



President: Mr. Paul J. F. LUSAKA
(Zambia).

AGENDA ITEM 36

**The situation in the Middle East: reports of the
Secretary-General (*continued*)**

1. Mr. KHALIL (Egypt) (*interpretation from Arabic*): The international community calls on us today to continue our steadfast and serious search for a settlement of the conflict in the Middle East and to set our sights on a future free from all fanaticism and hegemony. We must cease to enumerate past events from this rostrum and seize the opportunities of moving towards peace.

2. The causes at the heart of the Middle East problem are well known to the international community. There is no need to revert to controversy over well-established facts. Let us rather examine the chances of peace which have eluded us year after year, and realize that our negligence has cost the peoples of the Middle East dearly. It has frustrated their hopes and aspirations and transformed the region from a land of convergence, an area of confluence, into an arena of violence which has forced its peoples to flee.

3. The international community is unanimous today in recognizing that this conflict must be settled by peaceful means, that the peace that is sought must be based on justice and that we should look towards the future.

4. Springing from this international will and fully aware of its national responsibilities, Egypt put forward its historic initiative, which its Minister for Foreign Affairs described as follows in his statement before the General Assembly on 28 September 1984:

"Egypt . . . was prompted to launch its historic peace initiative in the hope that a just and honourable peace encompassing the whole region might be achieved, a peace that would usher in a new era of coexistence in accordance with the principles embodied in the Charter of the United Nations, the framework for civilized relations between States and people" [*12th meeting, para. 105*].

5. The events which buffeted the Middle East region in 1982 and 1983, both in Lebanon and in the occupied Arab territories, are excellent proof, if proof is needed, that stark force, whatever level it may reach in wantonness and ferociousness, in destruction and massacres, is unable to quell the will for life and the national spirit, nor can it stifle the aspirations of the Palestinian people for their own State

and their attachment to their land, Palestine. Whether they live in exile, in the lands of imposed diaspora, or in the occupied territories of the West Bank, Jerusalem and Gaza, the Palestinian people are prompted by undying nationalist motivations; they want to return to their homeland and to recover their legitimate rights.

6. The occupied Arab territories are the scene every day of inexcusable developments which block the path towards the achievement of peace based on justice and obstruct the serious efforts made towards reconciliation and coexistence. This is manifested in the perpetuation of military occupation as a system of government and by the multiplication of economic and population measures aimed at establishing settlements and installing new settlers.

7. The tragic events in Lebanon have unmasked not only the failure of a policy based on militaristic conceptions but have confirmed by bloody experience that the solution of the Middle East problem does not lie in military action but must be based rather on a peaceful political solution, founded on justice, the principles of the Charter and resolutions of the United Nations, and the will of the international community, which can no longer ignore the fact that the Palestinian problem is the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

8. Lebanon, in spite of war, violence and occupation, continues to regroup its energies and to unify its ranks, in realization that a unified Lebanon will be a stronger and more lasting Lebanon. Everyone today must respect the will of the Lebanese people and their legitimate authorities that the defiling of their territory must cease and they must be given the chance to achieve reconciliation and to start the reconstruction of their country, so that Lebanon may once again contribute, as it has throughout history, towards the prosperity of the region which will once again become an oasis of security, liberty and learning.

9. Egypt follows closely the role of the United Nations, which is one of the manifestations of the international will in providing assistance to Lebanon with a view to bringing about the withdrawal of the Israeli occupying forces. We support the role played by the Secretary-General. We support the people and Government of Lebanon in their steadfast efforts to attain their just and legitimate objectives.

10. The success of the international and regional efforts made within the framework of the United Nations, guided by its Charter and pertinent resolutions, depends on the will of all the parties concerned, international and regional, to accept the challenge of peace, fully aware of the disastrous nature of any alternative and the critical time element.

11. Egypt's peace proposal is well defined and its objectives are very clear. It is based on the recognition of rights and the fulfilment of commitments. It is also based on the exercise by the Palestinian people of their natural right, in common with all peoples, to self-determination, under their sole legitimate representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization [PLO]; their absolute right freely to choose the political system which they deem appropriate, without intervention or coercion; the right of all to existence and security without discrimination or distinction.

12. Egypt, fully aware of the true nature of the relationships which prevail in the Middle East and the dimensions of the Arab-Israeli conflict and after evaluating carefully the present international equilibrium and the historical period in which we live, has responded to all constructive international initiatives, including the United Nations initiative calling for an international peace conference on the Middle East.

13. Egypt has responded to and supports this invitation. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Egypt stated in his address before the General Assembly, "We wonder why such a call should be rejected or ignored. All of us should reflect deeply on the implications of the positive response by the PLO in accepting this initiative." [*Ibid.*, para. 116.] This position, as described by the Foreign Minister of Egypt in the General Assembly, "constitutes a great step forward towards peace."

14. Egypt has clearly explained its position concerning the proposal to hold this international conference and this position is reflected in the Secretary-General's report [A/39/130 and Add.1].

15. We believe that the methods applied by the United Nations must be borne in mind. In the final analysis, they provide every chance for the major Powers to fulfil their collective responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, as defined in the Charter of the United Nations, and give the regional parties, on an equal footing, the chance to respond to the appeals and challenges of peace in the Middle East. This is the key to peace and stability, so that the human and material potential may be devoted to the attainment of progress and prosperity for the peoples of the region.

16. Egypt believes that Arab security is indivisible, Arab right is indivisible, Arab peace is indivisible. On that premise, Egypt remains determined to pursue a path towards a comprehensive, just and lasting peace settlement of the Middle East conflict and its core problem, the Palestinian question.

17. An in-depth reading of the Secretary-General's report [A/39/600] reveals the care with which it has been drafted; it sheds light on the various aspects of the situation in the Middle East, including the military developments as regards the peace-keeping operations, the situation in the occupied territories, the Palestinian question, in both its political and its humanitarian dimensions, and the search for a peaceful settlement of the conflict.

18. Among the most important aspects of the Secretary-General's report is the serious and precise manner in which he puts forward a political, procedural and organizational framework for breaking the deadlock and paving the way for serious and practical dialogue between the parties concerned, through the Security Council, as the appropriate negotiating

body, and the need to make full use of the Security Council as the organ with principal responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, and to exploit its potential fruitfully.

19. As the report makes clear, the Secretary-General's visits with parties concerned in the Middle East, including Egypt, has provided the United Nations with an opportunity to learn the positions of those parties and also emphasized the international commitment to overcome the obstacles in order to revive the dialogue and negotiations, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and its resolutions.

20. The Secretary-General explains how the Arab-Israeli conflict has continued for 37 years, how a vicious circle of destructive wars has accompanied peace efforts, which stem from a consciousness of the danger of continued deadlock, and how all of this affects the future of the region. We share the view of the Secretary-General, expressed in his report, that it is necessary to attain a comprehensive peaceful settlement that meets the following conditions: the withdrawal of Israeli forces from occupied territories; respect for and acknowledgement of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every State in the region and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries, free from the threat or use of force; and, finally, a just settlement of the Palestinian problem based on recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, including its right to self-determination. In this context, the question of Jerusalem also remains of primary importance.

21. We fully accept the framework put forward by the Secretary-General for we see in it a practical approach to reaching a comprehensive peaceful settlement.

22. We also applaud the constructive ideas put forward by the Secretary-General to give effect to the international consensus on the necessity of finding a peaceful settlement through negotiations, with the participation of all the parties concerned within the framework of the Security Council as the negotiating organ.

23. There is no doubt that we are in favour of the various elements or conditions of the settlement proposed by the Secretary-General. At the same time, and as recommended by the Secretary-General, we should incorporate the common characteristics of the various initiatives and proposals submitted in previous years.

24. The Secretary-General has summed up the situation in the Middle East in a succinct and effective manner. We hope that all will understand its long-term effects. He states, *inter alia*, that:

"The history of the Arab-Israeli conflict in the Middle East and of the Palestinian question has thus been a long record of missed opportunities punctuated by wars and violence that have only served to complicate the situation further and to create new misery and new obstacles to peace.

"It seems clear to me that none of the parties to this historic and tragic conflict can hope to obtain its maximum demands if there is to be a state of real peace in the region." [*Ibid.*, paras. 42 and 43.]

The Secretary-General goes on to say: "In the light of the deep tension in the Middle East and the emergence of new factors in the situation, nothing could be less realistic than to expect the indefinite continu-

ation of the present situation of no peace—no war” [*ibid.*, para. 49].

25. The international community continues rightly to uphold the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, a principle that is enshrined in Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), as well as in other relevant resolutions of the United Nations. The withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories—from the West Bank, including the Holy City of Jerusalem, Gaza and the Syrian Golan Heights—must be realized.

26. The challenge before Israel today is not one of geography or security, but rather a historic one in which the whole world calls upon Israel to recognize the legitimacy of the independence of Palestine and take the necessary historic decision to live in peace with it as an independent national entity which, like Israel, has rights. Without a response to that challenge, the peace process will fail. The peace and stability of the region are at stake.

27. To conclude, I wish to add that after 37 years of wars and missed opportunities, the Middle East and the Arab-Israeli conflict are on the threshold of change that could give birth to hope or to continued frustration. Let us therefore endeavour to resuscitate hopes for peace based on justice. Let us seize each available opportunity. Let us open the road in the Middle East for the Palestinian people so that they may exercise the right to self-determination and join the family of nations and the international community. As we are about to turn over the pages of the twentieth century, we call anew for a vigorous renewal of the process of a comprehensive peace based on justice. The time has come to change and to look forward to the future.

28. Mr. PAPAJORGJI (Albania): A survey of the development of events since the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly last year shows, regretfully, that nothing has changed for the better in the region of the Middle East. On the contrary, the situation has deteriorated. Regardless of the documents produced, the decisions taken or the resolutions adopted by the Security Council, the General Assembly or other international bodies, new elements have been added to the existing conflicts and tensions, making the situation even more tense and explosive.

29. The Albanian delegation would like to reiterate at this session as in the past that the source of the grave situation fraught with tensions in the Middle East is the aggressive and annexationist activities of the Israeli Zionists and the hegemonistic policy pursued by the two super-Powers—United States imperialism and Soviet social-imperialism. It is the Middle East’s oil and geo-strategic position that lie at the foundation of their bitter political, military and economic rivalry. Their clash for hegemony and the consolidation and expansion of their zones of influence has made the situation more turbulent and has turned the Middle East into a permanent hotbed of tension. The super-Powers cannot hide their wicked envy by publicly proclaiming this region as “a zone of their vital interests”, for whose defence they do not hesitate to resort to threats, including the use of force. By treating the entire region, which includes various sovereign countries and peoples, as their own preserve, the super-Powers are overtly and arrogantly showing their aggressive nature.

30. It has now become standard behaviour for them to take the position that only the super-Powers can

bring a solution to the crisis of the Middle East and that it is only they who can and should have the last word on everything. But today’s reality is such that it is very hard for anybody to believe that a solution could come out of American or Soviet plans.

31. The period since the Reagan plan was sensationally proclaimed on 1 September 1982¹ has given the clearest testimony of this. Since that time our delegation has shared the view that that plan did not and never would serve the interests of the Arab peoples, in particular the Palestinian people. The main aim of that plan remains the consolidation of the United States positions and those of its tool, Israeli Zionism, in the region. It was exactly during that period, and against the background of that plan, that American imperialism increased its military intervention in the Middle East and the barbaric Israeli act of aggression was launched against Lebanon, where United States Marines were also engaged. Aeroplanes and cannons of the United States Sixth Fleet rained tons of fire and iron on to the unprotected population of Beirut. The United States signed a strategic-alliance agreement with Israel, the main intention of which was to give Israel greater support politically and greater power militarily. To that end, the American imperialists are providing more financial aid so as to enable Israel to buy weapons from American arms manufacturers and those of other countries, which strengthens their military industry.

32. Logically and rightfully one can pose the question: Why does Israel need all this military arsenal, which, as regards its potential, can be compared with that of the largest imperialist Powers? It can easily be understood. It needs it for no other purpose but to consolidate and perpetuate its occupation of Arab lands and, at the same time, to execute other dangerous plans. It is no accident that, just after that strategic-alliance agreement was signed, the Israeli Zionists became even more unrestrained. Their annexationist policy has taken on new dimensions: the process of Israeli colonization of the occupied territories has gone on apace, southern Lebanon is now completely under occupation and the military régime of the Zionists prevails in Lebanese towns and villages. In sum, by so doing Israel has presented the entire world with a *fait accompli* that not only precludes any withdrawal from the occupied Arab lands but, under the pretext of “the security of borders”, aims at expanding the occupied territories further.

33. In the situation now prevailing in Lebanon and in the Middle East in general, one can easily see the efforts made by the American imperialists to involve their allies as much as possible in the region’s political and military events. By “internationalizing” intervention in the area because of not wanting to be isolated in its military and political aspects, the American imperialists try at the same time to give the impression of an intervention undertaken in common by the West.

34. On the other hand, the Soviet social-imperialists are doing their utmost to exploit the situation created in the region to achieve their own aims, to gain ground and to torpedo to the maximum the American initiatives. Under these circumstances, they proposed the convening of an international conference that would allegedly solve the crisis in the Middle East [*see A/39/368*]. But it is quite clear that the Soviet proposal has nothing new, either in form or in content. Its principal aim is to consolidate the

position of the Soviet Union in the Middle East at the expense of the American imperialists and to secure greater and stronger involvement in the course of all events. That proposal in itself does not contain anything that serves the interests of the Palestinian or other Arab peoples. It is in keeping with the well-known Soviet policy, which has never spared the label of "friendship" with the Arab peoples. But experience has proved that whenever its interests require, the Soviet Union has not hesitated to stab them in the back. The so-called Soviet aid to the Arab peoples and countries is nothing but a means for accomplishing its enslavement intentions.

35. The continuation of the fratricidal war between Iran and Iraq for more than four years now has aggravated the situation in the region. It is the super-Powers that, to promote their expansionist interests, instigated and provoked this war—which is causing heavy losses to the peoples of both countries—and now try to keep it alive.

36. All this hostile activity against the Arab peoples has created numerous difficulties and caused great suffering, in particular for the Palestinian people. Nobody can be indifferent to the brutal genocide being practised against them, which is often characterized by the physical liquidation of people *en masse*. No matter how many years pass, Sabra and Shatila will always remain an indelible black blot of wantonness on Israeli zionism in its bloody crusade against the Palestinian people.

37. The massacred—old men or women, adults or children—the mountains of victims, are and will remain a vivid accusation of the Israeli Zionists. Nothing can justify the deportation of the Palestinian people from their homeland where for thousands of years generations of them have been living. History has hardly known any other such practice of genocide. Nevertheless, such things do not attract the attention at all of those who claim to be champions of the defence of human rights.

38. The Palestinian people have become a target of the imperialist-Zionist policy because the struggle of that people is one of the main obstacles preventing them from accomplishing their plans. The enemies of the Palestinian people would like them to lay down their arms, give up their armed struggle and subject themselves to the tragic fate dictated by the super-Powers and zionism. They have always attempted to sow discord within the Palestinian liberation movement and create antagonism between it and various Arab countries. But the brave and heroic Arab peoples which have been fighting for centuries will never abandon their struggle until they win their legitimate rights. They know how to avoid falling into the traps and the misleading and disruptive plots of the super-Powers, the United States and the Soviet Union, as well as those of Israel. The strengthening of the genuine unity among themselves in order to resist and overcome the united forces of Israel, the American imperialists, the Soviet social-imperialists and those in reactionary circles is a necessity in their just struggle. Only resolute, uncompromising struggle based on genuine Arab unity will lead them to victory.

39. The Albanian people and its Government, as always, strongly condemn the criminal actions of the Israeli Zionists against the Palestinian and other Arab peoples. They condemn their brutal genocide that knows no bounds, their occupation of southern

Lebanon and their annexationist policy as a whole. At the same time, they denounce the conspiratorial policy of the two super-Powers, which have provoked, kept ablaze and adjusted the tension in the Middle East according to their aims and ambitions, even by bargaining with each other in keeping with their interests.

40. The synthesis of our attitude of principle in support of the just cause of the fraternal Arab peoples is to be found in the following extract from *Reflections on the Middle East*,² a book written by the leader of the Albanian people, Comrade Enver Hoxha, and published recently:

"We have defended and will continue to defend the just anti-imperialist cause of the Arab peoples, who have seen, are seeing and will see that small socialist Albania is not afraid of the imperialists and revisionists and that it will always be a sincere and loyal friend of the Arab countries, in good times or bad."

41. Mr. ALATAS (Indonesia): While unresolved tensions and crises are rampant in various regions of our world today, nowhere but in the Middle East has protracted conflict carried with it such a palpable threat to international peace and security.

42. The Arab-Israeli conflict has remained unresolved for almost 40 years now. The search for durable peace in that volatile region has become locked into a most depressing pattern—moving from one crisis to the next, from war to frenzied peace initiative, to war and back again—without ever budging significantly from the impasse that has persisted, or has been allowed to persist, over this problem. In the meantime, far from yielding new opportunities towards a solution, continued delay has brought added complications and even more dangerous dimensions to the conflict.

43. The United Nations, which since its inception has been seized of this problem in all its multifarious aspects, cannot, however, be held accountable for this stalemate. Over the years, the General Assembly and the Security Council have adopted scores of resolutions and decisions in efforts to create the necessary conditions for and to point the way to a just and lasting peace in the region. But they have all met with Israel's brazen intransigence and utter disregard of international norms of civilized behaviour.

44. Encouraged by the almost unquestioning support extended to it by its powerful friends and protectors, Israel has habitually flouted the cardinal principles and rulings of the United Nations. As events during the past year have again shown, Israel persists in its efforts to impose on the region by force of arms its own aggressive and expansionist designs, in arrogant defiance of world censure.

45. Two and a half years after the brutal invasion of Lebanon, Israeli troops are still occupying parts of Lebanese territory. Indeed, their prolonged illegal presence in southern Lebanon all but confirms the view that Israel's ultimate intent has all along been the *de facto* partition of that country. In the light of those facts, the stated readiness of the Tel Aviv régime to negotiate the withdrawal of its occupation forces under the aegis of the United Nations cannot be accepted at its face value. My delegation for one can be persuaded of Israel's good faith in this matter only if and when it complies with Security Council and General Assembly demands.

46. At the same time, my delegation is greatly encouraged that after an arduous process of national reconciliation Lebanon has emerged with a new Government of National Unity. Indonesia extends its full support to the Lebanese Government and people in their efforts further to consolidate national resilience and to restore its territorial integrity by achieving the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all Israeli forces to internationally recognized boundaries.

47. The past year has also witnessed the continued colonization and Judaization of the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories, including Jerusalem and the Golan Heights, which are aimed at changing their legal status and demographic composition. Israel's pursuit of its infamous settlements policy is unabated and, indeed, has accelerated. The Palestinian Arabs in the West Bank, as in all territories under Israeli rule, have had to endure ever harsher measures and practices designed to terrorize and intimidate them into leaving their ancestral homeland. And their most elementary human rights and civil liberties continue to be ruthlessly trampled upon. It is the intensification of this systematic policy of oppression and repression which constitutes the bitter reality in the Middle East today and has rendered the resolution of the conflict immeasurably more difficult.

48. It is clear that the onus of responsibility for this state of affairs falls squarely on Israel, whose policies and actions have always been the root cause of aggravated tension and conflict in the region. It is equally clear, however, that resort to armed might and policies based on sheer power calculations have brought neither greater security to Israel nor peace to the Middle East.

49. By Indonesia and the overwhelming majority of mankind, the essence of the Middle East problem is rightly perceived as one of justice: justice in ensuring the exercise of the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and independent statehood in Palestine; justice in effecting Israel's total withdrawal from all Arab territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem; justice in safeguarding the basic need of the States in the region to live in peace within secure boundaries, free from aggression and foreign occupation; and, finally, justice in securing the right of the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, to participate on an equal footing in all efforts and negotiations towards finding a peaceful settlement in the Middle East. Those are indeed the essential elements on which a durable and comprehensive peace should be based.

50. It is most distressing to observe, however, that to the major Powers the Arab-Israeli conflict appears to be primarily viewed in terms of a global power struggle, for which strategic alliances need to be forged and in which armed confrontation cannot be ruled out. If this is to be the predominant perception in our pursuit of a solution in the Middle East, the chances of world-wide conflagration could conceivably become an imminent reality.

51. My Government, therefore, has always been acutely aware of the need for all of us to persevere in the only sensible path towards a peaceful and comprehensive settlement, which is through a process of negotiation involving the one international machinery which we have collectively created and designed for this very purpose: the United Nations.

Mr. Helgason (Iceland), Vice-President, took the Chair.

52. At this juncture, my delegation would like to recall that the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, held at Geneva from 29 August to 7 September 1983, unanimously agreed to call for the convening of an international peace conference on the Middle East, a call subsequently endorsed by the General Assembly in resolution 38/58 C.

53. Indonesia's support for the proposed conference was premised on the conviction that such a conference would indeed serve as a viable and effective negotiating framework within which the various interrelated aspects of the Arab-Israeli conflict, as well as the multiplicity of contending interests inherent in them, could equitably and comprehensively be addressed. It would furthermore provide a forum in which all the parties concerned would participate on an equal footing, including the PLO.

54. Resolution 38/58 C also requested the Secretary-General to undertake consultations and to seek the views of the members of the Security Council and of Governments directly interested in the Arab-Israeli conflict on the holding of the conference. The Secretary-General has reported to us the results of his efforts [see A/39/130 and Add.1]. Although a large majority of those consulted fully endorsed the convening of the peace conference, with some advancing significant proposals on various aspects, certain Governments responded negatively. My delegation, therefore, deeply regrets that on the basis of those responses the Secretary-General in his subsequent report has had to conclude that: "the conditions required for convening the proposed conference with any chance of success are not met at the present time" [A/39/600, para. 40].

55. While Indonesia is under no illusion that the objective of a peace conference could be easily realized, we remain convinced that it is only through patient diplomacy and serious negotiations that a peaceful and lasting settlement to the Middle East problem can be attained. There is also no question but that any progress and success on this score will essentially depend on the political will and the support of the major Powers, particularly the two super-Powers. Hence, we fully agree with the Secretary-General that the United Nations should make another determined effort to find the means by which we can move forward to a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. We in Indonesia believe, as he does, that given the urgent need to break the present deadlock, it should still be possible to devise, within the overall framework of the international peace conference, a negotiating process or structure acceptable to all the parties concerned, for the alternative can only be an inexorable slide towards yet another, even more destructive, cycle of violence and war, with disastrous consequences not only for the region but for the world as a whole.

56. Mr. TSVETKOV (Bulgaria) (*interpretation from French*): For many long years, the situation in the Middle East has been the centre of world attention. During all of those years, the United Nations has adopted a large number of resolutions and decisions for the purpose of achieving a just and peaceful solution to the conflict, but they have yet to be applied and the situation remains extremely tense and explosive. The crisis is perpetuating itself and

could at any moment be converted into an armed conflict with unforeseeable consequences.

57. There is no shadow of doubt, for the world as a whole, that the crisis in the Middle East is a direct result of the expansionist policy of the State of Israel. From 1948 up to the present time, it has waged five wars of aggression, and since 1967 it has been occupying the West Bank of the Jordan, the Gaza Strip, the Golan Heights and the south of Lebanon. It is pursuing a policy of colonization in the occupied territories. It is extending the network of its military settlements by constantly increasing the number of settlers. There is confirmation of its designs to increase the number of those settlers to 1.4 million. From the very rostrum of the Knesset, calls were made by chauvinist elements dreaming of Greater Israel for the complete annexation of the occupied territories.

58. During the last few years, Tel Aviv has added a new page of violence to the annals of the conflict of the Middle East. An Israeli army, 100,000 men strong, invaded Lebanon, sowing death and devastation on its way. From the beginning, the designs behind that aggression were no secret to anyone. They were to seize a new strategic stronghold, to crush the patriotic national forces and the Palestinian resistance. In the operation in Lebanon, Tel Aviv saw among other things a possibility of dealing a crushing blow to the Syrian Arab Republic whose anti-imperialist positions had more than once foiled its military designs. And it is precisely its adventure in Lebanon which has covered it with opprobrium: the Israeli military machine organized the massacre of hundreds of thousands of innocent women, children and the elderly in the camps of Sabra and Shatila.

59. Israel's aggression has caused indescribable suffering and hardship to the people and the countries of the Arab world. But the principal victims of its ambitions of conquest are the Arab people of Palestine.

60. For decades, millions of Palestinians have been living expelled from their homes and have been denied the sacred right to own their own homeland. In the occupied lands, their national rights are cruelly trampled underfoot. They are the object of gross exploitation and of police lawlessness and national discrimination. The whole of Israel's military machine is subordinated at present to the goal of destroying the Palestinian movement of national liberation and to erase the question of Palestine from the agenda of world problems. All this is done in flagrant violation of the principles of international law and of the decisions of the United Nations, in defiance of international public opinion, which has been expressed on so many occasions.

61. As for the causes of the serious situation in the Middle East, it is clear, even to an uninformed person, that it is solely through the military, financial, political and diplomatic assistance of the United States that Israel has been capable of carrying out its major piratical operations and has ignored, with so much defiance, the Charter of the United Nations, as well as the appeals of the world Organization. For its part, the United States sees Israel as the principal instrument of its long-term strategy in this region, a strategy which aims at imposing its political and military domination upon the crossroads of the three continents in the eastern hemisphere, as well as its

control over the natural wealth of the Arab world, first and foremost, its oil resources.

62. The anti-Arab nature of this alliance between Israel and the United States has been displayed in the last few years in all clarity. It has based its tactic on the imposition of separate agreements with Arab States, in accordance with the classic principle of divide and rule. This was ultimately the meaning of the ingloriously famous Camp David accords, which have only led to the escalation of the crisis, and also the meaning of their latter-day variations. The humiliating agreement reached between Israel and Lebanon in May 1983, which was another desperate attempt to impose this system, in practice was designed to achieve the partition of Lebanon and the transformation of that country into a foreign protectorate and into a forward position for attacks against the neighbouring Arab countries.

63. The events which followed illustrated the limited possibilities of the new colonizers. Signed in the shadow of the cannon, this shameful document was revoked, thanks to the fierce opposition of Lebanese patriots and progressive Arab States. It has been demonstrated once again that it is difficult today to force a people to their knees by bayonets or by the threat of reprisal expeditions, or by armadas.

64. The most recent developments show that the urgency for a peaceful settlement of the Middle East problem remains as great as ever. The analysis of its history reveals that its various components are closely linked and interdependent. The path of partial solutions and of selective approaches is filled with dangers and leads to an impasse. To try to strengthen the security of someone by ignoring the legitimate rights of others is only a step towards the perpetuation and the aggravation of the conflict.

65. In view of the gravity of the present international situation, the world community is quite right in looking for a solution to the problem of the Middle East which would take into account all of its aspects: the vital interests of the peoples of the region, as well as strengthened international peace and security. This is the approach of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, which is based upon the principle of the inadmissibility of the annexation of foreign territories by means of aggression. This steadfast position of the socialist countries was expressed in the Political Declaration adopted at the meeting of the Political Consultative Committee of the States Parties to the Warsaw Treaty, held at Prague on 4 and 5 January 1983,³ as well as in numerous other initiatives and proposals that are well known by now.

66. The Soviet proposal of 29 July 1984 [A/39/368], which offers benchmarks for a comprehensive solution to the Middle East problem and opens a clear prospect for the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the region, has been welcomed with great interest. It was qualified as a positive undertaking by numerous Heads of State and political leaders.

67. The People's Republic of Bulgaria fully shares the idea that the first and irreplaceable condition for the solution of the problem remains the liberation of all the occupied Arab territories held from 1967 to this day and the elimination of Israeli settlements established in those territories. With this, it is necessary to put into practice guarantees for the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and the establishment of its own State.

This will have decisive importance for the normalization of the situation in the Middle East. The possibility should also be given to Palestine refugees to return to their homes or else to be compensated for their property.

68. The settlement of the problem should guarantee, in practice, the right of all the peoples to live and develop in independence and security, with due respect for absolute reciprocity. The only real way that could lead to this goal is the cessation of the state of war between the Arab countries and Israel and the undertaking by all the parties to the conflict, Israel and the State of Palestine, to respect the independence, the sovereignty and the territorial integrity of the other and to resolve their difficulties by peaceful means.

69. An important instrument of stabilization for such a settlement would be the adoption of international guarantees for the peaceful settlement; and the role of guarantor could then be entrusted to the permanent members of the Security Council or to the Security Council as a whole.

70. The Soviet initiative, as we see it, has the merit of putting into focus the idea of an international conference on the Middle East, which was launched some time ago by the socialist countries and which has broad international support. The Bulgarian delegation has constantly expressed the certainty that such a conference, under the aegis of the United Nations, offers the most appropriate machinery for the solution of the complex problems of the Middle East. It is natural that at such a conference we should have the participation of all the Arab States having common frontiers with Israel. This means Syria, Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon and, of course, Israel, as well as the PLO, as the only legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. It would also be normal for the Soviet Union and the United States to take part in such a conference in view of the fact that, historically, they have been playing an important role in the affairs of the region and that they were co-chairmen of the previous conference on the Middle East. It is also logical to provide for the participation, by common agreement, of certain other States capable of favourably influencing the solution of the problems under discussion.

71. I should like to point out that the constructive positions of the socialist States, including those of the Soviet proposal of 29 July 1984, are consistent with the principles embodied in the Final Declaration adopted on 9 September 1982 at the Twelfth Arab Summit Conference, held at Fez,⁴ as they are consistent with the well-known resolutions of the United Nations on the problems of the Middle East.

72. To conclude, I should like to emphasize that the People's Republic of Bulgaria has always followed with interest and sincere preoccupation the development of the situation in this region. My country feels the legitimate aspirations of the Arab people as being very close and understandable and fully supports their heroic struggle for freedom, independence and social progress.

73. The vital interests of the peoples of the Middle East, like the interests of peace and security throughout the world, require that the United Nations and all its Member States exert maximum effort so that an early end might be put to the hotbed of tensions in this long-suffering part of the world. As far as Bulgaria is concerned, it will continue in the future to

work in favour of a peaceful, just and lasting settlement of the conflict of the Middle East.

74. Mr. WASIUDDIN (Bangladesh): In his report on the situation in the Middle East, the Secretary-General observed that:

"The search for a peaceful settlement in the Middle East has followed a pattern that has become all too familiar. Each of the five destructive and inconclusive wars has been followed by a new peace effort, spurred by the renewed awareness of the dangers of continued stalemate. On each occasion proposals were put forward and in some cases partial agreement reached, but the peace effort soon became deadlocked because of the intransigence of one party or another. In time, the sense of urgency was lost and a deadlock was once again allowed to persist until the next major crisis." [A/39/600, para. 35.]

75. No other issue in contemporary history has been discussed and deliberated on so extensively, yet the problem remains unresolved, and it continues to threaten international peace and security, despite the nearly unanimous appeals of the international community. On the contrary, the situation has steadily deteriorated, even in the course of the past year, and this has further aggravated the already explosive situation in the region. What we are faced with is a totally unacceptable situation created by the continued Israeli policy of aggression, occupation and expansionism. The people in the occupied Arab and Palestinian territories have been subjected to the worst forms of harassment and persecution. Israel's policies and recent actions have made it abundantly clear that it is interested only in heightening tension in the region and is determined to frustrate any international move to resolve the Middle East problem peacefully.

76. The present explosive situation in the Middle East is a direct consequence of a historic injustice, when an alien people was virtually imposed upon the Arab world through the creation of Israel. This newly created State, which received huge economic, political and military aid from its allies and friends, adopted from the outset an aggressive and hostile policy against its Arab neighbours. In violation of all the canons of international law and of the Charter of the United Nations, Israel—pleading so-called self-defence—carried out a series of acts of aggression and occupied huge Arab territories. Despite repeated calls by the General Assembly and the Security Council, Israel has refused to vacate the occupied Arab and Palestinian territories. All the efforts of the United Nations to bring justice to the suffering Palestinian and Arab people have been arrogantly and deliberately rejected by Israel, which has openly flouted the voice of the international community.

77. In the face of the growing universal consensus in favour of the Arab and Palestinian cause, Israel has of late further intensified its policy of aggression, illegal settlements and annexation. The Israeli attempts to annex and change the status of the Holy City of Jerusalem and the Syrian Golan Heights have been unequivocally condemned by the international community and declared null and void. Then, in 1982, Israel invaded Lebanon and, despite resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly and the Security Council, has continued to occupy a major part of that country.

78. In pursuance of its policy of State terrorism, Israel has also stepped up its barbarity and repression in the occupied territories as part of its ruthless design to liquidate the Palestinian people and its sole legitimate representative, the PLO. Thousands of innocent men, women and children have been massacred, but the heroic Palestinian people have demonstrated that they cannot and will not be subjugated by violence. The Palestinian youths who laid down their lives only last week proved once again that the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people cannot be denied them. Similarly, recent developments have demonstrated that their sole legitimate representative, the PLO, cannot be silenced.

79. It is now universally recognized that the question of Palestine is at the core of the problem of the Middle East and that, consequently, it is not possible to envisage a settlement of the problems in the Middle East unless the legitimate and inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people are fully restored. Bangladesh has reiterated in the past its firm conviction that any meaningful effort to bring peace in the region must be based on a comprehensive solution of the problem.

80. It was in this context that the Bangladesh Adviser for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Humayun Rasheed Choudhury, in his statement to the General Assembly on 1 October, summed up our position on this issue when he stated:

“The tragedy of Palestine is the tragedy of our times. No other issue in recent times has evoked so much attention and concern as the plight of the Palestinians. For more than three decades, the international community has witnessed the sufferings and anguish of the Palestinian people, who were forcibly uprooted from their hearths and homes. It is now universally recognized that the heart of the problem is the restoration of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to establish a State of their own with Jerusalem as its capital. It is regrettable that Israel continues to flout the decisions and resolutions of the United Nations and persists in its illegal occupation of Arab and Palestine territories, including the Holy City of Al Quds al-Sharif. The position of Bangladesh on this question has always been firm and consistent and we have always extended our unstinted support to our Palestinian brothers in their struggle for the restoration of their inalienable right to self-determination under the leadership of the PLO, their sole and legitimate representative. We condemn the continued Israeli occupation of Arab and Palestinian territories and the establishment of settlements in the occupied lands. We are convinced that the situation demands a comprehensive settlement of the problem which must be based on total and unconditional withdrawal of Israeli forces from all Palestinian and Arab territories and the restoration of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. We are also convinced that the participation of the PLO, on an equal footing with all other parties, in the peace process is indispensable. It is in this context that we extended our full support to the Arab peace plan as a sound basis for establishing peace in the region. We commend the Secretary-General for his sincere endeavours and for his untiring efforts to restore peace in the region.” [15th meeting, para. 129.]

81. The developments in the Middle East during the last nearly four decades have demonstrated beyond any shadow of a doubt that the complex problem of the Middle East cannot be solved by a few countries—or, in other words, by a major Power and its allies. Such moves are bound to be heavily tilted in their own favour, serving only their narrow national interests, and to the detriment of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. What is clearly needed is an international effort under the aegis of the United Nations to ensure that the interests and rights of all the parties concerned are met and respected in a fully impartial and rational manner, with a view to evolving a just, viable and lasting settlement of the problem.

82. It is in this context that the proposed international peace conference on the Middle East assumes particular importance. Such a conference, it is unnecessary to emphasize, will have to go through a process initially with the parties directly involved, including the PLO and the major Powers, particularly the United States and the Soviet Union. Gradually the process should be widened to include all the parties that are interested in the region and, finally, the entire international community. What is needed to start this process is the necessary political will, particularly on the part of the major Powers which are in a position to influence developments in the region. The situation in the Middle East has already reached an explosive stage and any further delay in starting the peace process might trigger off a totally unmanageable crisis, making it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to restore peace in the region.

83. Bangladesh has therefore consistently supported the call for the early convening of an international peace conference on the Middle East. We consider it vital that all parties involved in the current conflict in the Middle East should participate in the conference, including the PLO, as well as the United States and the Soviet Union. We therefore fully appreciate the efforts of the Secretary-General to that end. We are somewhat disappointed to note from his latest report that “the conditions required for convening the proposed conference with any chance of success are not met at the present time” [A/39/600, para. 40]. However, we fully share his assessment that:

“What is now needed, it seems to me, is a framework for negotiations and an umbrella under which the necessary contacts could develop according to the demands of the problems that were being considered. It is this kind of framework or auspices that I believe could most usefully serve the needs of all the parties to the Middle East conflict.” [Ibid., para. 47.]

We are greatly appreciative of the persistent efforts of the Secretary-General, who is seeking a way to get the peace process moving.

84. On the eve of the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations, a renewed international effort should be undertaken to start the peace process in the region. The Arab peace plan, which was adopted on 9 September 1982 at the Twelfth Arab Summit Conference, held at Fez,⁴ and which my delegation fully supports as a sound basis for the restoration of peace in the Middle East, and other plans which have been submitted from various quarters are already before the international community. Let us then take a decisive course of action here at this session to initiate the peace process. The purposes and princi-

ples of the Charter of the United Nations are as valid today as they were at the time of the founding of the Organization. The most fitting sign of respect that we can show this great world body on the eve of this historic anniversary is a determined effort to restore peace in the Middle East on the basis of the sacred principles enshrined in its Charter.

85. Mr. BOUZIRI (Tunisia) (*interpretation from French*): It has become customary, after each Israeli act of aggression against Arab States, for peace initiatives to be put forward in an attempt to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict. It has also become customary for Israel, after each of its misdeeds, to adopt an intransigent position, consisting in a challenge to the international rule of law and a denial of the rights of others. This observation, which unfortunately has been proved correct repeatedly by the adventurism of successive Israeli leaders, was shown to be valid once again following the Israeli aggression in Lebanon.

86. For the first time in the history of the conflict, four peace plans emerged and gave rise to hope in an international community sorely tried by the persistence of a hotbed of tension that seriously threatens international peace and security. As soon as their authors announced these initiatives, they were rejected by Israeli leaders very little inclined to take account of the concerns of the international community.

87. More than two years after the invasion of Lebanon, these various peace initiatives remain pious wishes, despite the protracted involvement of the occupation forces and the vicissitudes that led to the departure of Mr. Begin and the postponement of Israeli designs in Lebanon.

88. Tunisia, which is dedicated to the rule of international law and the role that the United Nations is destined to play in this conflict, deeply regrets the failure that we see today as a result of the inflexible attitude of the Israeli leaders.

89. Israel stubbornly rejects the idea of the establishment of a Palestinian State, despite the international consensus. Israel is making ever more clear its intention to annex the occupied territories by force of arms. Israel continues to expropriate and confiscate Palestinian and Arab lands and to arrest and expel Palestinians. Israel is feverishly establishing settlements in the occupied territories with the aim of crushing Arab towns and villages and forcing their inhabitants to leave. In the name of a dubious concept of security, Israel bombs the Iraqi nuclear reactor, transforms southern Lebanon into a forward observation post and tightens its grip on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Worse still, Israel keeps alive a doubt as to its true borders in the hope of realizing what it terms "Eretz Yisrael".

90. In the more than 35 years since the establishment of Israel, the international community has had ample time to observe that that country is a danger to peace and that the description "peace-loving State" conferred upon it in General Assembly resolution 273 (III), of 11 May 1949, was all the more unjustifiable in that, between 29 November 1947 and 11 May 1949, Israeli troops, despite the efforts of the United Nations, had already seized territories in the area allocated to the Arabs of Palestine.

91. Count Bernadotte rightly stated that "The United Nations has neglected the vital duty of applying to this State [Israel] the régime of an international mandate to determine the functional

system of the State and to assess the competence of its public authorities and its conduct in inter-State society."

92. It is clear today that this kind of omission, in addition to the circumstances and pressures which led to the adoption of General Assembly resolution 181 (II) of 29 November 1947 and which were touched upon in the memoirs of former United States President Harry Truman, is at the root of the explosive situation in the Middle East and notably of the grave injustice committed against the Palestinian people.

93. It is not our intention to reassess the historical background of both the Israeli-Palestinian and the Arab-Israeli problem but only to indicate that the policy of *fait accompli* which underlies the Zionist ideology was unfortunately tried out successfully as soon as it was announced that Israel was going to be created.

94. Israeli expansionism consists of a series of *faits accomplis*, the latest of which is the invasion of Lebanon. Virtually any pretext can be adduced so long as the objective remains clear—that is the deplorable attitude adopted by the Israeli leaders when they face the Arab-Israeli problem.

95. The settlements policy promoted by the leaders of Israel is of the greatest concern to us. If the Governments that have succeeded each other since 1967 have encouraged and promoted settlements in the occupied territories, the Begin Government, in particular, did not fail to make use of Talmudic arguments to affirm that the West Bank belongs to what it calls the "Land of Israel". The objective was to have 100,000 settlers in the West Bank as rapidly as possible. That figure, in its view, would be a "critical mass" which would not allow any subsequent Israeli Government to agree to a withdrawal from the occupied territories.

96. This plan to Judaize the occupied territories, or at least engulf the Palestinian population by politically, economically and even numerically stifling Arab villages and towns, is based on arguments of security, the myth of an alleged Arab danger lurking against Israel and many other considerations running counter to the letter and spirit of the Charter of the United Nations.

97. Israeli leaders emphasize the fundamental strategic role of the settlements. In January 1977, Yitzhak Rabin, then Prime Minister of Israel, stated that the settlements strengthened the security of Israel and provided a solid foundation for its argument demanding peace with defensible borders. Yigal Allon was of the view that the settlements were set up in strategically important areas along the existing borders and in the proximity of areas that could become borders in the future.

98. The process that Israeli leaders view as irreversible was accelerated in the wake of the invasion of Lebanon and of the peace proposals put forward by President Reagan on 1 September 1982.¹ At present we are seeing the acceleration of Judaization of the Holy City of Al-Quds and of Al-Khalil and other Palestinian towns, pursuant to a plan which is no doubt intended gradually to remove the Palestinian inhabitants and put Jewish families in their place.

99. The establishment of Jewish militias which sow terror among the Palestinian inhabitants is obviously favourable to this policy of gradually absorbing the Arab occupied territories.

100. The Kach movement of Meir Kahane, an expert on violence against the Palestinians in the occupied territories, has firmly established this deplorable racist tendency which the Israeli leaders are trying in vain to defend. In his book, *The Case of Israel: A Study of Political Zionism*,⁵ Roger Garaudy feels that "the racism of political Zionism is a perfectly coherent system on which all the legislation and practices of the State of Israel are based".

101. Israeli practice in the occupied Arab territories at present consists of tightening the vice around Arab habitation centres, increasing the density of already existing settlements, and establishing others so that, by 1987, 175 settlements will be established in which a quarter of a million Jews will take up residence.

102. The plan prepared by Matiyahu Drobles on the settling of the West Bank, as well as documents of the World Zionist Organization on the expansion of settlement areas, clearly show the annexationist intentions of the Israeli leaders in defiance of relevant international laws and conventions.

103. Despite the Israeli Government's refusal to admit that the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,⁶ applies to the occupied territories, on the pretext that before the 1967 war Jordan and Egypt did not exercise legitimate sovereignty respectively over the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, its applicability was affirmed by the International Committee of the Red Cross, by the United Nations and by most Governments of the world.

104. Leonard Meeker, an attorney and former legal counsel of the United States State Department, expressed the following view on the question of the establishment of settlements in the Arab territories:

"The establishment of Israeli settlers in these areas, without any agreement to that effect, is incompatible with the right to self-determination of those areas and, consequently, considerably complicates the demographic situation. As has already been stated, this kind of action is incompatible with the obligations assumed by Israel as a military occupying Power in the territories in question."

105. Defying all rules of international law and relevant conventions, Israel has profoundly changed the demographic character of the occupied territories by resorting to expropriation and the confiscation of Arab lands and severely punishing the Palestinians by applying a vast array of coercive measures, turning the Arab populations of the territories into undesirables in the eyes of the Israelis.

106. The Ben Porat project, relating to the resettlement of Palestinian refugees, constitutes another link in the chain of criminal actions against Palestinians designed to minimize their struggle and to erase every trace testifying to the injustice they have suffered.

107. All this, we are told, is done in the name of the security of Israel, whether it be Lebanon, the Golan Heights, the West Bank or the Gaza Strip. The aggression against Lebanon is particularly puzzling. We cannot go along with the fact that a military Power such as Israel should occupy a third of Lebanon, a small country which, for that matter, represents no threat to Israel and whose southern borders were defined by the General Armistice Agreement between Lebanon and Israel, of 23 March 1949.⁷

108. Furthermore, we are shocked by the Israeli authorities systematically resorting to practices prohibited by the Geneva Convention and the Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907.⁸

109. Those authorities, which constantly defy the Charter of the United Nations, the Security Council and the General Assembly, are today attempting to drive away the inhabitants of southern Lebanon by force of arms or by destroying their means of livelihood. Having failed to impose upon the Lebanese Government an unjust, unequal agreement, Israel is seeking by all means to cut off southern Lebanon from the rest of the country and establish a zone of influence serving its own expansionist designs.

110. These realities are obvious to everyone today. They cannot be concealed by the pretexts the occupying Power sometimes uses to maintain its hold on the occupied territories.

111. Above all, the argument regarding security is to our mind fallacious, because no matter how far one pushes one's borders one always finds oneself next to neighbours that one has not chosen and whose sovereign and inalienable rights one must recognize and respect.

112. We believe that the notion of sure borders defended by Israel will remain a mirage, a delusion, so long as the problem of the Middle East is not solved at its root and the Palestinian people have not exercised their right to return, to self-determination and to the establishment of their own State.

113. Ariel Sharon, one of those directly responsible for the genocide at Sabra and Shatila, spoke of Israel's interests in the following terms:

"Israel's interests are not confined to the Arab countries of the Middle East, of the Mediterranean or of the Red Sea. For reasons of security, in the 1980s Israel's interests will extend to countries such as Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, areas such as the Persian Gulf and Africa, notably those of northern and central Africa."

That is what Mr. Sharon said. It is a very specific vision of what the world around Israel should be, a frightening vision, not just for Lebanon and other Arab neighbours, but for other countries considerably further away.

114. Israel is seeking supremacy in the Middle East region and is harbouring excessively ambitious designs which were reported in an article in the review *Kivunim*, published by the World Zionist Organization in Jerusalem in February 1982, issue No. 14.

115. The article deals with Israel's strategy for the 1980s. The disintegration of neighbouring Arab States is one of the priorities for the coming years. The reconquest of the Sinai, the dismemberment of Egypt, of Lebanon, of Syria, of Iraq and other Arab countries further removed will, according to the World Zionist Organization, be brought about through ethnic or religious conflicts in which Israel will play a key role.

116. The Palestinians of the occupied territories, which the *Kivunim* calls Arab-Palestinians:

"must understand that they cannot have any homeland except in Jordan . . . and cannot know security except by recognizing Jewish sovereignty from the sea to the Jordan . . . It is not possible, at the threshold of the nuclear era, to accept that three fourths of the Jewish population should be

concentrated on an over-populated and naturally exposed seacoast, and the dispersal of this population is a major imperative of our internal policy; Judea, Samaria and Galilee are the sole guarantees of our national survival, and if we do not become a majority in the mountainous regions we may suffer the same fate as the Crusaders who lost this country."

117. The World Zionist Organization nourishes an ambition to bring about what it terms "the re-equilibrium of the region from a demographic, strategic and economic standpoint, which would require control over the water resources of the region from Beersheba to Upper Galilee".

118. The appropriation of water resources in the region has led to disputes with neighbouring Arab countries since the creation of Israel. Today, again, the quest by Israel for new sources of water poses a grave threat to Jordan and Lebanon, whose rivers are sought by Israel.

119. Perhaps here we should recall that at the Paris Conference of 1919 the leaders of the World Zionist Organization called for the establishment of a Jewish National Home incorporating the rivers of southern Lebanon and both banks of the Jordan.

120. The policy followed by Israel since its creation, both *vis-à-vis* the Palestinian people and *vis-à-vis* the countries of the Middle East, has continuously increased tension in a region that has seen the birth and development of three religions that appeal to the minds and hearts of man, to the brotherhood of man and love for one's neighbour.

121. By its obstinacy and intransigence, Israel has brought about the failure of every attempt at a solution over the last 36 years and has blocked implementation of resolutions adopted by the Security Council and the General Assembly. In so doing it hoped to reach a point of no return in the implementation of its plans for colonization, Judaization and expansionism. But it has pretended to ignore the danger that it is bringing to the region, to the situation in the Mediterranean and to international peace.

122. Of course, Israel has always lived in fear that peace might break out. The military potential it has available has so far enabled it to win the battles; but does it hope to carry away nothing but victories?

123. What will Israel do 10, 20 or 30 years from now when the Arab countries will exceed 200 million inhabitants and will have developed their scientific and technological bases? What will Israel do then? Will it always be resolved to confront its neighbours on the field of battle? Will it still refuse to recognize the right of the Palestinians to self-determination and to live in peace? Is it forgetting that without the aid of its powerful allies it would have lost the war of 1973, a war that destroyed the myth of invincibility that it had used as its shield?

124. Israel's allies, to our way of thinking, should have a broader view of the region's future and abandon their support of what is increasingly an unjust cause which condemns millions of Palestinians to wander homeless and constantly threatens the territorial integrity of neighbouring countries. And what will Israel do when its powerful allies decide strictly to respect international law, the resolutions of the United Nations and the promptings of equity, and withdraw their support?

125. There is still time to move towards peace, a peace that should begin with the solution of the Palestinian problem, which is at the core of the situation in the Middle East and involves the whole region.

126. There is still time once again to give hope to the Palestinian people, who are firmly resolved to pursue, under the leadership of the PLO, their struggle for dignity and liberty.

127. Palestinians and Arabs, meeting at Fez in September 1982 at the Twelfth Arab Summit Conference, unanimously adopted a peace plan⁴ based on two clearly defined principles: first, the withdrawal of Israel from all occupied Arab territories, including Al-Quds, and recognition of the imprescriptible rights of the Palestinians to return, to self-determination and to the establishment of their independent State; and secondly, recognition of the rights of all States of the region to peace under the guarantee of the Security Council.

128. The Fez plan is based on the rule of international law; it emanates from a realistic assessment of the Middle East situation reflecting the various peace initiatives put forward. Its merit arises also from the fact that it presents specific and concrete modalities for implementation.

129. Israel, as usual, rejected this plan. It also rejected the Reagan plan of 1 September 1982¹ as soon as it was announced. The same fate befell the Brezhnev plan, put forward on 15 September 1982,⁹ and the French-Egyptian plan, embodied in a draft resolution submitted to the Security Council on 28 July 1982.¹⁰

130. Israel seems to believe only in the virtue of separate plans imposed by force, which, unfortunately, have contributed only to enhancement of the tensions and doubts in the region.

131. The Israelis know today how much they have been misled. The financial, economic, political and spiritual crisis resulting from this lunge forward by their governments tells a great deal about the failure of the political line chosen by Israel. Therein lie the true problems facing the Middle East, problems which the Israeli representative failed to touch upon in his statement yesterday [72nd meeting].

132. The perfidious, laughable and pointless diversion which he touched on yesterday could not disguise the reality of which his country is the cause in the Middle East, a tragic reality consisting in massacres of Palestinians, denial of their fundamental rights and plots against the Arab countries, threatened by an expansionist, colonialist, aggressive Israel, whose principal objective is to extend its supremacy over the entire region.

133. In addressing a new appeal to the international community to redouble its efforts to bring about a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East, Tunisia wishes to pay tribute to the tireless efforts of the Secretary-General for the convening of an international conference on peace in the Middle East.

134. If we all agree to make efforts in good faith to ensure that it is convened, that conference, we are confident, will put an end to the vicious circle of violence that continues to beset that region and will contribute to the speedy resumption of the process towards peace based on law and justice.

135. Mr. ALIAS (Malaysia): The situation in the Middle East has been on the agenda of the General

Assembly for many years now, almost since the birth of the United Nations. Yet, despite numerous attempts to find a solution and a host of General Assembly and Security Council resolutions, we are no nearer a solution. Ironically, many elements contained in the various resolutions adopted by the United Nations could have paved the way or contributed significantly towards a solution. Unfortunately, peace in the Middle East continues to elude us because one of the parties to the conflict adheres to its policy of aggression and does not believe in peace and coexistence with its neighbours.

136. Recently, during the Special Political Committee's discussion of the item on Israeli practices against the human rights of the population of the occupied territories, the representative of Israel reiterated his country's "moral right" to Arab territories that it has occupied since 1967. The thrust of his assertions was that after 2,000 years the people of Israel were merely returning to their "promised land". But what of the people who have been living there? Should they just pack up and go, just conveniently disappear? Therein lies the core of the problem—Israel's refusal to give up territories it acquired through its war of aggression. It would appear that no solution will be acceptable to Israel unless it sanctions Israel's "right" to Arab lands.

137. Over the years, events in the Middle East have developed in a direction which makes a solution to the problem infinitely more difficult. The strategic concerns of the major Powers have become enmeshed with the problem, widening its dimensions. The intrusion of big-Power rivalry has added an apocalyptic element to the situation, which on several occasions has led the world to the brink of disaster. The Middle East continues to be a flash-point of potential conflict the effects of which would transcend the region, with grave repercussions for us all. The Secretary-General says in his report: "The interests of major Powers, which have political, economic and strategic concerns in the region, are also inevitably involved. New layers of complexity are thus added with each new war and the passage of time" [A/39/600, para. 36]. It is therefore imperative that the international community persevere in the search for a comprehensive settlement of the Middle East question.

138. A comprehensive settlement must, by definition, include the return of Arab territories and the right of the Palestinians to self-determination and their own homeland. The overwhelming majority in the General Assembly have testified that such a comprehensive settlement must include the principles I have just outlined. It would appear that it is the acceptance and realization of those principles that can best ensure for Israel the attainment of the goal it seeks, or claims to seek—its right to exist. How can Israel justify its actions in terms of protecting its right to exist while denying the same right to others?

139. The Palestinian people are a reality; they cannot be wished away; nor can they be bombed, napalmed or shot away. Despite all the violence unleashed against them and the deprivation and indignity of having to live as refugees, the Palestinian will has not been broken. Indeed, all the persecution seems to reinforce their resolve to fight for their own identity and their right to be a nation. Israel, whose people, as Jews, were themselves once threatened with annihilation, must know this, must recognize and come to realize that its attempt to wipe out the

Palestinian people is as immoral as Hitler's attempt to exterminate the Jews.

140. Israel's penchant for aggression and violence knows no bounds. The whole world was witness to the awesome destruction that it unleashed on Lebanon and to the massacres at Shatila and Sabra. Israel's obscene readiness to display its military might has been demonstrated repeatedly. The wonder of it all is that, in spite of its awesome capability and the fact that its arsenals contain the most advanced weaponry, Israel is still able to get away with the portrayal of itself as a little David. Israel is repeatedly forgiven for the terrorism it inflicts, while any action by Palestinians in defence of their rights is invariably branded as terrorism.

141. The overwhelming majority of us here have lamented Israel's absolute disregard of the numerous resolutions adopted by the United Nations. Despite our frustrations, we are, however, not deceived as to why Israel is able to ignore the pronouncements of the United Nations, being only too well aware that Israel's refusal to come to terms and accept a settlement fair to all, including Israel, is based on the protection of a single Power. It explains why, despite inflation running into several hundred per cent, Israel is still able to devote 50 per cent of its budget to defence. Billions of dollars in economic and military assistance are extended to Israel on most generous terms in the name of Israel's survival and justified in terms of Israel's strategic necessity. It is therefore no mystery why any number of resolutions can be adopted by the United Nations, which, we may rest assured, Israel will continue to ignore. Undoubtedly, Israel will also ignore any and all calls for a settlement except on its own terms.

142. In such circumstances, it is difficult to envisage a true chance for peace in the Middle East. Israel can only be emboldened to carry on its policy of aggression against its Arab neighbours. The dynamics of such a situation can only lead to sustained conflict, more outside involvement and thus escalation of the problem in a global sense.

143. Yet, as I stated earlier, we in the United Nations should push on with our efforts to make Israel and its benefactors see the wisdom of a just, comprehensive settlement. It is particularly at this time when the task seems hopeless that we must press on with renewed urgency, for to shrug our shoulders and stop trying would mean the death of the United Nations. It is in this context and in this spirit that my Government fully supports the efforts of the Secretary-General in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 38/58 C to ensure the convening of a Middle East conference in which all the members of the Security Council and all the parties directly involved in the conflict, including the PLO, would participate. We commend the efforts of the Secretary-General and urge him to continue his consultations.

144. Mr. NYAMDOO (Mongolia) (*interpretation from Russian*): The Secretary-General, in his report, has pointed out that: "The Arab-Israeli conflict in the Middle East and its key issue, the Palestinian problem, have remained unresolved despite intensive efforts undertaken by the United Nations and individual Member States during the past 37 years" [*ibid.*, para. 34].

145. Indeed, the international community is exerting enormous efforts to find a peaceful solution to

the problem of the Middle East, which is one of the most acute problems of modern times.

146. The General Assembly is again examining that question and discussing ways and means of resolving it. The large number of participants in the present debate is a reflection of the great alarm of the States of the world concerning the further deterioration in the already very serious situation in the Middle East.

147. The cause of the further deterioration in the situation in that region remains the same. It is the aggressive, expansionist actions of Israel, in which it is being provided with all manner of aid and assistance by Washington. The strategic alliance of Israel and the United States causes the dangerous situation in the Middle East to worsen and is designed to serve the aim of Washington to establish its domination in that region. It is fitting here to condemn most firmly the direct, the military, and other interference of the United States in the affairs of the States of the region.

148. The absolute unwillingness, indeed, the refusal, of Israel to comply with Security Council and General Assembly resolutions relating to the problem of the Middle East are the main obstacles to the achievement of a settlement in the Middle East and are a challenge to the international community. The Mongolian delegation firmly condemns both this Israeli position and the obstructionist position of the United States, which are thwarting all efforts to achieve a genuine solution to the problem of the Middle East.

149. The Mongolian People's Republic also condemns the aggressive, expansionist actions of Israel against Lebanon and its inhuman actions in the occupied Lebanese territories, in violation of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949.⁶ The Mongolian People's Republic has been speaking out consistently in favour of the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Israeli troops from the occupied territory in Lebanon, and respect for its sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity.

150. My delegation firmly rejects the policy and practices of Israel in the occupied Arab territories. The Israeli settlements in the occupied territories, its actions designed to change the geographical character and demographic composition of those territories and the flagrant violation by Israel of the rights of the indigenous Arab population are contrary to international law and United Nations decisions.

151. Israel must heed the demands of the international community and must carry out all the pertinent decisions of the Security Council and the General Assembly.

152. As in the past, the delegation of the Mongolian People's Republic considers that the way to the establishment of a lasting peace in the Middle East lies through a comprehensive settlement of the full range of problems of this region, taking into account the legitimate interests of all the peoples and States of the region.

153. Any piecemeal attempts or any attempts at separate deals to resolve this question, as events have demonstrated, have not led to peace, but, on the contrary, have pushed away the prospects of peace and have created additional difficulties and complications. The people of Lebanon and its Government, who have had direct experience with the separate "peace" forced upon them, annulled the pertinent

agreements with Israel. That is why that course, the course of separate deals, is rejected by the overwhelming majority of the States Members of the United Nations, as will be seen in the report of the Secretary-General [A/39/600], as also in the Final Communiqué adopted at the Meeting of Ministers and Heads of Delegation of the Non-Aligned Countries to the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly, held in New York from 1 to 5 October of this year [see A/39/560].

154. A comprehensive solution to this problem presupposes, as we have emphasized in the past, the recognition and exercise of the lawful rights of the Palestinian people. These include the right to the establishment of an independent State; the withdrawal of Israeli forces from all Arab territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem; respect for the right of all States of the region to a secure and independent existence. We proceed from the premise that guaranteeing the lawful rights of the Arab people of Palestine is the key question in the settlement of the Middle East problem. Without a just solution, it is not possible to establish a lasting peace in the region.

155. The Mongolian People's Republic considers that, for a comprehensive settlement to be reached, it is necessary to convene an international conference, with the participation of all the parties concerned, including the PLO, which would then act on an equal footing. In this connection, the Mongolian delegation expresses its full support for the constructive proposals put forward by the Soviet Government on 29 July of this year [see A/39/368] to bring about a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the situation in the Middle East.

156. The Mongolian people and its Government express sincere solidarity with the struggle of the Arab peoples who stand for the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of their countries, for the withdrawal of Israeli troops from all occupied territories, and against the aggressive expansionist and annexationist actions of Israel. They systematically support the just struggle of the Arab people of Palestine to secure its legal right, the right to self-determination, including the establishment of an independent State.

157. The Mongolian People's Republic stands firmly on the side of those who speak out for the peaceful settlement of the problem of the Middle East and for the establishment of a lasting peace in the region. It welcomes and supports the efforts of the United Nations and, in particular, of the Secretary-General in this direction.

158. Mr. TAÏB (Morocco) (*interpretation from Arabic*): Once again the General Assembly is considering the situation in the Middle East, as it has been doing for almost 40 years. This region is witnessing a serious crisis, endangering international peace and security, as a result of Israel's policy of aggression.

159. The majority of representatives who have spoken so far have referred to this dangerous situation, expressing the concern of world opinion about this problem and showing an international interest in finding a solution capable of guaranteeing the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and the Arab States that are victims of aggression.

160. We can still hear the echo of the statements made last year, from this very rostrum, which strongly condemned the Israeli practices following the horrible massacres perpetrated by the Israeli

authorities in the wake of their invasion of Lebanon. Those massacres have shaken the conscience of the international community, and they require us to cooperate once again to repel aggression and to devise the means of reaching a just solution capable of restoring, at long last, stability and tranquillity in the Middle East region.

161. Regrettably, all those efforts have failed because of Israeli intransigence and arrogance. Israel does not listen to the voice of the international community, nor does it heed the resolutions adopted by various international forums condemning its actions.

162. Israel, by its continued occupation of the West Bank, the Golan Heights and the Gaza Strip, tries to consecrate its illegal presence through practices that run counter to international law and that have been condemned by international resolutions. The Israeli settlements, designed to change the demographic structure of the occupied territories, are multiplying daily. The expropriation of property, the demolition of houses and terrorization of the local population are continuing.

163. We also know that in the occupied territories and the Golan Heights, Israel has abolished local laws and replaced them with Israeli legislation. We are also aware of Israel's continuous violations of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949.⁶ We are also aware of the plunder of archaeological and cultural remains and of the destruction of farms, as well as of the imposition of collective punishment on the Arab population.

164. The Holy City of Jerusalem, the birthplace of several revealed religions, languishes under Israeli tyranny and injustice. It is the object of several ferocious attacks, aimed at Judaizing it and at changing its religious, historical and cultural characteristics. The Holy Places are the object of the endeavours of archaeological adventurers and of profanation. Many times over, they have been burnt and destroyed. Israel has succeeded in antagonizing Muslims and Christians alike on the question of the Holy City, acting in defiance of numerous resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly calling upon it to respect the Holy Places and their sacred status.

165. All of this is the result of a deliberate policy based on expansionism and aggression and on the displacement and uprooting of an entire society in order to replace it with settlers from all over the world.

166. The international community has stated its views on this situation and has called on Israel immediately to withdraw from all occupied Arab and Palestinian territories, including the Holy City of Jerusalem, and to restore to the Palestinian people, under the leadership of its sole authentic representative, the PLO, its inalienable right to return to its lands and to establish its own independent State in Palestine.

167. Despite the international consensus on these just principles—endorsed by United Nations resolutions—the doors of peace in the region remain locked owing to Israel's intransigence and its persistence in aggression, based on might, forced deportation and military occupation.

168. Faced with such a situation, the General Assembly should shoulder its responsibility to re-

establish justice and bring an end to the tragedy unfolding in the Middle East, by adopting measures which will compel Israel to respect the international community's resolutions. These measures should include the imposition of the military, economic and other sanctions which are provided for in the Charter of the United Nations in the event that a State violates the resolutions, values and customs recognized and accepted by the international community.

169. My delegation calls upon the Assembly to take these decisive measures because Israeli practices in the occupied Arab and Palestinian territories have gone even further than the usual practices of colonial Powers. These practices, in fact, are intended to eliminate an entire people, by liquidating it physically and politically, by confiscating its lands and by annexing the territory of neighbouring Arab States.

170. It is now recognized that any just and lasting solution of the Middle East conflict must be based on a solution of the Palestinian problem, which is at the core of the conflict in the Middle East and is the origin of the tragedy through which the peoples of the region have been living for so many years.

171. That has been the view of the General Assembly for years, as stressed in resolutions adopted at successive sessions. The Assembly has recognized the right of the Palestinian people to independence and sovereignty and its right to participate as a principal in all efforts to find a peaceful, just solution to the Middle East problem.

172. The Security Council, too, has condemned Israeli practices in the occupied Arab and Palestinian territories and has declared the results of such practices null and void. It has also called for the exercise by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights and for the establishment by that people of an independent State of its own. That same position has been adopted by regional organizations and conferences, at which the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people have been stressed.

173. In the League of Arab States, the monarchs and other Heads of State of the Arab countries endorsed a courageous, positive and flexible initiative aimed at solving the problem. This initiative, known as the Fez plan, adopted on 9 September 1982 at the Twelfth Arab Summit Conference, held at Fez,⁴ has met with a favourable international reception. The Fez plan has formed the basis of large-scale Arab political activity designed to elucidate its objectives and the ways in which it can be implemented. In 1982, at the thirty-seventh session, King Hassan II of Morocco set out the plan before the General Assembly [44th meeting].

174. Since the Fez plan converges on some points with President Reagan's plan of 1 September 1982,¹ an attempt to merge the two on the basis of these similarities could help in reaching a just and comprehensive solution to this question, provided that the Soviet Union agrees to participate in an international conference to lay the foundations for such a solution.

175. Morocco, which had the honour to host the Fourth Islamic Summit Conference earlier this year, and whose King presides over the Al-Quds Committee—which seeks to assure the political and religious rights of the Arabs and Muslims in the Holy City of Jerusalem—wishes once again to condemn Israeli practices in the occupied Arab and Palestinian territories, especially in Jerusalem, and to express its full support for the exercise by the Palestinian people

of its inalienable rights and for the struggle of that people under the leadership of its sole legitimate representative, the PLO.

176. We call upon the United Nations to persist in its efforts to achieve the long-wished-for peace in the region of the Middle East, a peace which should be just, equitable and comprehensive and which should ensure just rights and restore usurped rights to their legitimate holders.

177. In conclusion, my delegation wishes to express its thanks to the Secretary-General for his untiring efforts in the cause of peace and justice in the region. We wish also to express our satisfaction at the efforts in this regard of various United Nations bodies, particularly those of the Secretariat's Division for Palestinian Rights and the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.

178. Mr. RÁCZ (Hungary): There was hardly a statement made by a Head of State or Minister for Foreign Affairs in the general debate that did not touch upon the situation in the Middle East. That is not surprising. This unique region, which has not known real and lasting peace for almost four decades now, affects us all in one way or another. If and when the situation there becomes more tense, it has adverse effects on the whole international situation; and, conversely, if and when there is or seems to be a movement in the right direction, towards peace, it exerts a favourable effect on the international atmosphere.

179. Unfortunately, if we want to be objective we have to state with much regret that at the present time we are not a bit closer to a solution than we were a year ago.

180. The main obstacle to a comprehensive settlement and the cause of the aggravation of the situation are the same as it has always been: the Israeli policy of aggression and expansion. Israel has continued since 1967 to occupy Arab territories and its troops have yet to be withdrawn from Lebanon, the latest victim of the Israeli war machine. With its aggression against Lebanon, and by its continuous occupation of the southern part of that country, Israel not only expanded territories under its occupation but further complicated the situation and made an overall solution even more difficult.

181. During past decades, Israel has displaced and uprooted the great majority of the Arab populations in the occupied territories and made several attempts to extend Israeli legislation to the Golan Heights, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, clearly embarking upon a policy of annexation. The Israeli measures are aimed at deliberately changing the geographical character, the demographic nature and the legal status of the occupied areas, flagrantly violating the norms of international law, especially the generally recognized principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territories by force. When speaking about the situation in the region one cannot remain silent concerning one not insignificant circumstance well known to all—that is, the role played by the main ally of Israel, the United States, in shaping the situation in the region by providing constant and multifaceted support to Israel.

182. Looking at the record of the Israeli policy described earlier, one is forced to come to the conclusion—and it must be shared eventually by Israel also—that Israel is chasing a mirage if it seeks

to make peace with its neighbours through wars of aggression and by illegally occupying the territories of others and sowing the seeds of hatred among the Arabs with its repressive measures.

183. If Israel wants to live in peace, it must recognize that its security is inseparably linked to the security of the Arabs and that its right to live and develop in peace can never be achieved at the expense of the other parties involved in the conflict and by denying them similar rights.

184. A just and lasting solution can be achieved only through peaceful means, with the agreement of the parties concerned; and, since there are many parties to this conflict involving complex and interrelated issues, it is obvious that the Middle East conflict can ultimately be solved only by a comprehensive settlement covering all its aspects. If the history of the Middle East problem teaches us anything it is that unilateral and one-sided approaches, separate deals, do not work; they do not lead to a lasting solution.

185. I should like to mention also that, in order to make some progress towards a solution, it is necessary to strengthen the unity of the Arab countries and of the Palestinian movement so that the lack of such unity cannot be exploited to prevent a just and lasting solution. Needless to say, the United Nations, which has been involved in this question since its inception, has also a role to play in searching for ways and means of reaching a solution. It has already proved its usefulness in adopting resolutions embodying the common will of the international community, and it can serve as a useful framework for our future activities as well.

186. Through many years of discussions and efforts both here in the United Nations and through bilateral diplomacy, a growing international consensus seems to be emerging concerning the conditions for a comprehensive settlement. These are: the withdrawal of Israeli forces from all the occupied Arab territories, including Jerusalem; the guaranteeing of the inalienable national and human rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to self-determination, the right to establish their own independent sovereign State; and the guaranteeing of the right of all States in the region, including Israel, to secure an independent existence and development.

187. A comprehensive settlement could best be achieved within the framework of an international conference on the Middle East especially convened for the purpose. In this regard, we support the proposals of the Soviet Union put forward on 29 July of this year [A/39/368], which incidentally is in conformity on major points with the emerging international consensus referred to earlier.

188. We recognize that there are differences among the parties concerned on many important issues, but these differences should not and must not prevent a dialogue. On the contrary, a just and lasting solution can be arrived at only through talks, through negotiations between all the parties to the conflict, including the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

189. It is high time to renew international efforts to create the necessary conditions for an international conference on peace in the Middle East.

190. We are convinced that joint efforts can lead to results and that, even if we cannot hope to have a

solution by next year, we shall at least have a report on some progress.

191. Mr. MUSTAFA (Sudan) (*interpretation from Arabic*): There is perhaps no need for me to explain the extreme importance of the debate in this Assembly on the situation in the Middle East, not only because of the repeated challenge which this question poses to the authority and credibility of the United Nations, but also because it constitutes a threat to peace and stability in this sensitive region and in the world in general.

192. The situation in the Middle East has become a perennial item on the agenda of the General Assembly. It has continued to gain increasing attention in the United Nations because the Palestinian problem constitutes the core and origin of the question of the Middle East and because the international community attaches great importance to that, and to the fact that the Palestinian people have been expelled from their homes and deprived of their properties ever since the start of the Zionist onslaught against a region which has played a role in the development of human civilization and which continues to provide the world with vital contributions in different spheres.

193. The continuous deterioration of the situation in the Middle East has led to increased alarm as a result of these events, not to mention Israel's arrogance and recalcitrance in refusing to accord to the Palestinian people their natural and legitimate rights. It is clear that the region is threatened with new conflagrations. The invasion of Lebanon and the tearing apart of the fabric of that society, the massacre of innocent women, children and the elderly, the barbaric practices against various countries of the region—all have become the standard practice of the Zionist entity. That entity, which has been implanted in the Middle East region, continues to deny to the Palestinian people its inalienable rights, which have been recognized by the international community and guaranteed by the Charter of the United Nations. It has continued to challenge the will of the international community and the principles of the Charter. It still pursues its policy of expansion and annexation of Arab territories by force of arms, a policy publicly proclaimed by the rulers of Israel. The world at large has not forgotten the crimes being constantly committed by Israel against the Palestinian people, the repression of the peoples of the occupied Arab territories and the banishment of local leaders. Israel's aggression assumed another dimension when it bombed the Iraqi nuclear installations, annexed the Golan Heights and invaded Lebanon. Its crimes have multiplied: Israel has desecrated the Al-Aqsa mosque; it is trying to distort the characteristics of the occupied Arab territories; it is deporting their original populations and establishing settlements, in addition to a record of mass murder, destruction of houses of civilians, the Judaization of the land and the proclamation of Jerusalem as the eternal capital of Israel.

194. The international community is now firmly convinced that Israel is not a peace-loving country. At its ninth emergency special session, held from 29 January to 5 February 1982, the General Assembly took a decision that confirmed this [*resolution ES-9/1*]. Subsequent resolutions of the Assembly have defined the great danger inherent in Israel's aggressive behaviour. It is clear that this aggressive entity is totally disregarding the Charter of the United Na-

tions and international laws and customs, since there is no deterrent to ensure its compliance with the will of the international community. Israel and its expansionist dreams and recklessness are threatening a grave deterioration in the Middle East and in the conflict, with all its tragic and sad dimensions.

195. On many occasions and in numerous forums the international community has reaffirmed that a just and lasting peace in the Middle East cannot be established without the total and unconditional withdrawal of Israel from all the Palestinian and Arab territories occupied in 1967, including the Holy City of Jerusalem, and the granting to the Palestinian people of the right to self-determination, the right to return to their homes and recover their property, and the right to establish their sovereign independent State on their national soil, under the leadership of their sole legitimate representative, the PLO. The international community recently reiterated those principles at the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, held at Geneva in 1983. The Geneva Declaration on Palestine,¹¹ which was endorsed last year by the General Assembly in resolution 38/58 C, called for the holding of an international peace conference on the Middle East with a view to achieving a just and lasting settlement of the conflict in the region. The wide international participation in the Geneva Conference has conferred legitimacy on this positive contribution by the United Nations towards the desired objective. We believe that this call for the holding of an international conference must meet with a positive response if we want the region to enjoy the peace which it has not known for centuries. The negative Israeli stance concerning the holding of such a conference is but another link in the chain of its well-known attitude towards every sincere call for a peaceful settlement. It has rejected peace initiatives, including the Arab peace plan endorsed on 9 September 1982 by the Twelfth Arab Summit Conference, held at Fez.⁴ Israel's policy has always been to resort to the force of arms in total disregard of the fact that a peace imposed by force inevitably brings in its wake destruction, violence and more war. Israel must realize that its sterile reading of the situation in the Middle East is no longer convincing to anyone. Its persistence in trying to divert attention from the Palestinian question by delving into other questions fools no one. Israel has been and continues to be the cause of all tension in the Middle East. It fans the flames of strife and turmoil in all the countries of the region. It must fully realize that such a role is indeed reckless and that its policies are destructive and will end only in total failure. The statement of the representative of Israel yesterday [*72nd meeting*] concerning Arab differences will not legitimize its occupation of the lands of others. The international community will not be deceived by allegations by Israel of other differences, which indeed are the product of Israel's machinations.

196. In the Sudan we were able to foil an Israeli intervention in the south of the country, and our success in putting an end to a conflict which had lasted 17 years has met with international approval. Israel's allegations will in no way diminish such a great achievement.

197. His references to certain alleged measures and problems only reflects Israel's arrogance and its attacks on the liberty of other peoples that have chosen their own system and their own religious

beliefs, free from any outside intervention or coercion.

198. The question of Palestine will remain the core of the Middle East conflict. It is therefore incumbent on the international community to intensify its efforts to compel Israel to bow to its will and to ensure that the Palestinian people is able to exercise self-determination.

199. In spite of the savagery of the Zionist massacres and the continuous deterioration of the situation in the region, the Palestinian people continue at every opportunity to give firm evidence of their cultural authenticity and the justice of their cause. My delegation would like to pay tribute to the Palestine National Council on the occasion of its meeting in Amman, which is a positive event at a time when that region is facing historic challenges which demand the closing of ranks and the unification of positions.

200. Further, in the context of positive events, my delegation very much welcomes the restoration of relations between Egypt and Jordan, since this represents support for the common Arab effort. We believe that the two countries, whose commitment to the Palestinian cause is well known, will certainly be able to meet the historic challenges facing them.

201. My delegation cannot fail to refer to the dangerous collaboration between Pretoria and Tel Aviv in the face of the struggle in the Arab and African regions. Such collaboration adds to the challenges facing the African people in South Africa and Namibia and the Palestinian people, especially as the conspiratorial nature of such collaboration has become clear and it is obviously aimed at denying the right of peoples to self-determination. A few years ago we tackled the question of the policy of *apartheid* of South Africa; today we are facing another challenge, a challenge by Israel directed against the peoples of the Arab region. Efforts to thwart the machinations of those Axis allies must be redoubled.

202. We wish to extend our thanks and appreciation to the Secretary-General for his report [A/39/600] and particularly for having referred to the deterioration of the situation in the Middle East, the adverse effects of the failure to solve these problems and the implications for the credibility of the United Nations and the hopes placed in it. We also express our appreciation of the work of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories and the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.

203. It is more necessary today than at any other time in the past for the United Nations to shoulder its responsibilities in the Middle East and to ensure for the Palestinian people exercise of their right to self-determination, sovereignty on their national soil and an independent State. Israel must learn that peace is indivisible and that justice cannot be restricted to one people alone.

204. Mr. KURODA (Japan): The situation in the Middle East continues to be increasingly volatile and deeply complex, and hopes for peace remain dim. In particular, we regret that no concrete progress has yet been made with regard to the situation in Lebanon in spite of the efforts of the parties concerned.

205. Lebanon has left glorious footprints on the path of world history and has made major contributions to Arab culture in the modern age. It is tragic

that the national energies of such a country are being consumed in a civil war.

206. The most important elements in restoring peace to Lebanon are, first, the prompt achievement of national reconciliation and, secondly, the withdrawal of all foreign forces so as to enable Lebanon to re-establish its territorial integrity, independence and sovereignty.

207. The Japanese Government strongly hopes that the Lebanese people, in particular the parties to the national reconciliation talks, will make serious efforts towards the restoration of national unity. Specifically, we hope that they will demonstrate a flexible attitude based on a long-range and broad perspective and will strive to co-ordinate sectarian interests. Furthermore, it is essential that an environment be created in which all foreign forces can leave Lebanon as soon as possible.

208. In this connection, Japan welcomes the fact that Israel and Lebanon have entered into talks, convened by the Secretary-General, regarding military aspects relating to the withdrawal of Israeli forces and security arrangements in Lebanon. Japan hopes that both parties will do their utmost to achieve concrete results.

209. The situation in Lebanon underlines the urgent need to find a solution to the Middle East problem as a whole. I should like to take this opportunity to restate the basic position of the Government of Japan on the Middle East problem, at the core of which is the question of Palestine. First, peace in the Middle East must be just, lasting and comprehensive. Secondly, such a peace should be achieved through the early and complete implementation of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and through recognition of and respect for the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to self-determination, under the Charter of the United Nations. Thirdly, each and every path towards the realization of such a peace must be explored, with careful consideration being given to the legitimate security requirements of the countries in the region and to the aspirations of all the peoples in the region, including the Palestinian people. Fourthly, Japan is of the view that the PLO represents the Palestinian people. Thus, Japan believes that, in order to advance the cause of peace in the Middle East, it is essential that Israel and the PLO recognize each other's position and that the PLO participate in the peace process.

210. I should like to stress my Government's long-standing appeal to all parties, including Israel and the PLO, to resolve their problems through negotiations and not to resort to the use of force, in order to bring about a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the region. To this end, it is necessary that both the Israeli and the Palestinian peoples make sincere efforts to dispel mutual distrust and foster a genuine will to coexist in peace.

211. In this context, Japan regards Israel's policy of establishing settlements in the occupied territories as a major obstacle to peace efforts. Nor can it condone Israel's measures to change unilaterally the status of the occupied Arab territories, such as its annexation of East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights.

212. At the same time, Japan strongly appeals to Israel, as the occupying authority, to make special efforts to protect the human rights of the Palestinian inhabitants in accordance with the Geneva Conven-

tion relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949.⁶

213. Furthermore, we hope that, in order that the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people may be recovered, the unity of the PLO will be restored and that it will consolidate its position as an integral party in the search for peace.

214. Various international efforts have been made towards the achievement of a comprehensive peace in the Middle East. I refer, for example, to President Reagan's initiative of 1 September 1982¹ and to the Final Declaration adopted on 9 September 1982² by the Twelfth Arab Summit Conference, held at Fez.⁴ The Government of Japan strongly hopes that, in order to break the present stalemate, the parties concerned will take such proposals into account and, with a realistic, constructive and flexible attitude, make serious efforts towards the achievement of genuine peace in the Middle East.

215. There is, of course, no easy solution to the Middle East problem. But the Government of Japan reaffirms its intention to co-operate in all efforts towards the early attainment of our common goal—a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East achieved through a process of negotiation and without recourse to the use of force.

216. Mr. OSMAN (Somalia): The Somali delegation shares the deep concern expressed by many preceding speakers over the complete lack of progress towards a just, peaceful and comprehensive settlement in the Middle East. Indeed, only retrograde steps are evident, whether we consider the question of Palestinian rights—a question at the heart of the Middle East conflict—the question of occupied Arab territory, including the Holy City of Jerusalem, or the continuing tragedy of Lebanon.

217. Furthermore, as the Secretary-General has observed in his report [*ibid.*], the recurring crises of the area have added new layers of complexity which tend to obfuscate the fundamental issues and divert international attention from them. This state of affairs can only add to international tensions, threaten world peace and security and make the prospect of a just and lasting settlement more distant than ever.

218. The central factor in the chronic unrest and violence in the Middle East is undoubtedly Israel's success in ignoring with impunity the principles and measures established by the United Nations as an appropriate basis for Middle East peace. The list of General Assembly and Security Council resolutions treated with contempt by Israel is, as we know, a long one. Consequently, the Middle East question is closely linked to the question of the authority of the United Nations and its efforts to establish the rule of law in international affairs.

219. My Government wishes to affirm its strong support for the decisions of the General Assembly and the Security Council aimed at achieving the important international goal of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. We are convinced, first of all, that this goal cannot be achieved without universal recognition of the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to statehood in Palestine. In this regard, the world community must not fail to condemn Israel's genocidal attempt to eliminate the Palestinian people in Lebanon and to pre-empt the establishment of a Palestinian State through its illegal settlements and terror tactics aimed at intimidating the inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza.

220. Certainly the restoration of Palestinian rights must figure prominently in a comprehensive Middle East settlement, and any process of negotiation to that end must include the representative of the Palestinian people, the PLO.

221. Israel's creeping annexation of occupied Arab territory, in defiance of Security Council resolutions and in clear contravention of the 1949 Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War,⁶ is of course a major obstacle to the achievement of peace in the Middle East and a major challenge to the authority of the United Nations.

222. The world community must continue to demand the reversal of the Israeli settlements policy, an end to oppressive policies which violate the human rights of the Arab people under occupation, and an end to attempts to change the demographic character and legal status of occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories.

223. Much lip-service is paid to Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), which emphasize the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory through aggression. But what has been the result of Israel's refusal over the past 17 years to withdraw from all the occupied Arab territory, in accordance with those resolutions?

224. It must also be asked what repercussions have been set in motion by Israel's arrogant and illegal annexation of the Holy City of Jerusalem, in defiance of the clearest international consensus on this matter and of repeated condemnations and declarations of invalidity by the Security Council.

225. As Member States are fully aware, Israel has been able to defy the United Nations on these matters with impunity. Furthermore, Israel has not been called to account in any significant way for the continuing tragedy in Lebanon. Yet its invasion of that territory, its unjustified and brutal military aggression, in which thousands of non-combatants have been wantonly killed, and its oppressive occupation of Lebanese territory are all criminal violations of international law.

226. After more than three decades of tension and conflict it should be obvious that no interests of any kind are served by continued turmoil in the Middle East area. Every effort should be made by all concerned to advance the cause of peace in the region.

227. My Government welcomed the positive contribution of the Arab peace plan adopted unanimously on 9 September 1982 by the Twelfth Arab Summit Conference, held at Fez.⁴ Regrettably, Israel's response continues to be the pursuit of its expansionist plans through *faits accomplis*.

228. We believe, with the Secretary-General, that in the search for solutions time is of the essence, since the emergence of new factors could well mean a further deterioration of the situation in the Middle East. In our view, an international peace conference on the Middle East could well give an important and useful impetus to a negotiating process. The immediate necessity, however, is to put pressure on Israel to comply with the resolutions of the Security Council and to desist from its violations of international conventions to which it is a party. The threat to regional and international peace and security posed by its expansionist, illegal and aggressive policies clearly demands action by the Security Council under

Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations. My Government also associates itself with the call to Member States to refrain from extending military, economic or other support to Israel which would encourage it to pursue its aggressive policies.

229. In conclusion, I wish to emphasize my delegation's belief that a framework for negotiations on a comprehensive Middle East settlement exists and has long existed in the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council. We urge all the States most closely concerned to make a new and sincere effort to address the fundamental issues at stake in the Middle East and to promote a just and lasting peace in the region.

230. Mr. KORNEENKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) (*interpretation from Russian*): Among the hotbeds of tension on our planet which are threatening international peace and security and causing great concern to the international community, pride of place is taken by the Middle East. For more than 37 years now, this area has been a dangerous hotbed of crises and conflict, and the attention of the United Nations has been focused on it. Because there has been no settlement in the situation, the major, vital interests of the peoples of the Middle East have been jeopardized. An entire generation has grown up there without knowing real peace, and the peoples of the region have not been given any further comfort in the past year.

231. The reason for the present dangerous situation, as everybody knows, can be found in the aggressive, expansionist policy of those in the ruling circles of Israel, which is carried out with the support and participation of imperialist countries. In spite of the many decisions of the Security Council and the General Assembly, Israel continues to occupy the Arab lands which it seized in 1967 and is taking further steps to colonize and annex them. The inalienable rights of the suffering Arab people of Palestine continue to be violated. These people are living in conditions of Israeli occupation and some are forced to leave their homeland. The Palestinian and other Arab peoples in the occupied territories are enduring mass terror and violence, while a policy of changing the demographic nature and economic structure of the seized Arab lands is being pursued.

232. Responsibility for the deterioration of the situation in the Middle East and the lack of any settlement of the Middle East conflict is fully shared by the United States, the senior partner of Israel in "strategic co-operation". In their efforts to promote their strategic interests, these "partners" have adopted a policy of imposing separate anti-Arab deals, dividing up the Arab countries and strengthening the American military presence in the region under the pretext of so-called vital interests. That policy is designed to achieve for them domination over the region and to suppress Arab national and patriotic forces.

233. However, the events of the past year have shown quite clearly the unprofitable nature of the policy of force and military adventurism in the Middle East.

234. The gamble on a show of military force and armed intervention in the affairs of Lebanon did not come off. The armies of the United States and their allies in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization had to leave Lebanese territory hastily and they had to

end their interventionist so-called multinational forces mission.

235. The aggression against Lebanon has not brought any glory either to the organizers and executors of that plan. Indeed, it was a serious political and military defeat for them. According to press reports, the Lebanese adventure cost Israel \$3.5 billion and more than 600 Israelis paid for it with their lives. By and large, today, in Tel Aviv itself, people have begun to realize that the country has been led into an impasse because of the senseless expansionist policy.

236. Nevertheless, the occupation of about one third of the territory of Lebanon continues, and the Israeli high-level military authorities are pursuing a policy of terror and oppression against the Lebanese and the Palestinians. Flouting the norms of international law and the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, Israel is refusing to comply with the relevant decisions of the Security Council that the occupation of the territory of sovereign Lebanon must be ended and is attempting to divide it up. The seriousness of the situation in that country is shown by the fact that in this year alone the Security Council has met four times to discuss the actions of the aggressor. A little more than two months ago, because of the negative position of the United States, the Council failed to adopt a draft resolution calling upon Israel, the occupying Power, to respect generally acknowledged norms of international law. And this, unfortunately, is not the only example of the obstruction of the efforts of the United Nations and interested States to bring about a settlement of the Middle East problem.

237. In continuing the bankrupt policy of separate deals, the United States and Israel are rejecting out of hand constructive proposals which are designed to achieve a comprehensive Middle East settlement. This happened, for example, with the peace plan adopted on 9 September 1982 by the Twelfth Arab Summit Conference, held at Fez.⁴ As is well known, the "strategic" partners have blocked efforts undertaken in implementation of the decisions of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, held at Geneva in 1983, and those of the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session, efforts designed to convene an international peace conference on the Middle East, which is the only true and genuine procedure for achieving a just settlement in the Middle East. Such a policy clearly demonstrates the intentions of Israel and those who aid and abet it to continue to speak with the Arabs in the language of diktat and to impose upon them conditions for a settlement which takes into account only the interests of Israel and forces the Arabs to come to terms with the high-handedness of Israel and its policies in the occupied Arab territories. Quite naturally, the peoples of the region and their Governments reject any "recipes" for such a sham settlement.

238. The Ukrainian SSR is firmly convinced that the Middle East cannot find peace through a policy of force or through the imposition of an alien will on the parties to the conflict. A solution to the problem is urgent, but it should be political in nature; it should be comprehensive and it should take into account the interests of all countries of the region.

239. This, in fact, was the programme of a comprehensive, just settlement of the Middle East that we found in the Soviet proposals of 29 July of this year

[A/39/368]. Those proposals are based, first and foremost, on the fact that we should uphold the principle of the inadmissibility of the seizure of lands of others by aggression. All territories occupied by Israel in 1967 should be returned to the Arabs. We must, in practice, ensure the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, to the establishment of its own independent State on Palestinian lands freed from Israeli occupation. Palestinian refugees should be granted the opportunity of returning to their homes or receive compensation. The eastern part of Jerusalem should be returned to the Arabs and should become an inalienable part of the Palestinian State. We must firmly ensure the right of all States of the region to a secure and independent existence and development, put an end to constant wars and bring about peace between the Arab States and Israel. Finally, international guarantees for a Middle East settlement are proposed. As was pointed out in the proposals, the Soviet Union is prepared to take part in such guarantees.

240. The broadest avenue to a comprehensive settlement is through an international conference on the Middle East, with the participation of all interested countries, including, of course, the participation, on an equal footing, of the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. It is not difficult to notice that the basic principles for a Middle East settlement proposed by the Soviet Union are a summary of earlier initiatives and take into account the interests of all parties to the conflict. When one views those proposals, which have received broad international support at this session of the General Assembly as well, it can be seen that they have become a sort of litmus test, a measure of the seriousness with which various States seek a peaceful settlement in the Middle East.

241. While we sternly condemn the policy of aggression and annexation against Arab countries, the Ukrainian SSR would like to express its solidarity with the just struggle of the Arab people of Palestine for their inalienable rights. We support the just cause of the Arab peoples who are waging a struggle against Israeli aggression and occupation. The unconditional and earliest possible withdrawal of the Israeli armies, as requested by Security Council resolutions 508 (1982) and 509 (1982), is a necessary step.

242. We condemn the policy of imperialist forces in building up their military presence in the areas of the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea and we support limiting naval activities of foreign governments in those regions. We are against the establishment of foreign military bases, the proliferation of nuclear weaponry, the threat of the use of force and interference in the internal affairs of other States of the region.

243. The delegation of the Ukrainian SSR supports decisions that would help us to seek a just peace in the Middle East, in the interests of the peoples living there.

244. Mr. MARINESCU (Romania) (*interpretation from French*): Even more than in the past, the Middle East remains an area of great instability and one of the primary sources of threats to international peace, security and co-operation. The dangers of the persistent conflict in the Middle East, and the many questions it has opened which have still not been settled, are even greater in the present particularly tense international atmosphere, which is the result of

policies of maintaining and redividing spheres of influence, the intensification of the arms race, above all the nuclear arms race, and the emergence of new conflicts while old conflicts continue.

245. The confrontations that exist in the Middle East and the entire development of the Israeli-Arab conflict confirm again, if this is necessary, the historical truth that peace and security cannot be built and ensured by the threat or use of force or by denying the right of other peoples to freedom and independence. It is axiomatic that peace and security can be achieved only on the basis of respect for the legitimate rights of other countries and for new principles and norms of conduct in international relations.

246. Therefore, it is high time that all Member States assume their high political and moral responsibilities and that the United Nations, whose primary function it is to maintain peace and security throughout the world, act more decisively to achieve a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of this conflict that has lasted only too long, causing untold suffering to the peoples in the area and seriously endangering peace in the world.

247. Romania and its President are in favour of settling conflicts and disputes among States exclusively by peaceful means and by negotiations. No matter how prolonged and difficult they may be, peaceful means and negotiations, in our opinion, are the only reasonable way of solving disputes among States, the only alternative to conflicts and deadly wars.

248. As President Nicolae Ceaușescu recently said, at the Thirteenth Congress of the Romanian Communist Party, Romania has always been strongly in favour of a political settlement in the Middle East, one guaranteeing a comprehensive peace in the region, and of settling the problem of the Palestinian people on the basis of their right to self-determination, including their right to the creation of an independent Palestinian State. In this spirit, we are in favour of an international conference, with the participation of all interested States, including the PLO. A comprehensive settlement must lead to the achievement of a just and lasting peace, to guarantees for the independence and sovereignty of all States in the area.

249. On the basis of its position of principle that the occupation of foreign territories and their acquisition by force are inadmissible, Romania has from the start consistently maintained that for the future peace settlement in the Middle East to be just and lasting, the first requirement is the withdrawal of Israel from the territories occupied since the 1967 war, including the Arab part of Jerusalem. This requirement has been clearly formulated in the relevant United Nations resolutions and has been stressed repeatedly in all forums which have considered the situation in the Middle East. As is well known, we are strongly opposed to Israel's actions aimed at annexing the Syrian Golan Heights. Romania is also in favour of the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Israeli troops from Lebanon, the national reconciliation of internal political forces and guarantees of the independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Lebanon.

250. All the developments in the situation in the Middle East and the absence of progress towards a comprehensive settlement have only made it increas-

ingly clear that without a solution to the Palestinian problem there can be no comprehensive, just and lasting peace. An essential component of such a settlement is recognition of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, including the establishment of an independent Palestinian State, as well as recognition of its right to participate through its legitimate representative, the PLO, in negotiations on peace in the Middle East. At the same time, we believe that one pre-condition of any solution that will fully meet the legitimate interests and aspirations of States and peoples of the Middle East is the guaranteeing of the right of every State in the region to free and sovereign existence, independence and territorial integrity, which would make possible relations of co-operation, trust and mutual respect among all States and peoples of the region.

251. Like other countries, Romania has constantly advocated and promoted increased political and diplomatic efforts to find solutions to all the complex problems of the area and to achieve a comprehensive settlement and a just and lasting peace. As early as 1978 President Nicolae Ceaușescu put forward the idea of convening an international conference on peace in the Middle East, within the framework and with the active participation of the United Nations and with the participation of all interested parties, including the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, the Soviet Union and the United States, as well as other countries which could make a positive contribution to the settlement of the complicated problems of that part of the world.

252. This idea has been included in General Assembly resolutions, is supported by an ever-increasing number of States and, finally, is endorsed in resolution 38/58 C, of 13 December 1983, of which the Romanian delegation was a sponsor. Romania believes that this initiative remains relevant and that increased efforts by all States and by the international community are needed to ensure that such a conference is convened as soon as possible.

253. We share the view expressed by the Secretary-General in his report [A/39/600] that such a conference could provide a flexible framework for all the necessary negotiations on the settlement of all the outstanding questions. Similarly, the Romanian delegation shares the opinion of other delegations that the time has come for all the countries concerned and all the political forces of the region to promote the organization of such a conference, which would be a significant contribution to the achievement of the comprehensive, just settlement so anxiously awaited by the peoples of the region and of the entire world. As the Secretary-General says in his report: "In the light of the deep tension in the Middle East . . . , nothing could be less realistic than to expect the indefinite continuation of the present situation of no peace—no war" [*ibid.*, para. 49].

254. It seems to us to be futile to seek partial solutions, to the exclusion of some of the parties concerned, for this is an overall problem, as complex as the entire situation in the Middle East.

255. Is there any reasonable alternative, therefore, to a conference organized under United Nations auspices at which all the parties concerned can defend, as appropriate, their legitimate interests within the framework of an overall, just and lasting peace settlement?

256. The United Nations can and must play an increasingly active role in efforts to resolve the conflict in the Middle East and ensure the conditions for comprehensive negotiations, under its auspices, leading to a just and lasting peace in this troubled area of the world, a peace that will fully meet the hopes and expectations of the peoples of the region and, indeed, the peoples of the entire world.

257. Romania is determined to continue to do whatever it can to make its contribution to the search for a just and lasting settlement of the problems of the Middle East, to the establishment of a just peace in the region and to the strengthening of international peace, security and co-operation.

258. Mr. CABALLERO (Cuba) (*interpretation from Spanish*): The subject of the Middle East continues to claim a position of priority on the agenda of the General Assembly.

259. The constructive position taken by the Arab countries and the PLO concerning the various initiatives aimed at achieving a just and lasting settlement of the conflict in the Middle East continues to stand out in contrast to the arrogant, intransigent attitude of the Tel Aviv leaders. In clear defiance of the many resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council, Israel continues to pursue its well-known expansionist plans and to make itself an ever greater source of danger to peace and security in the region and, therefore, in the world as a whole.

260. In this context, a few days ago the Special Political Committee completed consideration of the report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories, in which it was stated unequivocally that in the past year the Tel Aviv Government had intensified in those territories its practices and policies aimed at creating the necessary conditions for the final annexation of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and the Syrian Golan Heights.

261. At the same time, following the brutal invasion and the crimes committed by the Israeli forces in Lebanon, the Tel Aviv authorities have striven relentlessly to maintain their occupation forces in the southern part of the country in their attempts to incorporate part of Lebanese territory in their expansionist plans, in keeping with their long-held ambitions so well known to the world public.

262. How has it been possible for Israel to continue for more than three decades to disregard the will of the international community, fail to comply with the many resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council and, with its practices and policies, systematically violate the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations? But this is no secret. The sole explanation for this lies in the unconditional support which the Israeli Government receives from the United States for its political, diplomatic, economic and military plans.

263. For this reason, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, now encompassing 101 full-fledged members, at the Meeting of Ministers and Heads of Delegation of the Non-Aligned Countries to the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly, held in New York from 1 to 5 October 1984, stated its position on United States assistance to Israel in strong terms. The Ministers and Heads of Delegations, in considering the situation in the Middle East,

“denounced once again the continued support provided by the Government of the United States for these Israeli practices and acts as well as all forms of American assistance, particularly the agreements of mutual co-operation between them within the framework of their strategic alliance which threatens the security of the region and the world, and confirms the United States’ total partiality toward Israel” [A/39/560, para. 60].

264. That negotiations were renewed to increase assistance to Israel could be deduced from the recent talks held in Washington between the leaders of both countries. Israeli-American talks were also aimed at frustrating any attempt to bring about a peaceful settlement of the Middle East conflict, as was recently reflected in the refusal of both Governments to accept efforts by the Secretary-General to convene an international peace conference on the Middle East, in keeping with the Geneva Declaration on Palestine¹¹ and the Programme of Action for the Achievement of Palestinian Rights,¹² adopted by the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, held at Geneva in 1983, and with resolution 38/58 C of the General Assembly.

265. In view of the deterioration of the situation in the region and the dangers that situation represents for international peace and security, this forum must insist on the need for an early convening of that peace conference and unequivocally support the Secretary-General’s efforts to that end.

266. The peace conference, in which all the parties concerned must participate, including the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, must help to bring about a just and lasting peace on the basis of the complete withdrawal of Israel from occupied territories and the recognition of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to establish a sovereign, independent Palestinian State.

267. Mr. MOUSHOUTAS (Cyprus): Once again the General Assembly is considering the item entitled “The situation in the Middle East”. As in past years, this world body is again engaged in the search for a just and lasting solution in a region which has not seen peace for four decades and at a time when ominous signs of deterioration in the situation are obvious.

268. Because of our geographical proximity, the close historical ties that bind the Arab people with the people of Cyprus and the nature of the issues inherent in the situation, we are of necessity vitally involved as a people and as a country.

269. The Middle East has been accurately described in various reports of the Secretaries-General as presenting one of the major world problems, posing a direct threat to international peace and security, and, in addition to its intrinsic dangers, heavily contributing to the polarization which we witness today.

270. On the other hand, a just, comprehensive and lasting solution of this challenging problem would prove to be a major positive development, with benefits to the countries involved and to the whole of the Middle East, and would contribute to the amelioration of the present negative world climate.

271. The tragic developments of past years and the unending suffering of the peoples of all the countries involved in the conflict confirm that no just and lasting peace can be achieved by the use of force. The acquisition and annexation of territories by force, the

uprooting of peoples, the illegal settlements and the violation of the rights of others are contrary to the Charter of the United Nations and the provisions of international law and thus are totally unacceptable in a twentieth century enlightened world.

272. It is with those thoughts in mind that Cyprus, along with the other non-aligned countries, supports and strives for a peaceful, just and comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict through negotiations, as proposed at the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, held at Geneva in 1983, in accordance with the Charter, resolutions and decisions of the United Nations and the declarations of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

273. In those negotiations, the participation on an equal footing of the PLO, the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, along with other interested parties to the dispute, is indispensable. We firmly believe that no solution to the Middle East problem can be envisaged which does not take fully and justly into account the national aspirations of the Palestinian people. We consider the question of Palestine as the core of the Middle East problem and the realization of the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, independence and national sovereignty as a *sine qua non* to its solution. Only when that right has been universally recognized and respected, as called for by General Assembly resolution 3236 (XXIX), of 22 November 1974, will all States in the region indeed live within safe and internationally recognized boundaries.

274. We further believe that for the solution to be just and lasting it must entail the withdrawal of Israel from all Arab territories occupied since 1967, including the old city of Jerusalem. Israel must rescind its illegal and unilateral decision with regard to the Golan Heights, which constitutes an inseparable part of the territorial integrity of Syria, and withdraw its troops from Lebanon, that much tormented, friendly and neighbouring State.

275. Even though the situation in the Middle East lends itself to pessimistic appraisals and fears of another major conflagration, it also constitutes a challenge for mankind, and mainly for the United Nations, whose primary purpose is the maintenance of international peace and security. The problem is grave; it is also challenging. It is a problem which has evaded solution for as long as the United Nations has existed.

276. Next year, the United Nations will commemorate its fortieth anniversary. Even though in this world of power politics, of “might is right”, we do not necessarily believe in miraculous developments, we do believe that we owe it to ourselves and to succeeding generations to redouble our efforts, reconsider our policies and rededicate ourselves to the everlasting principles of the Charter of the United Nations in a concerted endeavour towards the solution of this major crisis and this endless, blood-letting problem.

277. A just solution of the Middle East problem is imperative, not only for reducing grave tensions in the ever-worsening international climate but also for sustaining and nourishing renewed faith in the credibility of the United Nations as the Organization of peace and in its lofty and everlasting principles.

278. Perpetuation of the Middle East problem is perpetuation of world problems. Its solution will definitely contribute to the salvation of mankind.

279. Mr. OULD BOYE (Mauritania) (*interpretation from Arabic*): When we consider the situation in the Middle East, whether on the basis of the valuable reports of the Secretary-General or going beyond them, we find that there is really no conflict in the true sense of the word. We find, however, that Israel has occupied Palestine by force and illegally attacked the peoples of the States in the region, in defiance of all the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly. This has damaged the credibility of the United Nations in the eyes of the world public. It is only natural that Israel continues its acts of aggression, since strong sanctions, which would have put an end to the military, economic, financial, humanitarian and technological assistance it receives, have not been imposed on it.

280. It might perhaps be useful to recall that what we are now witnessing in the Middle East is the result of a colonialist, Zionist plan dating back to the beginning of this century. In 1907, the colonialist States held a conference in London to consider colonization in the world and in the regions where they felt threatened. In his report, Campbell-Bannerman, then British Prime Minister, said:

“The greatest threat to imperialism is in the Mediterranean, which is a link between the East and the West, and on the eastern and southern coasts on which live peoples that possess all the elements of unity and cohesion, that have resources that enabled them to make progress and to develop.”

The report also recommended that the imperialist States should endeavour to divide up this region and oppose all attempts at unity between those peoples. It proposed, as an urgent step, that the African zone be separated from the Asian zone by the establishment of a foreign human buffer which the imperialists could use for the attainment of their objectives.

281. As soon as that imperialist plan for the Middle East was drawn up, the Zionists seized the opportunity to volunteer to play the role they are playing today. They succeeded in persuading the imperialist States to entrust them with this task. They sent letters to the imperialist States stating their desire to control the entire region and to establish Zionist colonialism and imperialism. I will read one of those letters, which were published in *The Struggle between the Arabs and Israel*, a book by nine authors, including Mehdi ben Baraka, Khairy Hamad and Lotfi el Khouly:

“The countries we intend to occupy include lower Egypt—that is, northern Egypt—the southern part of Syria and Lebanon. Thus, we shall be able to control trade with India, the Arab peninsula and eastern and southern Africa. We believe that France cannot but support the idea of the route to India and China controlled by a people which will defend it to the death.”

In a letter sent to the German Kaiser Wilhelm II, we read:

“We”—that is, the Zionists—“intend to create on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean a modern civilization and a trade centre which will be a bulwark of German sovereignty, directly or indirectly. Palestine will thus become, thanks to the immigration of Jews, a political and trade base, indeed, a German compound.”

282. It is not surprising, therefore, that Israel is the cause of the tension and instability in the Middle East. Indeed, this is its objective and the justification for its existence. Protection, the provision of weapons, and financial assistance enabled it to occupy Palestine, as well as other Arab territories in 1967.

283. As for Lebanon, as soon as it achieved independence and its financial institutions were established and the economic and cultural life of the country began to develop, Israel launched attacks against that peaceful country. “But it is possible that ye dislike a thing which is good for you” [*Koran, Surah II:216*], for Israel’s repeated attacks have strengthened the determination of the peoples of the region. Israel boasted that it was invincible and claimed that no Arab force could conquer it and that it had destroyed three Arab armies in 1967. Today, however, we see that Israel has for years been faced with violent resistance by Syria.

284. The Palestinian revolution, even within the occupied Arab territories, has intensified over the past years. By its patriotism and great courage, the Lebanese people have given an example of struggle against foreign invasion, reminding us of the glories of history we have seen in Japan, Viet Nam and Algeria and, in the face of the Nazi invasion, in Europe.

285. In fact, Lebanon’s unity was strengthened following the Israeli invasion. Actually, the various national parties, regardless of their religious or political doctrines, adopted the cause of the homeland. Thus, the Lebanese people have proved to Israel that its calculations were erroneous, to wit, that the Christians and Muslims would engage in a civil war that would enable Israel to occupy all the territory it wanted.

286. Israel is disregarding the fact that Christian Arabs have played their role, side by side with their Muslim brothers, in ensuring a modern Arab renaissance. Many parties and national Arab groups have Christian leaders, and Israel is probably not aware of the fact that Islam believes that Christians are the closest to Muslims. In fact, the Koran states: “And the nearest among them in love to the Believers wilt thou find those who say, ‘We are Christians’: because amongst these are men devoted to learning and men who have renounced the world, and they are not arrogant.” [*Surah V:82.*]

287. Mauritania, which upholds the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, in keeping with the will of the international community, supports United Nations resolutions condemning Israeli occupation, and exploitation of the resources, of Arab territories. We condemn the invasion of Lebanon and the destruction of Beirut. We condemn the unjust policy of annexation carried out by Israel in the Syrian Golan Heights. We condemn most energetically the Sabra and Shatila massacres, which bring to mind the Deir Yassin massacre also perpetrated by Israel. We condemn Israeli terrorism against the inhabitants of southern Lebanon. And we also condemn the growing co-operation between Israel and racist South Africa to increase terrorism and exploit the Arab and African peoples.

288. We appeal for an end to any form of assistance to Israel, because that assistance is what encourages it in continuing its acts of aggression and expansion and its settlements policy. Any assistance to Israel, over and above the fact that it is unjust from the

standpoint of principle, might eventually force countries in the region into foreign alliances for reasons of self-defence—alliances they would not enter into if Israel were not given any assistance.

289. My country, like many others, believes that the occupation of Palestine is at the core of the question of the Middle East. Consequently, any solution must be comprehensive and must be based on Israel's withdrawal from all the occupied Arab territories, including the Holy City of Jerusalem. The Palestinian people, under the leadership of the PLO, must regain its legitimate rights, including its right to return to its homeland and to set up its own Palestinian State.

290. Although Israel is occupying territories, has succeeded in mobilizing a few Jews and caused the death of many innocent persons, and has been able to destroy cities and thwart development in the Middle East region, there is one thing which Israel has not been able to alter—the refusal of the peoples in the Middle East to recognize zionism and its régime in occupied Palestine.

291. Come what may, history will never be on Israel's side, and in the final analysis, Israel will have to withdraw from all the occupied Arab territories.

The meeting rose at 7.20 p.m.

NOTES

¹See *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* (Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1982), vol. 18, No. 35, p. 1081.

²Tirana, "8 NËNTORI" Publishing House, 1984.

³See *Official Records of the Security Council, Thirty-eighth Year, Supplement for January, February and March 1983*, document S/15556.

⁴*Ibid.*, *Thirty-seventh Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1982*, document S/15510, annex.

⁵London, Shorouk International, 1983.

⁶United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, No. 973.

⁷See *Official Records of the Security Council, Fourth Year, Special Supplement No. 4*, document S/1296/Rev.1.

⁸Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, *The Hague Conventions and Declarations of 1899 and 1907* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1915), p. 100.

⁹See *Official Records of the Security Council, Thirty-seventh Year, Supplement for July, August and September 1982*, document S/15403.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, document S/15317.

¹¹See *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), chap. I, sect. A.

¹²*Ibid.*, chap. I, sect. B.