestine, adopted the Geneva Declaration on Palestine¹ by acclamation. In that Declaration, among other things, Israel was once again explicitly called upon to withdraw from all occupied territories and thereby permit the Palestinian people to exercise their right to self-determination and to establish a sovereign State of Palestine. We must also recognize the right of the PLO to participate fully and on an equal footing in all negotiations or discussions on the question of Palestine. My delegation believes that that right must be fully respected and realized, otherwise the genuine and legitimate interests of the Palestinians may be seriously jeopardized.

202. In conclusion, my delegation is of the view that, in order to permit the Palestinian people to achieve their inalienable rights, all the parties concerned must resort to peaceful solutions and be flexible and accommodating in their demands. Rigid positions, even though they may seem very justifiable, can only obstruct negotiations towards a lasting solution of the Palestinian problem.

203. Mr. AL-QAYSI (Iraq) (*interpretation from Arabic*): For 36 years now, the world has been witnessing, with pain and sorrow, the terrible tragedy visited upon the Palestinian people, which has caused them to go into exile after their homeland and their possessions were plundered and a foreign State established itself on their land. This tragedy has become increasingly acute year after year and has become an international problem included in the agenda of the General Assembly at every session. The Security Council has also dealt with this question from time to time. Special sessions and special conferences have been held on the question of Palestine as well.

204. Nevertheless, Israel continues with impunity to practise its policies of murder, oppression, terror and racial discrimination to eliminate the very identity of the Palestinian people and root out those Palestinians who remain, all that are left of a people that have lost everything except their lives, over which hovers the constant threat of extinction at the hands of Zionism. Zionism persecutes the exiles in its midst wherever they can be found in a campaign of genocide and plots against their institutions in an odious way never before seen in human history. Yet the international community has failed to find a comprehensive and just solution to save the Palestinian people and repel the continuing Israeli aggression against them; it has failed to prevent Israel from taking over vast portions of the Arab world in violation of the Charter of the United Nations, an action which constitutes a threat to international peace and security in the region.

205. The international community today seems powerless to find a solution to this great tragedy and in the future it will be even more powerless as long as Israel persists with its aggression and persecution and pursues its policy of annihilation and expansion. It appears that such policies will never be abandoned until Israel achieves its evil objectives, aided and abetted by a major Power, the United States of America.

206. In spite of the escalation of that aggression and expansion the Palestinian people are continuing their bitter and hard struggle to recover their rights and their lands and to decide their own future, awaiting the time when the international community will prove itself equal to its responsibilities and demonstrate the political will truly to support them in their just and legitimate struggle.

207. Is it not strange that the Organization is making efforts and taking initiatives which are met only with defiance and resistance, while its resolutions are completely ignored? Is that not irrefutable proof that Israel is intent on evil, aggression and defiance of the will of the peoples? Does that not formally belie Israel's allegations that it wants to live in peace? Can it be possible for the international community to ignore the realities underlying Israeli actions, which affirm the Zionist schemes which can only be satisfied by expansion, aggression and the establishment of a greater Jewish State? In this extraordinary situation, we must question the usefulness of conferences and resolutions when the United Nations is seen to be powerless in the face of Israeli defiance of its efforts and its resolutions aimed at bringing about a just and lasting solution to this problem at a time when the Arabs have spared no efforts at many conferences to achieve the solution for which we all hope, one in which justice will triumph and which will restore the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, bring security and stability to the region and put an end to aggression and expansion.

208. I must take this opportunity to stress the positive position and the constructive co-operation of the Arab States in their relations with the United Nations and their desire to ensure that its resolutions are respected. The

Arab countries support the principles of the Charter and refuse to countenance aggression and the use of force in the settlement of international conflicts. The Arabs follow the course of wisdom, logic and flexibility in their efforts to bring about a just and comprehensive solution of the Palestinian problem. At the same time, they cannot agree to live with humiliation or to be subjected to acts of aggression. This is why the Palestinian people are struggling to repel aggression, recover their legitimate rights, safeguard their national dignity and regain their honour and their country.

209. The Israeli leaders have always openly denied the rights of the Palestinian people and rejected any draft or any initiative that recognizes its right to have its own independent State in its own territory, Palestine. Everyone knows, however, that the Palestinian question is at the very core of the Middle East conflict and is the very basis of this problem. It is the duty of the United Nations, therefore, to give this matter greater priority and to find a political solution to the problem. We believe that will only be possible by implementing the many resolutions that have been adopted over more than three decades. The Organization must also support the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, which must be able to participate on an equal footing with all other parties in all efforts to find a solution to the question of Palestine. It is now clear that Israel's continuing occupation of Arab territories complicates this problem and that therefore that occupation must be ended, in accordance with the principle of the inadmissibility of annexation or the acquisition of territory by force and in keeping with the need for the withdrawal of Israel from all occupied Arab territories, including Jerusalem.

210. In its aggressive and expansionist designs, Israel is clearly acting on the basis of *faits accomplis*, using fallacious arguments and pretexts and doing so with the support of certain major Powers. It is clear that this policy of *faits accomplis* that Israel is attempting to make the international community accept encourages those entities that have expansionist designs to pursue policies of aggression and of acquisition of the territories of others by force. Thus, precedents are established in the international community that encourage violation of national sovereignty and the independence of peoples and destabilization of their régimes. As a result, the United Nations is becoming unable to serve the purpose for which it was established to safeguard peace, security and stability in the world.

Mr. Pradhan (Bhutan), Vice-President, took the Chair.

211. The policy of *faits accomplis* being pursued includes the adoption of administrative and legislative measures by Israel, as the occupying authority, in its attempt to change the political, economic, social and demographic character of the occupied Arab territories, including the City of Jerusalem. Israel continues to implement its policy of confiscating Arab lands and property by applying the so-called "Basic Law" with reference to the City of Jerusalem, which it considers to be its capital.

212. Those that say that they are trying to bring about peace in the Middle East and to find some solution to this problem are clearly contradicting themselves when they continue to furnish Israel with arms, money and political support and to enter into military agreements with Israel. In so doing, they are assisting the aggressor in continuing its aggression. The United States of America is in the vanguard of this category. The United States has not merely continued its strategic co-operation with Israel, but has opened up its arsenals to Israel and given it access to the means of mass destruction and annihilation. The United States, according to the latest reports,

is prepared to give the Zionist entity \$1,275,000 in the form of military aid and \$910 million in economic aid.

213. One of the causes of the deterioration of the situation in the region and the increase in tension is the establishment of Jewish settlements in the occupied Arab territories. Those lands have been taken from their rightful Arab owners and Jewish refugees have been allowed to take them over and to establish settlements there, taking away from the Palestinians and their children their means of subsistence, forcing them to work at very low salaries for the benefit of the Zionist usurpers and reducing them to the status of second-class citizens.

214. Iraq is proud of the results achieved at the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, held at Geneva from 29 August to 7 September this year. We believe that the results achieved there are fair and that the international community should recognize them practically and effectively. Mr. Saddam Hussain, President of the Republic of Iraq, expressed this thought in his message on the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. He welcomed the outcome of that Conference and said:

"Mention must be made of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine held at Geneva earlier this year. That Conference achieved good and acceptable results, which are embodied in the Declaration and in the Programme of Action. One of the positive aspects of that Conference, which had a special meaning because of the circumstances in which the PLO currently finds itself, was the participation of the PLO on an equal footing with all other parties."

215. The Iraqi delegation appreciates all the commendable efforts made by the United Nations with a view to solving the Palestinian problem and supporting the struggle of the Palestinian people to enable them to recover their inalienable rights. However, we believe that what counts are the efforts and initiatives that can be put into effect. The United Nations has so far adopted hundreds of resolutions recognizing the rights of the Palestinian people, but they have not been implemented because of Zionist obstinacy and aggressive designs. Therefore, we must take practical and effective steps to recover the rights of the Palestinian people.

216. In conclusion, I would like to commend the Chairman and the members of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People for the care, honesty and objectivity with which they carried out their work.

217. Mr. WEEDY (Afghanistan): The United Nations inherited the problem of Palestine when it had already acquired dangerous dimensions. Since then, many developments have taken place that have added enormously to the tension and resulted in the present explosive situation in the region.

218. The United Nations, conscious of its direct responsibilities for maintaining international peace and security, has made every effort to bring about a comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East, through a just solution of the Palestinian problem.

219. Resolutions of the General Assembly, beginning with resolution 181 (II) of 29 November 1947 and ending with resolutions 37/86 A to D of 10 December 1982 and 37/86 E of 20 December 1982, have given a clear definition of the nature and scope of the problem. These resolutions not only reflect the verdict of the international community on this problem, but also draw up the basic guidelines for an acceptable solution.

220. It is highly disturbing for the peace-loving nations of the world to note that none of their repeated appeals

and calls for the restoration of peace in the region, through the implementation of United Nations resolutions, has been complied with by the Zionist régime of Israel and its imperialist supporters.

221. In brazen violation of the Charter and many resolutions of the General Assembly and of the Security Council, Israel refuses to withdraw its forces and administration from Palestinian and other Arab territories it has occupied since 1967.

222. Paying no heed to the verdict of the international community, the Zionist régime declared the Holy City of Jerusalem its "eternal" capital, annexed the Syrian Golan Heights and extended its legislation to virtually every aspect of the life of the Palestinian and Arab population in the occupied territories.

223. Despite the repeated condemnations of the international community, Israel has persistently continued its policy of establishing Jewish colonial settlements in the occupied territories. Thousands of the indigenous people have been forcefully evacuated from their homes and towns or have had to abandon them under enormous pressure and intimidation by the occupying authorities and the Zionist settlers. Their land and property have been confiscated for the purpose of establishing new settlements or for the construction of military facilities for the occupying forces. Not only are the people of the occupied territories denied their basic human rights, but their lives have also been under constant threat as a result of criminal and terrorist actions by the Jewish settler vigilantes and the military authorities of the occupied territories. Local administrations, such as city, town and village councils, have been closed down, and elected officials have been dismissed and replaced by military administrations of the occupying Power.

224. Muslim holy places and mosques have been the subject of repeated acts of vandalism and armed attacks. Schools, universities and other public institutions and properties have continuously been the targets of subversive acts.

225. In its quest for land, with a view to accomplishing the task of establishing "Greater Israel", the expansionist rulers of the Zionist entity have launched aggression against Arab States of the region, the most recent example of which is the invasion of Lebanon.

226. Vast territories of the Syrian Arab Republic in the Golan Heights are still under Israeli military occupation. Israel has extended its administrative and legal authority there, with the aim of the final annexation thereof.

227. Lebanon was savagely invaded, with the declared purpose of the physical liquidation of the PLO. After committing horrifying atrocities and genocidal acts against Palestinian refugees and Lebanese civilians, such as those at Sabra and Shatila, and the barbaric attacks on towns and villages, Israel has given no indication of withdrawing its troops from those parts of Lebanon which it still occupies. These and many other, similar actions have been permanent causes for alarm for the international community over the years. They have destroyed the peace and tranquillity of the region and posed a serious threat to the security of the whole area.

228. It is no longer a secret how Israel is able to fly in the face of the international community in complete disregard of international law and the Charter of the United Nations, and manages to get away with its murderous actions and policies. The entire cause of the United Nations' failure to call to order one of its smallest members lies in the intransigent refusal of one of its biggest members to co-operate in the implementation of its resolutions.

229. It is the firm opinion of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan that it is the economic, political and military support of the United States imperialism that has enabled the Zionist régime to continue its policy of aggression, expansion and repression against the Arab countries of the region and the populations of the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories. Without the billions of dollars of financial assistance and military hardware poured into the hands of the Zionist régime by United States imperialism, it would not have been possible for that régime to perpetrate repeated brazen aggressions or to keep hold of the territories it has occupied illegally. The stationing of large detachments of United States Central Command Forces in the area and the concluding of a strategic alliance between United States imperialism and the Zionist entity have served as moral and military support to Israel's expansionist ambitions. Similarly, United States imperialism has paralysed the Security Council because of its continued veto of the measures and actions considered by the Council.

230. Only this week, the leader of the outlaw régime of Israel was awarded a package of economic, political and military deals by the White House, in recognition of all the heinous crimes that it has committed against the Palestinians and other Arab peoples. These new aggressive designs aim not only at strengthening Israel's hand qualitatively and quantitatively against neighbouring countries, but also at expanding and consolidating the United States' military presence in the Middle East.

231. All this is being done in complete defiance of General Assembly resolutions and decisions of the conferences of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, the League of Arab States, the Organization of African Unity and many other international organizations, calling for the cessation of all kinds of assistance to the Zionist régime of Israel.

232. Therefore, the United States Administration cannot escape full responsibility for any and all Israeli actions and for the continuation of the present unfortunate situation in the region.

233. As far as the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan is concerned, the following basic principles must be borne in mind while searching for an acceptable solution to the question of Palestine.

234. First, the question of Palestine lies at the heart of the whole Middle East problem; therefore, no solution to it will be comprehensive or lasting unless the problem of Palestine is taken up in its right perspective and solved on a just basis. We reject any design to isolate the question of Palestine from the rest of the Middle East problem, and we consider all collusive and partial agreements, including the Camp David deals, as void of any moral and legal validity.

235. Secondly, the question of Palestine is a question of the denial of the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people; therefore, no solution can be just unless it enables the Palestinian people to exercise fully their inalienable national rights, including the right to return to their homeland, the right to self-determination and the right to establish their own national State in Palestine.

236. Thirdly, the PLO is the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people; therefore, any search for a solution to the Palestinian problem should include the participation of the PLO on an equal footing and with equal rights.

237. Fourthly, the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,³ and numerous resolutions of the

General Assembly and of the Security Council strictly prohibit the occupying Power from altering the geographical characteristics, demographic composition or legal status of the occupied territories. Therefore, all policies and practices of the Zionist entity in this regard are void of any legal validity before international law.

238. The International Conference on the Question of Palestine, held at Geneva from 29 August to 7 September this year, called for the holding of an international peace conference on the Middle East with the full participation of the PLO. In our view, immediate action should be taken to prepare for the convening of such a conference no later than 1984.

239. We reaffirm our fraternal solidarity with and all-round support for the people of Palestine under the leadership of the PLO, the steadfast confrontation of the Arab States and the patriotic forces of Lebanon. We are confident that the Palestinian people, enjoying the all-round support and assistance of peace-loving nations and progressive forces—their true friends—will ultimately succeed in the struggle for the realization of their national aspirations.

240. Allow me to conclude my statement with a quotation from the message of Babrak Karmal, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan and President of the Revolutionary Council of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, on the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, on 29 November:

"The Palestine question, as one of the most challenging and continuing problems of the century, is the product of collusion between the forces of imperialism and international zionism spearheaded against the Arab national liberation movements.

"It is quite obvious that the developments now taking place in the region clearly confirm the strategic dimension planned by the imperialist Powers since the establishment of the Zionist State of Israel at the expense of the Palestinian people . . .

"In the struggle against zionism and imperialism and for independence, freedom, peace and progress in the Middle East, the unity and solidarity of all peace-loving Arab peoples, and especially the unity of the Palestinian people—which United States imperialism is striving to destroy—is the path that can lead to final and complete victory."

241. Mr. SALAH (Jordan) (*interpretation from Arabic*): Anyone who believes that the reasons behind the violence and tension in the Middle East region have changed would have to be naïve indeed. It might serve the interests of some to claim today that the Israeli occupation of the Arab territories and its denial of the right of the Palestinian people to exercise their legitimate rights are not and have not been the primary cause of the tension in that region.

242. But I should like to repeat, for the benefit of anyone who might fall into the trap of making a hasty judgement, that the failure to bring peace and stability to the region is basically the result of Israel's continued refusal to comply with the international will and with all the calls for right and justice. Why, then, is there fighting in northern Lebanon? Who are living in the Beddawi and Nahr al-Barid camps? Are they not refugees from Haifa, Hebron, Jerusalem and Jaffa and other Palestinian cities? Why are Arab parties fighting each other there? Why is Arab blood being shed by Arabs? Is that not the result of differences of opinion with regard to the way that the problem of the Israeli occupation of the Arab territories should be dealt with, and the denial to the Palestinian

people of the exercise of their legitimate national rights? And where is Israel? Is it not occupying southern Lebanon? Who can deny that it has a hand in the plight of Lebanon and of other parts of the region?

243. One need not dwell on the role played by Israel in the perpetuation of tension and war in the Middle East. The explosive fires of violence and terrorism have been fanned by Israel's occupation of the Arab territories and its refusal to participate in any efforts to attain peace. Its extremist policies and its rejection of any concessions are responsible for the wave of violence sweeping our region.

244. Israel knows quite well that what it has to fear the most is peace. Therefore, it has mobilized its entire potential to avoid peace. To that end, it has pursued a policy of exploitation and sowed the seeds of division and conflict in the Middle East to poison the situation in the region and to arouse ethnic, national and sectarian factionalism—and Israel would remain the strongest faction. That is one of the central aims of Israel's foreign policy. It wants to keep the Arab world and the Middle East region at the boiling point. The existence of this state of affairs helps entrench irrationality and gives rise among some to frustration and fear, leading to irrational reactions.

245. That is what Israel is trying to promote in the Middle East region in order to make the Arab world sap its own strength; it would then finish it off in a few devastating strokes. This situation is intended to create a series of tensions and hotbeds of war, in which Israel does not mean to participate directly, believing that it can in this way hide the principal cause of the tensions and of all the wars and atrocities in the Middle East, particularly Israel's continued occupation of the Arab territories and its denial of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination.

246. In its plan, Israel has exploited various factors, including extremist appeals and irrational reactions on the part of some, caused mainly by frustration at or fear of the magnitude of the Israeli conspiracy to undermine the very existence of the Palestinians and Arabs. But the most important factor in the success of its plans and in its continued intransigence is the inability of the United Nations to implement its resolutions and to translate them into action. I need not dwell on the reasons for that inability, for they are well known to all, but I wish to state my fear that the day could come when we place criticism of the Organization for its impotence in the face of Israel above criticism of Israel itself and of its actions.

247. Israel is attempting to rewrite the history and geography of the area. Its establishment of settlements, its confiscation of Arab lands and its attempt by any means to expel the Arab inhabitants from those lands, as well as its military manoeuvres beyond the borders of Palestine, are policies which are intended to facilitate the annexation of the West Bank and Gaza in the wake of the annexation of Arab Jerusalem and the Golan Heights. Those policies are manifestations of the Israeli doctrine of creating a new geographical and historical foundation in the Middle East region.

248. The roots of the Palestinian problem lie in Israel's expansionist, Zionist inclinations, the historical, social and political bases of which are well known to all. Also no secret is the way in which Israel attempts to justify its policies: its security-related pretexts and fallacious arguments about its mythical rights are well known to all. Even the friends of Israel cannot ignore its ambition or its attempts to annex the Arab territories.

249. Israel claims that the Arabs do not wish to recognize it and that they do not want peace in the region.

But the international community is now fully aware that it is Israel which does not want peace and which strives to frustrate hopes for peace and destroy any hopes of their fulfilment. For their part, the Arabs, including the PLO, explicitly and officially declared their commitment to a responsible position when they took the national initiative of adopting the Arab peace plan, at the Twelfth Arab Summit Conference, held at Fez;³ the plan is based essentially on United Nations resolutions and on the norms of international legality. Earlier, Jordan, along with the Arab States directly concerned, accepted Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), which led to a cease-fire and a disengagement agreement regarding the forces in the Golan Heights. Furthermore, since 1967, Jordan has been striving, along with friendly and sister States, to achieve a just and comprehensive political solution to the Palestinian problem.

250. But what was Israel's response? It responded with more intransigence and rejection and with an attempt to ignore or distort every peace initiative or responsible position of the Arabs. It has become obvious that Israel does not want the Arabs to declare publicly and explicitly their desire for peace, since that does not serve the interests of Israel and its expansionist policies, which Israel is ever attempting to justify.

251. Israel has concocted the myth of an Arab threat to its existence and has used it internationally to justify by any means its intransigence and expansionism.

252. Jordan considers the quest for a political settlement as a principal aim of its foreign policy and it uses all of its potential and all of its institutions in that direction. But Israel uses all of its potential and all of its institutions, as well as all its intellectual and ideological values, for war and expansion. Jordan, in accordance with its policy of pursuing peace, has welcomed all initiatives and international efforts aimed at achieving a political solution to the Palestinian problem. Furthermore, Jordan has sponsored and encouraged international initiatives for implementing that solution. We have done our utmost to make those initiatives succeed, welcoming the mature position taken by the responsible leadership of the PLO aimed at reaching a just political settlement. We believe in the importance of that mature position and are eager that it be maintained; we shall exert every possible effort to maintain and protect it. We consider that taking such a position is a national responsibility imposed upon us by our conscience and our sense of duty to our people and to our lands, which are still under occupation. We are therefore following with pain and concern the threats to the freedom of the Palestinian people to take an independent decision and the attempts at sabotaging that decision. We consider that attempts to obliterate the independent Palestinian will are a very serious matter. Attempts to contain the responsible initiatives of the Palestinian people and to restrain it within a limited framework serve only the interests of Israel. What Israel wants is to lock that people into a position of extremism and rejectionism; it has based its propaganda on this, and made considerable, very destructive use of it. This is the first time in history that a complete distortion of the character of a people has taken place. The Palestinian people is a victim of Zionist settler racist aggression against it, and groundless slogans attempt to place it for ever in a position of extremism and rejectionism. Those who always take a negative attitude towards the Palestinian people and its peace initiatives bear a basic responsibility for the extreme violence now prevailing in the Middle East.

253. That responsibility, to be quite plain, lies primarily with Israel, because Israel's continuous denial of the legitimate rights of the Palestinians and its attempts to

destroy those rights have in fact justified negative reactions and rejection on the part not only of the Palestinian people, but of every Arab people.

254. When Israel launches expansionist wars, such as the invasion of Lebanon last year, under a false pretext of security and legitimate defence, which it afterwards attempted to explain strategically as a war of self-defence, is it not the right of the Arabs and Palestinians to resist Israel, which is in fact determined not only to destroy a people, but also to obliterate their identity and their human character?

255. Israel, after creating this immoral situation, is trying to shrug off the responsibility for it and attribute it to Arab extremism. This is the plight of Palestine and its people. Israel is accusing the Palestinian people and their Arab brothers of what it is responsible for, of what it calls its defence plans.

256. This is the situation that they want the Palestinian people to return to and remain in; that is, to return to a state of despondency and rejection, so that their struggle for freedom will be a justification for more displacement and destruction, so that they may reach a stage at which they not only will lose their ability to work towards restoring their rights, but also will lose their hope of restoring them.

257. This is the gravity of what the Palestinian people are being subjected to now. Yes, this is the gravity of the attempt to encircle the Palestinian people and to keep them for ever within the vicious circle of violence, extremism and rejection. This is what prevents the unleashing of their creative human potential and wastes their resources, and then forces them to stay continuously within a vicious circle which leads them on to a stage at which they will accept anything.

258. Hence it is the duty of all—and when I say all I mean every party concerned within the framework of national or international responsibility—to work in order to rescue the Palestinian people from this vicious circle of extremism, violence and rejection, in which their enemies wish them to remain. The only way of rescuing them is to be committed to the will of this people and their desire to extricate themselves from all forms of tutelage and hegemony, and to help them to emerge from the yoke of dependence and rejection imposed on them and to move on to the oasis of peace. This can be achieved only by enabling the Palestinians to determine their own destiny, to return to their native land, Palestine, and to establish the State they desire through their own free will. The key to this, and the only key, lies in dealing with the central aspect of the plight of the Palestinian people, namely their rejection by Israel and Israel's denial of their rights. I think that the Secretary-General has reaffirmed the established concept that will ensure the achievement of this hope, in his report [A/38/458, para. 43].

259. Mr. TRAORÉ (Mali) (*interpretation from French*): The situation in Palestine is a grave threat to international peace and security. Its just solution is the fundamental condition for the restoration of peace in the Middle East, which is more troubled now than ever.

260. It is difficult to understand why the United Nations, which was created to maintain peace and to ensure justice for all peoples, is not yet able, after more than three decades, to ensure justice for one people, the people of Palestine, whereas it was swift to seek amends for the criminal actions committed against another people, the Jewish people.

261. We need not dwell again on the history of the agony suffered by the people of Palestine. However, we should remember that Israel owes its very existence to

the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 181 (II), and that from the moment of its birth it was eager to challenge its validity for another people to which that resolution applies, the Palestinian people.

262. Thus, two strange courses of history came into being. While the Jew no longer wandered, the Palestinian people were made wanderers. Israel's intention to violate the provisions of the resolution which created it was clear, and equally clear was its determination to impose colonial domination over the Palestinian people, brutally expelled from its ancestral lands, which were gradually taken over by settlements. This expansionist policy, the plans for which were revealed to the Assembly, was later extended to other Arab territories, which fell under Israeli control through force of arms. The Institute for Peace and Development in the Middle East, which is an authority in this field, recently published a statement that the Israelis have already seized 28 per cent of the lands in Cisjordan, and that 60 per cent of the lands of the West Bank had been earmarked for settlements.

263. The fate of other territories in the Middle East which Israel seized by force, the launching of successive wars in the Middle East, the last of which came very close to being the ultimate world catastrophe, underline the real dimensions of the Palestinian question.

264. The people of Palestine, proud of its traditions, always united in adversity, stood up to respond by force to the language of force imposed on it by Israel.

265. Palestinian resistance, which some felt was merely a side issue which Israeli bombs and missiles would surely bury in oblivion, has revealed itself as one of the most glorious of all resistances against foreign domination. It cannot be broken, and the inability of Israel to break it has intensified its repression in Palestine and increased its wars of aggression against its neighbours.

266. The report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and that of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Arab Territories contain abundant details on the continuing confiscations of land, the closing of schools, and the violation of the conscience of Palestinians, all practices which shed sufficient light on the determination of Israel to make use of the entire land of Palestine solely for its own benefit.

267. During an earlier statement in this Hall on the question of Palestine, my delegation recalled the striking and significant vision of some young Palestinians who, having been arbitrarily arrested, one after the other answered "Palestine" when the Israeli torturers asked for their names.

268. It will be remembered that it was young Palestinians who had contributed to turning into a nightmare what Israel had believed would be merely a military excursion when it recently invaded Lebanon and besieged Beirut.

269. Thus, the harder Israeli oppression in Palestine becomes, the stronger and more determined will be the Palestinian response. We must live with this reality. We must live with the reality that the Middle East has often burst into flames and that it rests on a gigantic powder keg, because no satisfactory solution has been found to the Palestinian problem.

270. Whenever attempts have been made to play down or disguise the question of Palestine, it has had a greater effect on the international situation. And whenever a solution has been proposed that did not take account of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, the war in the Middle East has flared up, and each time it has been more of a threat to peace.

271. Thus, the present development of the situation in Lebanon gives cause for concern in many respects. The departure of the Palestinian militants from this other martyred country had been put forward as a *sine qua non* of the restoration of peace in the Middle East. But the Palestinian reality has swept aside this illusion, which nevertheless persists because of the new dimensions given to the interests which are in confrontation in the Middle East.

272. The question of Palestine—and we shall never cease to repeat this—is and will continue to be the core of the question of the Middle East. The Head of the Political Department of the Palestine Liberation Organization affirmed this in this Hall a few days ago on behalf of his people.

273. Seminars and colloquiums held in all regions of the world throughout this year came to the same conclusion. The peoples of the United Nations proclaimed it at the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, which was held at Geneva from 29 August to 7 September 1983.

274. That Conference, which took place despite numerous difficulties, adopted the Geneva Declaration on Palestine¹ and the Programme of Action for the Achievement of Palestinian Rights,¹ which have a universal character because of the calibre and number of the participants. Those documents complement the proposals for a settlement by peaceful means made by, among others, the heads of State of the League of Arab States and by the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.

275. The General Assembly, therefore, once again has before it objective elements to assist it in the settlement of the crisis in the Middle East, in particular in Palestine, on the basis of the real interests of all the parties concerned. Against this background, the delegation of Mali puts much hope in the holding of an international peace conference on the Middle East.

276. The key ideas for a settlement have been repeatedly indicated by the delegation of Mali both here and in other international forums. I would recall that they are realistic and are based on the following guidelines: first, the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people, including its right to establish a sovereign State; secondly, recognition of the legitimacy of the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people; and, thirdly, complete and unconditional withdrawal from all the Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967.

277. The International Conference on the Question of Palestine laid special emphasis on the time factor in the peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine, that is, in the relaxation of tension in the Middle East situation. The events which are taking place in that part of the world have brutally shaken the security of the Palestinian people, but a people which is fighting for its honour and its survival cannot but win. The Palestinian people will overcome Israeli colonization and every other adversity, because it will remain united and solely responsible for its fate.

278. Mr. LOĞOĞLU (Turkey): The plight of the Arab Palestinian people reached intolerable dimensions long ago and their suffering continues today without respite. The people and Government of Turkey are deeply distressed and saddened by the tragedy of their Palestinian brethren and remain firmly convinced that the question of Palestine should be the first priority of the international community in the continuing effort to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict.

279. There is sufficient reason today to be concerned about the lack of any tangible improvement in the

prospects of a settlement of the question of Palestine. Israel persists in its policies of occupation, annexation and expansion. The establishment of illegal settlements is being systematically and relentlessly pursued by Israel all across the occupied territories. Israel maintains its brutal grip over the civilian Arab population, whose basic human rights are being constantly violated, not only by the occupation authorities as such, but also and increasingly by Israeli settlers. Israel thus appears bent, more by choice than by default, on confrontation and domination and not seeking conciliation or coexistence with its Arab neighbours.

280. Israel's negative position notwithstanding, there are today some potentially positive variables in the equation of the Palestinian problem. It is of vital importance that we identify properly those international instruments which could possibly be used for the restoration of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. The ritual of the General Assembly debate or, for that matter, the Security Council discussions will be just that, a mere inconsequential ritual, unless we focus our energies on the elaboration of specific measures for the resolution of the question of Palestine.

281. The Government of Turkey is of the view that the International Conference on the Question of Palestine held recently at Geneva provided a valuable forum for the world community to deliberate comprehensively on all important aspects of the problem.

282. The Conference was successful in establishing a set of guidelines and a programme of action for the peaceful and just settlement of the Palestinian question. It is true that not everyone attended that Conference. It is also true that not even those which participated in the Conference all share equally in or understand in an identical manner all its elements.

283. None the less, there can be no denial of the fact that the Geneva Declaration on Palestine¹ and the Programme of Action for the Achievement of Palestinian Rights,¹ both adopted by acclamation at the Conference, constitute a truly important landmark in the evaluation of the question of Palestine. We believe that, despite some recent disturbing setbacks in the region, the positive momentum created by the Conference can still and must be profitably and constructively directed through concerted international support and encouragement towards the achievement of Palestinian rights.

284. The principal element of action requested in the Geneva Declaration on Palestine is the convening of an international peace conference on the Middle East, along the general guidelines contained therein. These guidelines reflect those principles long enunciated in the relevant resolutions of the United Nations. We would recall, in particular, that in order to settle the problem of Palestine there are certain essential conditions that have to be met. These are the withdrawal of Israel from the territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem, and respect by Israel for the special character and status of the Holy City of Jerusalem. Any solution for Palestine must allow the Arab Palestinian people to exercise their inalienable rights freely and without constraint in the way and to the extent they choose. These are the right to return to their homes and property, the right to self-determination and the right to establish their own independent State.

285. The Government of Turkey also considers that the PLO, as the representative of the Palestinian people, has the right to participate on an equal footing in all undertakings within the United Nations that concern the future of the Palestinian people. In this regard, we would like to emphasize that unity and solidarity in the ranks of the Palestinians are essential for the success of the Palestinian

cause and that whatever differences they might have should be resolved by themselves through peaceful means, without external intervention or interference.

286. If further divergence between the reality of the Palestinian problem and our debates on it here in the United Nations is to be avoided, we must move forward and we must act. The Programme of Action adopted at Geneva provides a useful tool in this respect. Inability to find an overall political solution to the problem is not, and should not be used as, an excuse for not immediately attending to the humanitarian, social and economic aspects of the question of Palestine. We must admit that all of us share a sense of deep frustration as we come to this rostrum, knowing full well that, no matter what we say here, the pain and suffering of the Palestinian people will continue unabated. This is why, for our words here to have more than merely a moral value, they should lead to practical steps and measures to improve the quality of life of the Palestinian people, not later but now.

287. Turkey will continue to support and encourage all reasonable initiatives aimed at the full realization of the inalienable rights of the Arab Palestinian people, initiatives which have the support of and provide for the full and equal participation of the Arab Palestinian people and its representative, the PLO. We hope that Israel, too, will engage in a genuine peace-making process when that becomes possible.

288. We will support the draft resolutions on the question of Palestine in the context of the long-standing position of my Government and its clearly established policy in favour of a just, lasting and comprehensive solution to the Middle East conflict and the question of Palestine. The Government of Turkey will continue to evaluate the new resolutions, when they are adopted, as it has done in the case of past resolutions on the same subject, in accordance with the general principles and objectives of its foreign policy and particularly in the context of its Middle East policy, as expressed in statements, official acts and positions taken by the Government of Turkey.

289. Mr. MAHMOOD (Pakistan): The question of Palestine is being considered by the General Assembly this year at a time when the heroic people of Palestine and their leadership are passing through perhaps the most critical phase of their history. Apart from the death and destruction which the current fratricidal confrontation within PLO causes, the crisis facing the Palestinians today will have a profound impact on their cohesion and unity, without which they will be severely handicapped in their struggle to regain their national rights and to achieve their national aspirations for a sovereign homeland in Palestine.

290. The national aspirations of the Palestinian people have received world-wide support, because the Palestinian cause is just and the long-suffering people of Palestine have given proof of their faith in their destiny and their determination to accept whatever sacrifices are demanded of them for the attainment of their national objectives. The PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, has made a historic contribution in giving the Palestinian liberation movement selfless and capable leadership and winning for it universal recognition. Chairman Yasser Arafat has symbolized the unity and solidarity of the Palestinian people and provided the PLO with dynamic leadership both on the battlefield and in international forums. The crisis through which the PLO is now passing is a temporary setback from which the Palestinian leadership will emerge with renewed strength and credibility.

291. As the General Assembly considers the question of Palestine, the issue before it is not the developments

within the PLO but the promises and commitments made by the United Nations to the Palestinian people. These are: first, to protect the rights of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories, in accordance with the international law applicable to peoples under foreign occupation; secondly, to work for the fulfilment of the national aspirations of the Palestinian people and the exercise by them of the right to self-determination in their own homeland; thirdly, in a broader context, to resolve the Middle East conflict so that this turbulent and sensitive region may enjoy just and lasting peace and stability.

292. These commitments and promises are no nearer fulfilment today than when they were made many years ago.

293. Despite General Assembly and Security Council resolutions which forbid any attempts to alter the status and character of the occupied territories, Israel is ruthlessly pursuing its ambition to annex these territories on a permanent basis. Consequently, the Palestinian and Arab populations of these territories are being subjected to relentless persecution and harassment, their lands and properties are being systematically expropriated and settlements of Jewish immigrants are being established and expanded with a view to altering the demographic pattern and historic character of the ancient land of Palestine.

Mr. Illueca (Panama) resumed the Chair.

294. On a broader plane, Israel has rejected every peace initiative which the Arab leadership and the United Nations have offered it. The Israeli authorities rejected out of hand the Arab peace plan for the Middle East,¹ which was acclaimed throughout the world as offering a reasonable basis for the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the region in which all States could coexist within secure boundaries. By rejecting even the subsequent initiative by President Reagan,² Israel demonstrated its implacable intransigence and its determination to pursue its policy of unbridled expansionism in which respect for the national rights of the Palestinian people has no place.

295. The question of Palestine, with which the United Nations has been preoccupied since its inception, presents a challenge to the Organization's ability to survive as an effective vehicle for the strengthening of international peace and security and for the fulfilment of the noble aspirations which led to its founding 38 years ago. Opportunities for peace initiatives in the Middle East continue to be available and need to be utilized. Most recently, such an opportunity was created by the initiative of the 117 States which participated in the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, held at Geneva from 29 August to 7 September this year.

296. That Conference once again outlined the parameters for a comprehensive, just and lasting political settlement of the question of Palestine. The guidelines adopted at the Conference emphasized the need for the realization of the legitimate inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to self-determination and to establish their own independent State in Palestine. They also asserted the right of all States in the region to exist within secure and internationally recognized boundaries, with justice and security for all peoples. The Conference adopted the Programme of Action for the Achievement of Palestinian Rights¹ which, if pursued with determination and firmness, can expedite settlement of the question of Palestine.

297. As in the past, Israel has chosen to ignore the decisions adopted at Geneva. Israel's antipathy towards these decisions and its repeated rejection of international peace initiatives stem from its stubborn refusal to accept Palestinian nationhood or to recognize the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people. Israel has been encouraged to persist in this course by the committed support

of the United States, now reportedly formalized in a reinforced relationship of strategic dimensions. In these circumstances, the Security Council is deprived of its capacity to take firm action against Israel. The inability of the Security Council to secure the implementation of its resolutions has already impaired its credibility as a viable instrument for the maintenance of international peace and security.

298. Continued tolerance of Israel's intransigence and defiance of United Nations decisions could erode the credibility of the world Organization. It would breed dangerous insensitivity to crises in the international community and induce loss of our collective capacity to resolve them. The only way to reverse this trend and redress the situation is to deal firmly with Israel and ensure its compliance with the relevant resolutions of the United Nations.

299. Mr. EL-FATTAL (Syrian Arab Republic) (*interpretation from Arabic*): In 1897, international Zionism chose Palestine as a country within which to practise settlement colonialism. It arrived at this decision after a difference of opinion on the best possible place for this, whether it would be Uganda, Argentina, Cyprus, Kenya or elsewhere. Palestine was chosen because of its strategic geographic position and the possibility of using it in the service of European colonialism. In Basel, a sentence was handed down which decided the fate of the Palestinian people. Later, in 1917, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of a major Power, the United Kingdom, on whose Empire the sun never set—in fact, a super-Power—undertook to implement the sentence with sincerity and insistence, particularly since its implementation would in turn serve the interests of the British Empire in maintaining control of the Suez Canal, preventing the establishment of Arab unity and enabling it to control the natural resources of the region. The decision was taken by the League of Nations to cloak it in legitimacy. Thereafter, the United Nations partitioned this Arab country, using the influence of the United States, and President Truman himself, who was eager to obtain Jewish votes to renew his term of office as President.

300. Zionist gangs were not satisfied with the lands they obtained through the partition. They attacked the lands set aside for the Arab Palestinian State. They occupied a large part of those lands, driving out and massacring tens of thousands of people, particularly during the massacre perpetrated by Begin at Deir Yassin. In 1967, the Zionists took control of all Palestine, in addition to the Syrian Golan Heights. In 1982, they invaded Lebanon and occupied its southern part.

301. The Arabs, since the Balfour Declaration, have realized that Zionism is an imperialist, colonialist settlement movement not connected to Judaism in any way. It is an expansionist, racist movement accompanied by all the ills of Western society, which in turn gave birth to political Zionism to solve its internal disagreements and achieve its colonialist aims. The result was to arrive at the regional model which has been represented by the Zionist entity since 1948. This is the model of elective racism based on force, elitism and expansionism.

302. Zionist thinkers took the model of perfection which was advocated by the pioneer philosophers of fascism, nazism and racism and amended it as they saw fit in order to justify their presence in a land which was not their own, at the expense of others. The method applied was completely in conformity with the ideological method. Thus, a racist State was created for the chosen people, personifying the ideas and the aims of the colonial system which prevailed throughout the nineteenth century.

303. Despite the international community's recognition of the human dimension of the refugee problem, it continued to condone the racist character of Israel, its expansionist aims, its élitism based on the principle of the superman and of God's chosen people, until the international community decided that the time had come to reveal the true nature of Israel, following the war of liberation in 1973. In 1975, the General Assembly, in its resolution 3379 (XXX), declared zionism to be a form of racism and racial discrimination. From that point on, the world began to realize the true criminal nature of Israel and its consequent threat for the world—that very nature of which Israel is proud and which it flaunts shamelessly.

304. The advocates of zionism started from the Zionist theory based on the principle of the survival of the fittest. It was inevitable that they would practise the same acts of nazism against the Palestinian people. Zionism has taken the principle of the chosen people and turned it into a right, by which the so-called élite can undertake the physical elimination of the Arab people. Violence and war have become characteristics of political zionism and the results of its practical implementation. However, the reason for the violence, terrorism and war is ultimately to eliminate the people and to Judaize the land.

305. Among these philosophical models, we have what has been stated by Joseph Weitz, who was President of the Settlement Department in the Jewish Agency:

"Between ourselves, it must be clear that there is no room in this country for both peoples. The only solution is Eretz Yisrael . . . without Arabs, and there is no other way but to transfer the Arabs from here to the neighbouring countries—to transfer all of them—not one village, not one tribe should be left."*

306. As for the principles of élitism, exclusivism and moral justification, in 1970, Eliezer Schweid, a lecturer at Hebrew University, emphasized the following in an article entitled "Dispersion and unity":

"The general policy of Zionism based itself upon the certainty and primacy of the right of the Jewish people to its homeland. From this point of view, the opposition of the Arabs was a stumbling block that must be overcome, and not a moral problem that must be dealt with. We must emphasize again that one should not see in this approach disregard for truth and righteousness. This approach had a factual and moral basis."*

307. It is such philosophies that justify the barbarism, the despotism and the continuous warfare against the original inhabitants. As a result of this kind of philosophy, Israel makes superiority and force a policy which is translated into actions against the Arabs and institutionalized. It is used as moral, religious and philosophical justification for eliminating the Arab, whether Palestinian, Lebanese or Syrian, as long as that person is present in any region between the Nile and the Euphrates, and particularly in any region marked on the map presented by the Zionists to the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, a map which included all of Palestine, Golan, southern Lebanon and Transjordan along the Hejaz.

308. Ahad Ha Aam deeply regretted the philosophy of élitism and the message of zionism, which had claimed that it was a spiritual zionism. That Jewish scientist said:

"Is this the dream of a return to Zion which our people have dreamt for centuries: that we now come to Zion to stain its soil with innocent blood? Many years ago, I wrote an essay in which I stated that our people will willingly give their money to build up their

State, but they will never sacrifice their prophets for it. And now God has afflicted me to have to live and to see with my own eyes that I apparently erred . . . their inclination grows to sacrifice their prophets on the altar of their 'renaissance': the great ethical principles for the sake of which they have suffered . . . without these principles, my God, what are we and what can our future life in this country be . . . Are we really doing it only to add in an Oriental corner a small people of new Levantines who vie with other Levantines in shedding blood, in desire for vengeance, and in angry violence? If this be the 'Messiah', then I do not wish to see his coming."*

309. We can easily imagine the reaction of Ahad Ha Aam, if he were alive today, at seeing the monsters to which zionism gave birth—first and foremost the terrorists, Begin, Sharon, Eitan and Shamir.

310. The historian Toynbee spoke of the roots of racism in Israel as follows:

"In basing the Jewish people's title to the soil of Eretz Yisrael on the physical ground that they were a master race in view of having Abraham as their father, the Zionist was unwittingly testifying that he had been ensnared by the lure of a post-modern Western Gentile racialism in which a late modern Western Gentile nationalism had denounced itself . . . as being the naked neo-paganism that it was."*

311. As for Bertrand Russell, he refuted the Zionist theory which says that pain justifies the torture of innocents as long as the Zionists are God's chosen people and as long as they are the allies of the United States of America, when he said, two days before his death in 1970:

"We are frequently told that we must sympathize with Israel because of the sufferings of the Jews in Europe at the hands of the Nazis. . . . What Israel is doing today cannot be condoned, and to invoke the horrors of the past to justify those of the present is gross hypocrisy."*

312. The President of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Senegal, in his statement to the Conference, summarized the reality of Israel's nature, thus:

"Now, for the fifth time since its establishment in 1948, Israel is again at war with the Arab and Palestinian peoples. Although the pretexts for murder, aggression and invasion may change with time, the logic behind them remains the same: that of Zionist policy, whose final objective is to reduce the Palestinian people to obedience and to create what David Ben-Gurion called 'the third kingdom of David', a 'Greater Israel' extending from the Nile to the Euphrates."†

313. As for the practical application of Zionism, it has led to the destruction of hundreds of Arab villages, particularly since the Arab village is the symbol of man's attachment to the land. Moshe Dayan, Minister for Defence at the time, declared before a group of students at the Technical School of Haifa, in March 1969:

"There is not one Jewish village in this country which has not been built in the place where there used to be an Arab village. The village of Mahlal took the place of the village of Mahloul, an Arab village, and Ghfat took the place of Gifla."†

314. Israel has destroyed 385 Arab villages out of an original 475 which were in 15 Palestinian districts before 1948; only 90 Arab villages remain. According to United Nations statistics, between June 1967 and November 1979 Israel destroyed 7,544 Arab homes in the occupied territories in addition to 36 villages in the Golan Heights that were completely erased from the face of the earth. The

*Quoted in English by the speaker.

number of homes destroyed has reached 16,312. Despite all that, the Israelis claim that the Jews came to that country and converted the desert into a paradise.

315. Despite General Assembly and Security Council resolutions, Israel's insistence on eliminating the Arab identity in Palestine has been clearly shown in the famous research undertaken by Professor Benvinesty for the City University of New York, in which he concluded that to date Israel had taken over 60 per cent of the lands of the West Bank. It has been shown from an aerial photograph in that document that approximately 3.2 million hectares out of a total 5 million hectares of land in the West Bank—a mixture of rocks and grazing land—have been declared "State property". Approximately 400,000 hectares concentrated mainly in the Jordan Valley have been designated "absentee land". Most of the settlements in the Jordan Valley are located on those lands. Finally, approximately 70,000 hectares have been bought by individuals.

316. The report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories states that, according to an Israeli source, there are approximately 103 settlements in the West Bank, including settlements that are now being built; the population of those settlements is 25,000. According to the same source, in the Golan Heights there are 35 settlements in which 10,000 persons live, and there are 12 settlements in the Gaza Strip. The report also says:

"The Settlement Department of the Jewish Agency was reportedly about to submit to the Government a proposal to establish 20 additional settlements in the West Bank within the next two years. Seventeen of these settlements would be located in the mountain area and three in (what is called by the Zionists) 'north-western Samaria'." [See A/38/409, para. 263.]

The report continues:

"It was reported that 1,000 new settlers had moved"—yes, let us use the right words, had been moved—"to live in the Golan Heights over the past year—since the extension of Israeli law to the area—and that efforts were being made to bring to the area (to the occupied Golan) 5,000 new settlers every year. Four new settlements were reportedly being planned in the western slopes of the Golan Heights." [Ibid., para. 267.]

317. Those acts are a flagrant breach of international law, the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,⁵ United Nations resolutions and, more particularly, Security Council resolution 497 (1981) and General Assembly resolution ES-9/1 adopted at the ninth emergency special session, on 5 February 1982, condemning Israel's annexation of the Golan Heights and demanding that it rescind that decision since it considered annexation an act of aggression, whether the United States representative likes that or not.

318. When the United States representative considers that annexation is not aggression because aggression must always entail gun-fire, she forgets that there is an Israeli occupation force in the Golan. She claims that annexation is not a crime and not an act of aggression because it does not fall within the framework of the definition of aggression.

319. In return for all these crimes the so-called free world decorates the terrorist Begin with half a Nobel Peace Prize—and I emphasize "peace".

320. In short, the State of Israel fulfils two main tasks.

321. The first relates to the support and assistance given by imperialist, colonialist circles which consider that this

State represents a forward base for imperialist, colonialist ambitions in this important region of the world.

322. The unlimited determination of some Western States—States of the so-called free world, and in particular the United States of America, which is, of course, the most free of the States of the free world—to support Israel and consider its security a basic United States commitment, regardless of the peace, security and interests of others, is not an accident.

323. The second task of Israel is expansionism, to set up a State stretching from the Nile to the Euphrates based on religious nonsense, and this requires the fragmentation of other societies by encouraging anti-Semitism. Thus, anti-Semitism is the necessary natural ally in the development and growth of Israel.

324. The reins of power in Israel have been transferred from Begin, who claims to be the hero of the massacre of Deir Yassin, to Shamir, the leader of the Stern Gang, which assassinated that great Swede, Count Folke Bernadotte, the United Nations Mediator for Palestine. The media in the United States and elsewhere have attempted to portray Shamir as a moderate, as opposed to Begin, who was described by the same media as being a moody, aggressive man. The truth is that those who adopt Zionism as their creed cannot but perpetrate crimes against the Arabs. The criminal mentality of Shamir, who has been called a "moderate", is well reflected in his declaration that "Israel did not conquer the territories from their legal owners, but liberated them from countries that conquered them in 1948." He went on to say: "We have not 'annexed' them, and we shall not 'annex' them. They are part of Eretz Yisrael, and what is part of your country you do not annex." [Ibid., para. 29.]

325. How can one possibly reach a solution to the question of Palestine with a man such as Shamir and hundreds of thousands like him?

326. Despite all this, Shamir arrived in Washington two days ago to conclude a lethal deal, a deal of destruction, with his masters in the White House. The White House gave him a welcome not even accorded to heads of State. All the leaders bowed their heads in fear. All doors were open to him, as well as all the coffers of the United States, so that he might scoop up whatever he wished of weapons and money. An agreement was reached on total co-ordination in all areas of aggression against the Arab people wherever they may be, from the Gulf to the Ocean. The talks showed clearly the aggressive intent against the Syrian Arab Republic because it is committed to the Palestinian cause. It stands by the side of the Lebanese people. It is the impregnable fortress which stands in the way of attempts to impose Israeli authority in the Middle East and American hegemony in the region. The imposition of this American hegemony also includes the Islamic Republic of Iran.

327. It is noteworthy that in the past Israel had to knock at the doors of the White House to obtain more aid and assistance. This time, however, the American Administration is very keen indeed to obtain Israeli assistance and support in promoting its presence in Lebanon and in the occupied territories and perpetrating joint aggression against the Syrian Arab Republic and the people and territory of Lebanon. These aggressive movements are not new. There has always been co-operation between the forces of evil and the recent strategic co-operation agreement between the Reagan Administration and the racist régime of Tel Aviv, which is no different from the racist régime of Pretoria, is merely a reward to Israel for the crimes, acts of aggression and massacres it has perpetrated, and continues to perpetrate. There is no doubt that the principal object of this co-operation is the

eradication of the Palestinian cause. This is the price paid for the services of Israel to America and the West—the free world.

328. We say to the United States that as long as we have free will its threats and terrorist attempts will never subjugate us as an Arab nation in our struggle to liberate the land and regain our rights. In this environment, which has been contaminated by Washington and in which acts of occupation and hegemony are being perpetrated ever more rapidly in Palestine and in the occupied Arab territories in order to step up Judaization, I say that the *fait accompli* can be reversed, although they say it cannot. We shall reverse the *fait accompli*. We wonder who chose the alternative of war in this contaminated atmosphere. Who chose the alternative of peace, on the other hand?

329. The United States chose the option of threatening war when the Marines landed and when it participated in acts of war against Lebanon. It mobilized the greatest fleet known to the world since the Second World War and positioned it in Lebanese waters. It comprises 40 warships, three aircraft carriers and 300 modern aircraft. The United States imagines that, in the case of an act of aggression on its part, there may be “moderate” Arab States and “non-moderate” Arab States. However, the United States must understand that there is one Arab nation committed to liberating its land, regaining its rights and defending itself.

330. We should further like to stress that there is no danger threatening the Arab nation except the aggressive threat of expansionism by the Zionist entity supported by Washington. Washington cannot succeed in diverting the Arabs from their basic cause, that of Palestine, and attempts to infringe on the sovereignty and freedom of Lebanon are doomed to failure. The presence of the Marines and the American fleet in Lebanon is an attempt to subject the region to American provocation and blackmail and to protect the Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon, Palestine and the Golan Heights.

331. We wonder why this American and Israeli mobilization is continuing, and against whom. The General Assembly must realize that the American forces participated in raiding villages and civilian ports in Lebanon.

It has bombarded those fighting for the independence, freedom, territorial integrity and sovereignty of Lebanon.

332. I should like to conclude my statement by quoting part of a letter from President Hafez al-Assad to the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. It reads:

“The Palestinian cause, as the core of the struggle in our region between the Arab nation, on the one hand, and expansionist, aggressive, racist Israel, on the other, is the cause of the Arab nation as a whole. Therefore, it is our cause in the Syrian Arab Republic. It is the very axis of our struggle; it is on this basis that we participate in this fight and the reason why our relation with the Palestinian cause is deeper than that of a mere relation of solidarity because it is a relation of joint struggle, a joint destiny, owing to the ties binding us to the Arab people of Palestine, because Israel’s ambitions do not stop at Palestine’s borders. They extend beyond those borders to all other Arab lands in which Israel has ambitions of creating the Greater Israel from the Nile to the Euphrates, as has been stated by Zionist leaders.

“We, in the Syrian Arab Republic, are determined to continue the struggle in support of the Palestinian cause, because it is a just cause. It is the central cause defended by the Arab nations.”

The meeting rose at 8.50 p.m.

NOTES

¹ See *Report of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, Geneva, 29 August-7 September 1983* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.83.I.21).

² See *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents*, Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1982, vol. 18, No. 35, p. 1081.

³ See *Official Records of the Security Council, Thirty-seventh Year*, Supplement for October, November and December 1982, document S/15510.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Supplement for July, August and September 1982, document S/15403.

⁵ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, No. 973, p. 287.