

UNITED NATIONS

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SECURITY COUNCIL OFFICIAL RECORDS

THIRTY-FIRST YEAR

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1969th

JUN 19 1969
MEETING: 11 NOVEMBER 1976

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NEW YORK

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NOTE

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The resolutions of the Security Council, numbered in accordance with a system adopted in 1964, are published in yearly volumes of *Resolutions and Decisions of the Security Council*. The new system, which has been applied retroactively to resolutions adopted before 1 January 1965, became fully operative on that date.

1969th MEETING

Held in New York on Thursday, 11 November 1976, at 4 p.m.

President: Mr. Jorge Enrique ILLUECA (Panama).

Present: The representatives of the following States: Benin, China, France, Guyana, Italy, Japan, Libyan Arab Republic, Pakistan, Panama, Romania, Sweden, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania and United States of America.

Provisional agenda (S/Agenda/1969)

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. The situation in the occupied Arab territories:
Letter dated 20 October 1976 from the Permanent Representative of Egypt to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/12218)

The meeting was called to order at 4.20 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the occupied Arab territories:

Letter dated 20 October 1976 from the Permanent Representative of Egypt to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/12218)

1. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Spanish*): In accordance with the decisions adopted at past meetings [1966th to 1968th meetings], I invite the representatives of Egypt, Israel, Jordan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Mauritania, Morocco and Nigeria as well as the representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), to participate in the debate without the right to vote.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Herzog (Israel) and Mr. Terzi (Palestine Liberation Organization) took places at the Security Council table and Mr. Abdel Meguid (Egypt), Mr. Nuseibeh (Jordan), Mr. Allaf (Syrian Arab Republic) Mr. Kaiser (Bangladesh), Mr. Marpaung (Indonesia), Mr. El Hassen (Mauritania), Mr. Bengelloun (Morocco) and Mr. Harriman (Nigeria) took the places reserved for them at the side of the Council chamber.

2. Mr. LAI Ya-li (China) (*interpretation from Chinese*): The Chinese delegation has listened atten-

tively to the statements on the situation in the Israeli occupied territories made by the representatives of Egypt [1966th meeting] and other Arab countries and by the PLO [*ibid.*]. It is clear from the abundance of irrefutable facts they have enumerated that, since the Security Council considered the relevant question last May, the Israeli Zionists, far from showing any restraint, have stepped up their policies of aggression and expansion in the occupied territories, committing a new series of atrocities against the people there. In these circumstances, we consider it entirely necessary for the Egyptian Government to request the convening of the Council meetings for the consideration of this question. The Chinese delegation firmly supports the solemn position of the Arab countries in strong condemnation of the Israeli Zionists' atrocities.

3. Over a long period, Israeli zionism has pursued in the occupied territories a policy aimed at the perpetual occupation of Arab territories. To achieve this aim, it has proceeded feverishly with the so-called zionization of the occupied territories, forcibly confiscated large tracts of Arab land, driven out large numbers of Arab inhabitants and established many Jewish settlements in a deliberate attempt to change the demographic composition of the occupied territories in defiance of the stern condemnation by the world's people and in disregard of the many resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and the Security Council. It has unscrupulously plundered the resources of the territories and carried out devastating exploitations in disregard of the consequences. It openly violated the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem in gross interference in the religious freedom of the Arab inhabitants. It has subjected the Palestinian and other Arab inhabitants in the occupied territories to frantic persecution and barbarous repression, in an attempt to stamp out the flames of the local people's struggle against aggression. The crimes committed by the Israeli Zionists in the occupied territories are too many to be enumerated here.

4. Confronted with ruthless persecution by the Israeli authorities, the Palestinian and other Arab peoples in the occupied territories have never ceased their resistance against the Israeli military occupation. Since the beginning of this year their struggle has undergone a new development in the forms of strikes, shop closings and student boycotts, and so on, to protest the occupation by the Israeli authorities and the atrocities committed by them.

5. In the struggle the people there have put forward the militant slogan: "Get organized to resist Israel!" Last October, in defiance of the bloody repression by the Israeli military and police forces, the Palestinian and other Arab peoples in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip again held mammoth demonstrations to mark the third anniversary of the October War, and the demonstrators shouted slogans against the Israeli occupation and they courageously fought against the Israeli troops and police force. Such a state of affairs has reflected the strong will and heroic mettle of the Palestinian and other Arab peoples in the occupied territories in defying brute force, strengthening their unity and persevering in their struggle.

6. We have always held that the question of the Israeli occupied territories is an inseparable part of the whole Middle East question. In the final analysis, the dire miseries suffered by the people there are caused by the rivalry between the two super-Powers for hegemony in the Middle East. In their prolonged struggle the Palestinian and other Arab peoples have come to realize that, to achieve a fundamental solution of the question of the occupied territories, it is imperative to do away with super-Power interference, regain the national rights of the Palestinian people and secure Israeli withdrawal from all the occupied Arab territories. Otherwise, there can be no talk about the solution of the question of the occupied territories and of the Middle East, still less the realization of genuine peace. At present, the true behaviour of the two super-Powers is being further exposed, that is, their behaviour of carrying out aggression and rivalry for hegemony in the Middle East. In particular, the nature of that super-Power which styles itself as "the natural ally of the Arab world" is being seen through by more and more countries and people, that is, its policy of carrying out aggression and expansion in the name of "friendship" and "assistance". The situation in the Middle East as a whole is developing in a direction favourable to the Palestinian and other Arab peoples and unfavourable to Israeli Zionism and big-Power hegemonism. The road is not smooth, and there will be many more difficulties and twists and turns, but the future of the struggle of the Palestinian and other Arab peoples is infinitely bright.

7. The Chinese Government and people strongly condemn Israeli Zionism for its atrocities in the occupied territories, and we deeply sympathize with the sufferings of the people in those territories. We remain unswerving in giving firm support to the Palestinian and other Arab peoples in their just struggle against Israeli Zionism and big-Power hegemonism and in their just struggle to recover their lost territories and regain their national rights. We firmly hold that the Security Council should uphold justice, sternly condemn the Israeli authorities for their atrocities, and adopt effective measures to stop the Israeli atrocities in the occupied territories, which trample upon the fourth Geneva Convention of 1949¹, and support the struggles of the people in the occupied

territories against Israel's military occupation and brutal domination.

8. The Arab nation is a great nation, and the Palestinian and other Arab peoples are heroic peoples who have been tempered in the flames of prolonged struggles. We are deeply convinced that by continuously strengthening their militant unity, and persevering in protracted struggle, they will certainly be able to frustrate the conspiracies and intrigues of the super-Powers, defeat the Israeli aggressors and finally achieve their national liberation with the support of the people of all countries.

9. Mr. MIRZA (Pakistan): Mr. President, may I, on behalf of the delegation of Pakistan, congratulate you on your assumption of the office of President of the Security Council. We are certain that under your able leadership the Council will acquit itself well in the important tasks before it.

10. On behalf of Mr. Iqbal Akhund, I should also like to take this opportunity to thank you, Mr. President, and the representatives of the United States, Sweden, the Soviet Union, Egypt, Jordan and the United Republic of Tanzania for the kind words addressed to him.

11. Nearly six months ago, the Council considered the situation in the occupied Arab territories and concluded its deliberations expressing grave anxiety over the situation in the territories and the well-being of the population in those areas. In the statement of the President it was also affirmed at that time [1922nd meeting] that the fourth Geneva Convention of 1949¹ was applicable to the occupied territories and that the occupying Power should comply strictly with its provisions. Furthermore, Israel was asked to refrain from and to rescind any measures that violated the provisions of that Convention. The measures taken by Israel to alter the demographic composition or geographical nature of the Arab territories, and in particular the establishment of settlements, were also deplored. That statement of the President expressed the majority opinion. In fact, there was general agreement on most of the text among the Council members, since it was in accordance with the previous resolution of the Security Council itself.

12. The evidence available to us now, based on the reports which have appeared in the international press as well as in the Israeli press itself, and the statements of the representatives of Egypt, Syria, Jordan and the PLO [1966th meeting], amply demonstrate that the situation in the occupied Arab territories has continued to deteriorate and that acts of violence against the Arabs have continued to increase. The protests and uprisings by the Palestinians against the acts of omission and commission of the occupying Power point to the existence of a manifestly unjust situation in those areas.

13. The continued occupation of the Arab territories, which came under Israeli rule as a result of war and bloodshed in 1967, is wrong in itself. This wrong is being further compounded by the fact that the occupying Power is not applying the generally accepted law of occupation: the fourth Geneva Convention. Indeed, the evidence shows that Israel is acting against the basic precepts of the fourth Geneva Convention. The declarations of the Israeli leaders, including Israel's Foreign Minister, Mr. Allon, clearly indicate that Israel plans to annex a considerable portion of the occupied territories in return for a peace settlement and withdrawal from the present demarcation lines. Also, in pursuance of this policy, Jewish settlements are being established in the occupied territories, and Israeli leaders have made it clear that these settlements are there to stay. Further, rules and regulations are being devised and action is being taken to change the demographic, cultural and religious character of the occupied territories through expulsions, evictions and other repressive measures against the Palestinians. Imposition of a curfew, arrests, physical abuse and mass persecution, including that of women and children, are aimed at intimidation and subjugation of the local inhabitants in order to make them comply with Israeli designs and intentions.

14. These actions are against the provisions of the fourth Geneva Convention and contrary to the resolutions of the United Nations, including those of the Security Council, relating to those territories in particular and the Middle East situation in general. Obviously, they also constitute very serious obstacles to the attainment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

15. Another very serious aspect of the situation in the occupied territories relates to the Holy Places. Since the Israeli occupation of Jerusalem and the West Bank in 1967, a large number of acts of desecration and profanation have been committed in the holiest of places and shrines held in utmost reverence by both Christians and Moslems. The burning of Al-Aqsa Mosque in 1969 caused extreme anguish to the Moslems in every part of the world. The violation of its sanctity early this year was also deplored by the international community in general and the Moslem world in particular. Recently, acts of profanation against the Al-Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron have multiplied. The information received from the Islamic Conference,² describes in detail the acts of desecration perpetrated by Israel and the Zionists against one of the holiest mosques of Islam. According to this document, Israeli authorities have encroached on the premises of the Mosque slowly and gradually since the occupation of the West Bank in 1967. In August 1975, the Al-Ibrahimi Mosque was formally divided, and only a very small area, 20 metres by 5 metres, has been made available to the Moslems for prayers. Action has also been taken to effect modifications in the physical aspects of the Mosque. These acts caused resentment and indignation among the local

inhabitants of Hebron, and the situation was further aggravated by other acts, including the desecration by groups of Jews of the Holy Koran inside the Mosque. There can be no doubt that these acts of sacrilege and the Israeli action aimed at changing the institutional structures and established religious practices have created a situation which endangers the peace and security of the area and causes deep anguish to the hundreds of millions of Moslems everywhere.

16. In their history of almost 1,400 years, Moslems of all races and continents have revered and guarded the shrines and places, in the Holy Land and elsewhere, holy in the eyes of both the Jews and the Christians. As the representative of Jordan pointed out in his statement [*ibid.*], these places are regarded as their own sacred heritage by the Moslems. The Al-Ibrahimi Mosque contains the mortal remains of three of the prophets of Islam: Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—peace be upon them. For the last 14 centuries the Moslems have shown the utmost respect for those tombs and have held their sanctity dearer than life itself. Indeed, for centuries caliphs, sultans, saints and millions of Moslem pilgrims have prayed in Jerusalem and at the tombs of the prophets Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in Hebron. Moslems in the four corners of the world, from the Atlantic Ocean to Central Asia, have been praying and continue to pray five times a day, every day, blessing the prophet Abraham and his descendants. Consequently, the desecration of the Al-Ibrahimi Mosque has caused the deepest pain and anguish to Moslems the world over.

17. The Government of Pakistan issued a statement on the incident in Hebron as follows:

“The Government and people of Pakistan have been deeply shocked and outraged at the desecration of the sacred tomb of the prophets in Hebron. The recent incident in Al-Haram Al-Ibrahimi involved the desecration by groups of Jews of a copy of the Holy Koran, destruction of the furniture and beating up of Moslems inside the Mosque. In spite of repeated assurances by the Israeli authorities, incidents of desecration of and insult to the Holy Places have occurred with regularity in the Israeli occupied areas. Irrespective of religious, racial or political affiliations, the insult to the Holy Book of a world religion betrays a state of mind which is out of keeping with universal notions of civilized conduct and minimum standards of human decency.”

18. The basic cause of the turmoil and trouble in the Middle East is the continued occupation of the Arab territories occupied by Israel in 1967. For over 10 years the Israeli occupation of Jerusalem, the West Bank, Gaza, Sinai and the Golan Heights has continued and their populations have suffered under Israeli oppression. If a just and lasting peace is to be achieved in the Middle East, then this occupation

must come to an end. Further, the rights of the Palestinians, including their right to self-determination, nationhood and a State of their own, must be implemented. Security and safety should also be ensured for all the peoples and the States of the region.

19. As regards the issue now under consideration, the Pakistan delegation regards it as essential that the Council should express strongly its grave anxiety and concern over the present serious situation in the occupied Arab territories and call upon Israel to ensure the safety, welfare and security of the inhabitants of those territories. The return of those inhabitants who have fled the areas since the outbreak of hostilities should also be ensured. Israel should be called upon to implement faithfully and scrupulously the fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 and to rescind all measures incompatible with that Convention. In accordance with its previous decision, the Council should also reaffirm that the actions taken by Israel, including the transfer of populations and expropriation of land and property, are invalid, cannot change the status of the Holy City of Jerusalem and should be rescinded.

20. Lastly, and equally important, the Council should declare any acts of profanation of the Holy Places, religious buildings or sites seriously endanger international peace and security, as they injure the feelings and deepest sentiments of the Moslems and Christians all over the world.

21. Mr. DATCU (Romania) (*interpretation from French*): Mr. President, it is a special pleasure for me to greet you as President of the Security Council for this month. Our gratification at seeing you preside over the Council is all the more justified since you represent Panama, a country with which Romania enjoys friendly relations, and since you yourself are an eminent advocate of the progressive traditions of the diplomatic and legal schools of Latin America; those schools have contributed enormously to the development of international law on the basis of justice and equality. In wishing you success in the performance of your important tasks, I can assure you that the support of the Romanian delegation is available to you.

22. I should also like to ask the Pakistani delegation to be good enough to convey my warmest congratulations to Mr. Iqbal A. Akhund for the exemplary way in which he presided over our work during the month of October.

23. For the third time this year we are here to discuss the situation prevailing in the Arab territories occupied after the 1967 war. And if we are called upon to do so, it is precisely because the problem still exists; the problem continues to grow more serious, and thus far nothing has been done to solve it.

24. We have stated in the past, and today we reiterate, that the tragic events that have taken place in the Arab territories placed under Israeli military adminis-

tration prove that so long as there is military occupation and therefore, injustice, the legitimate and natural opposition to the foreign occupation can only increase. Since those territories do not belong to Israel, the situation in the occupied Arab territories is of concern to the entire international community which has the duty and the responsibility to insist on respect for international law with regard to the status of the territories. It is obvious that, so long as Israel does not evacuate the Arab territories it occupied after the 1967 war, it is constrained to respect the provisions of international law set forth in the applicable international conventions.

25. At the same time, it is imperative that the Israeli authorities respect the resolutions of the General Assembly and of the Security Council that have proclaimed the inadmissibility of any modification of the demographic character of Jerusalem and other occupied Arab territories. My country disapproves of acts and measures to change the status of the occupied territories, such as the establishment of Israeli settlements, since that is contrary to the terms of international law. We also feel that the Israeli authorities must put an end to all forms of persecution of the Palestinian population.

26. We take part in this debate once again to set forth our views on a problem which is of the greatest concern to the people and Government of Romania. In fact, my country considers that the continuation of the tension in the Middle East is a constant threat to peace, not only in the region itself, but all over the world. It is for this reason that Romania, which is located very near the zone of conflict, is, together with many other States, extremely eager to arrive as soon as possible at the establishment of a stable and lasting peace in the Middle East.

27. The resumption of the Geneva peace talks, with the participation of the countries concerned and other States which might contribute to a just and lasting settlement of the problem, might be a very valuable initiative towards this end. So far, resumption of multilateral peace negotiations has been delayed by the refusal to accept the Palestinian people as a party to the negotiations and by a challenge of that people's right to be represented by the PLO. But that state of affairs is only a reflection of the refusal to accept the principle of the inadmissibility of occupation of territory by force and the consequent obligation to withdraw from any territories so occupied.

28. It is axiomatic that a stable and just peace in the Middle East cannot be achieved without settling the problem of the Palestinian people. That presupposes the withdrawal from the territories occupied in 1967. But it seems to me very difficult to imagine the fate of the Palestinian people being decided without the participation of its legitimate representative, namely, the PLO. Therefore, it is imperative that the Palestinian Arab people, through the PLO, should participate in

all the peace-making efforts on the Middle East, including the Geneva Conference.

29. A just and lasting peace cannot be conceived of without adequate guarantees being given with respect to the independence and territorial integrity of all the States involved in the conflict in the Middle East. We are convinced that the problem of the Middle East can and should be settled by peaceful means involving negotiations and the political methods provided for in the Charter of the United Nations.

30. We also believe that the United Nations, and in particular the Security Council and the Secretary-General of the United Nations, must play an even more important role in the solution of the conflict and for that purpose they must be more directly associated with all the initiatives aimed at solving the problem, including, above all, the convening and the work of the Geneva Conference. We feel that the efforts of the Security Council and the parties directly concerned that must resolutely grapple with the substantive issues in the future should be in those directions in order to reach a negotiated overall settlement of the conflict in the Middle East.

31. We are aware of the fact that a comprehensive settlement of the matter we are now discussing cannot be achieved unless there is an overall political solution of all the problems which are at the heart of the conflict in that region. We have supported for many years, and we are prepared to continue to support, all recommendations concerning the situation in the occupied Arab territories that will maintain or enhance the possibility of an overall political settlement of the Middle East question.

32. Mr. JACKSON (Guyana): Mr. President, it is fitting that a distinguished son of Panama should be presiding this month over the meetings of the Security Council, for it was 150 years ago in your country that the ideals of international co-operation and understanding, ideals that have come to form the very basis of the Organization, were demonstrated at the Amphictyonic Congress of Panama. It is a notable tribute to the vision of that Congress that we are gathered here a century and a half later in an Organization comprising so many nations and dedicated to the promotion of the noble ideals so eloquently defended by the great liberator Simón Bolívar at the Congress of Panama.

33. Like so many countries in the new world, your country has been the meeting place of a diversity of peoples and a diversity of nations. My country thus feels a special bond with Panama that goes beyond the mere geographical factor of our location in the same hemisphere. We are honoured to see you, a man of such wide experience and proved diplomatic acumen, presiding over the Council for this month. We pledge the continuation of the close and fruitful co-operation that we have enjoyed as members of the

Council, as members of the Latin American group and as members of the non-aligned movement.

34. I should like also to congratulate your predecessor, Mr. Akhund of Pakistan, who conducted our debates during October with the skill and wisdom that we have come to associate with his qualities as a diplomat. We thank him most sincerely.

35. Six months ago when the Council discussed the situation in the occupied territories, a majority of the Council members expressed, through a statement made by its President [*see 1922nd meeting*], their anxiety over the events occurring in the occupied areas and their concern about the welfare of the population of those territories. Council members also deplored measures taken by Israel to alter the demographic composition or geographical nature of the occupied territories and warned that such measures were an obstacle to peace. In addition, the Council decided to keep a continuing close watch over the situation.

36. To my delegation's regret, the intervening period has shown no improvement in the situation prevailing in the occupied territories. Tension in the area remains. Incidents, particularly those concerning sensitive religious issues, have occurred. Recent events have only served to underline what has been reiterated time and again, that so long as the occupation continues, so long will the international community be faced with a potentially explosive situation which poses a threat to international peace and security.

37. It is thus correct that the Council should meet to discuss this situation which gives ominous indications of its potential for generalized conflict. For it is the Council's responsibility under the Charter to seek to take speedy and effective action to deal with threats to international peace and security. The Council cannot by inaction acquiesce in the continuance of a *status quo* that represents the triumph of aggression and the consolidation of rule by force of arms. The Council cannot succumb to a strategy that seeks, with the passage of time, to convert a *fait accompli* into unquestioning acceptance of and indefinite resignation to acts of injustice. The Council cannot accept a rationale that would let the aggressor define what constitutes a threat to global peace and security in the Middle East. We must be vigilant and ever on our guard against any subtle or open attempt to distract us from our responsibility to the oppressed people of the occupied territories in the Middle East.

38. In considering the situation, the Council has returned once more to the substance of the Middle East tragedy. I feel constrained to make what should be to all an obvious point, because of late, the substantive issues of the Middle East problem have been clouded, sometimes unwittingly and sometimes by design, by an excessive and often tendentious exploitation of those tragic events that have caused so much pain to all those who so desperately long for

the restoration of justice in the Middle East. Do we need to be reminded that the present situation stems from an act of dispossession of an entire nation, an injustice of such magnitude that now, nearly three decades later, the world community is still grappling with its far-reaching consequences?

39. The occupation by Israel of Arab land is but one of the substantive aspects of the Middle East conflict. Another is the Palestinian question. The third is the right of all States in the area to live within secure and recognized boundaries. It is almost universally recognized that any long-term settlement of the Middle East problem must take account of these three fundamental aspects. The General Assembly has in recent years adopted a number of resolutions which have complemented resolutions adopted by the Security Council on the Middle East question. The net effect of United Nations action has led to the elaboration of a formula that can serve as the indispensable groundwork for future negotiations on a final Middle East peace settlement. The formula is balanced and just. It is well known to the international community. It caters to the interests of all the parties concerned—the Palestinians, the Israelis and the other interested parties. I feel that, if the Security Council can in unity actively support the implementation of these equitable principles, an impetus will be given to a response to the understandable demands for an urgent overall settlement of the Middle East conflict. Let us not shy away from the challenge. It is trite but nevertheless true to say that, in the Middle East, time is not on the side of peace. My delegation trusts that the action we shall take today will make a contribution in this regard.

40. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of Guyana for the very significant words he addressed to me and my country. As a Latin American brother and one whose country is part of the third world, he can be sure that his words have special meaning for us.

41. There are no further names on the list of speakers at this stage. As a result of consultations over which I presided with all members of the Council, I am authorized as President to make the following statement on behalf of the Council.

“Following the request submitted by Egypt on 20 October 1976, the Security Council held four meetings between 1 November and 11 November to consider the situation in the occupied Arab territories with the participation of the representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization. After consulting all the members, the President of the Council states that the Council has agreed:

“1. To express its grave anxiety and concern over the present serious situation in the occupied Arab territories as a result of continued Israeli occupation.

“2. To reaffirm its call upon the Government of Israel to ensure the safety, welfare and security of the inhabitants of the territories and to facilitate the return of those inhabitants who have fled the areas since the outbreak of hostilities.

“3. To reaffirm that the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War¹ is applicable to the Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967. Therefore, the occupying Power is called upon once again to comply strictly with the provisions of that Convention and to refrain from any measure that violates them. In this regard, the measures taken by Israel in the occupied Arab territories which alter their demographic composition or geographical character, and in particular the establishment of settlements, are strongly deplored. Such measures, which have no legal validity and cannot prejudge the outcome of the efforts to achieve peace, constitute an obstacle to peace.

“4. To consider once more that all legislative and administrative measures and actions taken by Israel, including expropriation of land and properties thereon and the transfer of populations, which tend to change the legal status of Jerusalem, are invalid and cannot change that status, and urgently to call upon Israel once more to rescind all such measures already taken and to desist forthwith from taking any further action which tends to change the status of Jerusalem. In this connexion, the Council deplores the failure of Israel to show any regard for Security Council resolutions 237 (1967) of 14 June 1967, 252 (1968) of 21 May 1968 and 298 (1971) of 25 September 1971 and General Assembly resolutions 2253 (ES-V) and 2254 (ES-V) of 4 and 14 July 1967.

“5. To recognize that any act of profanation of the Holy Places, religious buildings and sites or any encouragement of, or connivance at, any such act may seriously endanger international peace and security.

“The Council decides to keep the situation under constant attention with a view to meeting again should circumstances require.”

42. Mr. SHERER (United States of America): Mr. President, the United States has joined the other members of the Security Council in the consensus statement which you have read out because we believe that statement affirms several important principles in regard to the occupied territories. First is the principle that the fourth Geneva Convention¹ applies to the present situation in the occupied territories. Under that Convention and under international law the occupying Power has rights as well as responsibilities. Secondly, we have supported and we continue to support the principle that persons displaced in the 1967 war should be permitted to return to their places of habita-

tion at the time of that war. Finally, we welcome the concern in that statement for the sanctity of the Holy Places, which we consider to be a particularly sensitive and important matter.

43. While my Government has associated itself with the results of this debate, I must in candour observe that the criticism of Israel which dominated these proceedings has been largely one-sided and excessive. This was particularly true as regards the question of access to the holy sites, specifically the burial site of the patriarch Abraham.

44. We agree with the other members of the Council that the fourth Geneva Convention¹, specifically article 27, provides the standard for measuring Israeli conduct in this matter. We are also fully aware that in recent weeks there have occurred deplorable acts of desecration and violence in and around that site, which is holy to Moslems, Jews and Christians alike. However, it is only fair and proper to point out that the Israeli Government has condemned and opposed those activities and has most recently brought charges in a military court against a rather prominent Israeli citizen for his role in them. The question of access to and worship within this site is a particularly complex and difficult matter, but we believe that the occupying authorities have acted in good faith to protect and preserve the religious rights set forth in the fourth Geneva Convention.

45. The Council's statement of consensus speaks of the danger to peace of any act of profanation of the Holy Places. This we take to mean any act by the population, the local authorities or the occupying Power.

46. In closing, I should like to observe that in this debate we have been dealing with the symptoms of the problem rather than with the problem itself. The conditions we have been discussing will be satisfactorily resolved only in the context of the negotiation of a just and lasting peace in accordance with Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), with respect to which we stand by all our previous positions.

47. There is good reason to hope that conditions in the Middle East have improved to the point that renewed efforts towards such a settlement will be possible. The recent meetings of Arab leaders at Riyadh and Cairo promise to contribute to an end to the fighting in Lebanon and to the preservation of its independence, territorial integrity and national unity, to which we attach the highest importance. More broadly, the statesmanship displayed by the Governments principally involved promises to establish the constructive atmosphere and the conditions necessary if there is to be progress towards resolving the problems which continue to beset the Middle East.

48. Mr. ABE (Japan): I should like, first of all, to express to you, Mr. President, the heartfelt congratulations of my delegation on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of November. We are confident that with your great competence and diplomatic skill you will guide our deliberations successfully.

49. I take this opportunity also to express our deep appreciation to Mr. Akhund of Pakistan for the great distinction with which he presided over the work of the Council during the month of October.

50. The Japanese delegation agrees with the statement which you have just made, Mr. President, in concluding our debate on the present item. I feel that the Council can be proud of the manner in which it has concluded the debate. Being fully aware of the difficult nature of the problem and, at the same time, mindful of the need for the Council to keep its unity and weight, the members of the Council have made all possible efforts to reach agreement on the conclusion by consensus. My delegation wishes to express its gratitude and admiration to you, Mr. President for the impeccable leadership you have demonstrated in this matter.

51. The Council discussed the situation in the occupied Arab territories last May, and once again this issue has been brought before it. My delegation listened with close attention to the statements, particularly those made by the parties directly concerned. We recognize the legitimate concern and anxiety felt by the Governments of Egypt and other Arab States over the situation in the occupied Arab territories. It is obvious that the situation has not improved and that the population in the occupied areas continues to be restless as a result of the prolonged occupation of the areas.

52. It may be recalled that the debate on this question last May was concluded by the statement of the President [*ibid.*], which expressed the views of the majority of the Council's members on the following three points: first, the necessity to pay particular attention to the well-being of the population in the occupied areas; secondly, the observance by Israel of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War;¹ and thirdly, disapproval of the measures taken by Israel in the occupied Arab territories to alter the demographic composition or geographic nature, and, in particular, the establishment of settlements.

53. While there has been no clear indication from Israel as to whether it is heeding the conclusion of the Council, the uneasy situation in the occupied areas has continued. Demonstrations, riots or disturbances have taken place with such frequency that the situation needed to be re-examined this time.

54. When the Council considered this question last May [*ibid.*], my delegation stated that the Government

of Israel should realize that the situation would not have worsened as it had if Israel had complied with the provisions of the fourth Geneva Convention, and we urged Israel, which is a party to the Convention, to comply strictly with it. Today we reiterate our strong appeal to the Government of Israel to consider strict observance of the provisions of that Convention.

55. Further, my delegation wishes to emphasize once again, as we did during the previous debate, that the settlement policy of the Israeli Government in the occupied areas constitutes an additional factor in aggravating the fear and hostility of the Arab population, and threatens to produce an explosion in the very tense situation already existing in those areas. Indeed, the continued establishment of Israeli settlements in the occupied areas has aroused increased apprehension among the Arab population, and among the Arab parties directly involved, that the occupation will be prolonged by the use of *faits accomplis*, and indeed will last indefinitely. My delegation therefore once again urges the Government of Israel to end immediately its settlement policy, which constitutes a formidable obstacle to a peaceful solution of the problem of the Middle East.

56. As for the status of the City of Jerusalem, my delegation strongly believes that the Government of Israel should pay the fullest respect to the special character of the City and should not take any legislative or administrative measures which might change the legal status of Jerusalem.

57. Clearly, the principal cause of those troubles in the area is the continuing occupation. It is also obvious that the problem of the withdrawal of Israel from the occupied territories will not be solved in isolation, but within the framework of an overall settlement. The position of Japan on this problem has been stated many times, and I do not intend to repeat it in detail now. In summary, I would say that my Government believes that a just and lasting peace in the Middle East will be achieved through the prompt and complete implementation of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), as well as through the recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. As steps to that end, my Government hopes that the present standstill in the negotiation process for achieving a peaceful solution will be overcome, so that the momentum in the search for a peaceful overall settlement will not be lost. We continue to believe that such a just and lasting settlement will be obtained.

58. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Spanish*): The next speaker is the representative of Egypt. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

59. Mr. ABDEL MEGUID (Egypt): I should like first to express my Government's thanks to you,

Mr. President, and to the members of the Council for agreeing to Egypt's request that the Council be convened to discuss the explosive and deteriorating situation in the occupied Arab territories. That is, in our opinion, a clear indication of the Council's preoccupation with all issues that affect peace and security in the world. It is also a clear manifestation to the people of the occupied territories—in fact, to all oppressed peoples—that they are not alone in their struggle. The Council clearly emphasized to Israel that its oppressive policies and measures could not be condoned or allowed to go on unhindered.

60. Mr. President, from the beginning of the debate, under your wise leadership, my delegation was sure that the Council would rise to its responsibilities. The unanimous consensus statement you have just read out on behalf of the Council is indicative and constitutes an important sign of those responsibilities. It is a clear and direct warning to Israel that it cannot go on unhindered in its barbaric policies in the occupied Arab territories. The Council has made it very clear to Israel that the whole range of its policies is strongly deplored and can in no way be condoned. Its refusal to apply the fourth Geneva Convention, its refusal to ensure the safety, welfare and security of the inhabitants of those territories, its refusal to allow those inhabitants who fled to return to their homes, its refusal to abide by previous Council resolutions, especially those concerning the measures it introduced in the occupied Arab territories, which altered their demographic composition or geographical nature, and in particular the establishment of settlements—all these refusals were strongly deplored by the Council, and the Council correctly warned Israel that such measures as Israel has adopted have no legal validity and constitute an obstacle to peace.

61. More important is the fact that the Council is very clear on an essential point: that the present serious situation in the occupied Arab territories is a result of continued Israeli occupation. This occupation, which should come to an end, and Israel's continuing refusal to abide by United Nations resolutions and withdraw from the occupied Arab territories will only lead to further deterioration in the situation. I hope that Israel will consider wisely this very clear warning from the Council and the consequences of ignoring it.

62. The Council has also shown its determination concerning the Holy Places in the occupied territories by again calling on Israel to rescind all measures—and I repeat, "to rescind all measures"—it has undertaken to change the legal status of Jerusalem and forthwith to desist from taking any further action which would tend to change that status. In this connexion, the Council correctly considers that those Israeli measures are invalid.

63. I take this opportunity once again to express in the clearest terms Egypt's determination not to

accept in any way and under any circumstances the policies Israel is pursuing in the occupied territories in trying to establish a *fait accompli*. The systematic policy of Israel in establishing settlements and plundering our natural resources, such as oil, should be severely condemned and discontinued at once. If Israel persists in this dangerous policy it must alone bear the grave consequences of such a policy for the prospects of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

64. At the same time I should like to assure the Council that, as we are determined to liberate our land and to fulfil the Palestinians' rights, so we are determined to work for a just and lasting peace in the area.

65. Allow me also to thank the Council for its decision to keep the situation under constant attention with a view to meeting again should circumstances require.

66. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Spanish*): I call upon the representative of Israel.

67. Mr. HERZOG (Israel): I could take hours and go into detail in refuting the baseless allegations made against us at this meeting. But what is the purpose? The members' minds are made up and they would rather not be confused with facts.

68. I could devote a long speech to refuting the remarks made by those who went before me, but there is no purpose. Each argument is more ludicrous than the other. We have heard remarks here about aggression from countries who would have been better advised to remain silent.

69. History is already being rewritten in true Orwellian fashion. A great new discovery has been made by some of the representatives—namely, that Israel was the culprit in Lebanon. Apparently, it was Israeli troops who stormed into Tel Zaatar and massacred Palestinian women and children, not the Syrian so-called peace-keeping force—heaven forbid. It was the Israeli troops who caused the deaths and wounding of 150,000 men, women and children in the Lebanon, not the Syrians or the PLO.

70. By the same logic I suppose the Jordanian representative will maintain that it was Israeli tanks that crossed the Jordanian border from Syria in September 1970 and stabbed Jordan in the back and that it was the Israeli forces which fought in the streets of Amman in 1970 in an endeavour to overthrow King Hussein. Apparently, it is quite unimportant what the representative of Lebanon states to the General Assembly about events in Lebanon. That is, apparently, entirely irrelevant.

71. The facts are also irrelevant to the representative of the Soviet Union, who, with his customary

logic, saw fit to blame Israel for what is happening in Lebanon. I can understand and appreciate the measure of his obsessive interest in what is happening in Lebanon. After all, all the weapons used on both sides of the conflict there are Soviet-produced and Soviet-supplied, which, of course, according to the peculiar logic obtaining here, makes it only too natural to blame Israel. Why not? After all, it fits into a natural and historic pattern.

72. But why continue? What purpose is there in discussing this matter? The statement you, Mr. President, have made on behalf of the Council is unfortunately most illustrative of the biased selectivity, one-sidedness and political expediency which motivates statements or resolutions in this body.

73. Just think of it: in an incident which occurred in Hebron, in an ancient Jewish holy site cited as such in the Bible, an Arab mob defiled and desecrated the Holy Scrolls of the Law, which the Jewish people hold in more reverence and sanctity than anything else in the world. Those Scrolls contain the principles of the brotherhood of man and the social and moral values which are supposed to have inspired this Organization.

74. Following those events, the Moslem leaders in the West Bank and in Israel publicly apologized for the acts of desecration, maintaining that by the defiling of the Holy Scrolls of the Law part of the Moslem heritage was being defiled. The Arab leadership and the Arab press condemned that act of desecration. What then happens here? There is a statement, accepted by consensus, which condemns, of all countries, Israel. But not one word has been uttered by you, Mr. President, on behalf of the representatives here, to deplore or condemn this insult, this act of violation and religious desecration, this slur on the Jewish people and the Jewish faith. I protest against this despicable behaviour on the part of the Security Council on behalf of Jewish people, wherever they may be, and deeply regret the lack of moral courage on the part of the members which it reflects. The Council has not even had the good grace to do what the Moslem leaders in Hebron, in the West Bank and elsewhere did publicly. In so doing, the Council has in consensus displayed the most blatant disregard for the sensitivities of a small but great people which has given so much to the world, and for a religion which has given so much to the moral values of the world. There has been not one word of regret; not one word deploring what occurred; not one word—because the Arab representatives will not agree and, if they do not agree, who is to gainsay them?

75. We have, this week, in this building, been involved in five major attacks on Israel, a small country of 3 million people—five attacks, almost simultaneously. On Monday of next week a further debate begins. In the meantime, a number of other discussions will also take place. We are reaching a

situation such as that last year, when 50 per cent of the time of the General Assembly was being used in barren diatribe castigating Israel.

76. There surely must be a limit to this modern international expression of anti-semitism. There are other evils, after all, in this world. A major portion of our time is devoted to a recurrent and incessant outpouring of hate and vilification, of vituperation and slander, which dulls the wits, impresses nobody, and has no effect on anyone. Is this the purpose for which the world body was established? Have all the problems which face each and every one of you been solved? Are the hundreds of millions of hungry, ill-fed masses of the world being cared for? Have the freedoms which have been trampled upon and the wrongs which have been inflicted upon countless millions daily in this world been righted, that you can devote so much time to listening to this incredible barrage of rancour and malice? Is the purpose for which the United Nations was established to issue statements and resolutions which encourage extremism and discourage negotiation and reason? Has not this paranoid obsession with Israel gone beyond the bounds of logic and ordinary common sense? Do you really believe that this is the manner in which we are going to achieve peace in the Middle East?

77. What is so disturbing about this whole situation is that I am given to understand that, during the unofficial consultations which took place among members of the Security Council, an attempt to allude to Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) in your statement, Mr. President, was dismissed by the majority and the reference removed. In other words, the whole concept of negotiating for peace on the basis of mutual recognition and respect, free from threats or acts of war, is gradually becoming taboo, as indeed has become the word "peace". What a terrifying commentary on the Council.

78. Mr. President, I regret that your statement is not acceptable as far as we are concerned, ignoring as it does the basic problems facing us, ignoring as it does Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), and containing by implication, as I pointed out before, a very serious insult to the Jewish people, completely ignoring as it does an act of desecration which should have aroused the reaction of those who believe in the principles which were incorporated in that part of the Bible that was destroyed.

79. The statement is unacceptable because it ignores the root of the problem—namely, the fact that the Arab States are unwilling to sit down and negotiate face to face with Israel. They are unable to do so because they do not recognize Israel's right to exist. They can engage in their usual hypocrisy and semantic antics, but until they sit down and negotiate with us on a basis of respect for peace—and I mean peace—there will be no advance towards accommodation and peace.

80. Let me make it quite clear: no amount of threats, no amount of brow-beating, no amount of biased and one-sided resolutions, no amount of anti-semitic innuendos such as we hear from time to time in this building, will change our basic attitude or influence us in any way. On the contrary, that can only strengthen our resolve to resist those attempts to impose solutions. The solution must be arrived at in direct negotiations between the States parties to the conflict on the basis of mutual respect and recognition. Discussions such as we have had here and in other parts of the United Nations, and to which we shall be subjected in the coming weeks and months, have only one purpose and one effect—namely, to put off negotiations for peace. It is a tragic commentary on the state of world morality that this is exactly what the Council is engaged in doing.

81. Mr. President, I regret to say that your consensus statement only widens the gap in our war-torn area. Is it not time that the Council did something to close the gap, to bring the parties closer, to move towards peace?

82. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Spanish*): The representative of Jordan has asked to be allowed to exercise his right of reply. I therefore invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

83. Mr. NUSEIBEH (Jordan): The discussion in the Council of Israeli practices in the occupied Arab territories has focused attention upon one of the most crucial issues affecting the prospects for a just and equitable peace in the Middle East. This oft-repeated but in practice, largely ignored objective, is now delicately poised at a dangerous crossroads and may sooner rather than later reach an irrevocable point of no return, to no one's advantage.

84. If rationally assessed in an appropriate time perspective, the peripheral and transient practices and occurrences which we have discussed in the course of the debate, important and agonizing though they be, are not the crux of the complaint made by the representative of Egypt, in which several other countries have participated. The real crux and challenge confronting the Council is to its ability to act promptly and decisively to counteract measures which are currently being carried out by the Israeli occupation authorities and which have been persistently carried out during a decade of occupation, and the inevitable results of which will be to negate, if not obliterate, the prospects for a just peace in the Middle East.

85. Let there be no ambiguity about it: the Arabs, including the Palestinians, are here at the United Nations in a genuine effort to seek and pursue prospects for a just and equitable peace. If this were not their resolve there would be no point in their coming before the Council and other organs of the United Nations to argue for it. Resolutions apart, we and our

people in the occupied territories would like to know whether they are the object of occupation—this is the question which I posed in my first statement before the Council [1966th meeting], and if so, there are governing rules that must be respected, namely, the fourth Geneva Convention—or the object of annexation, just fading away, perhaps, to their ultimate perdition? While seeking and probing the prospects of a just solution and pending such a solution, we are understandably, I hope, requesting the Security Council to order “a stay of execution” in order to preserve intact the occupied territories and their people before it is too late.

86. My delegation has not been unduly perturbed that the debate has not been concluded with a formal resolution, although we were certainly gratified by the consensus which deplored the practices of the Israeli authorities; because resolutions have not been wanting in the past, but they were, unfortunately, conspicuous by non-compliance, notwithstanding their inherent worth and the staunch dedication to the Charter and to justice—and the statesmanship of all the delegations which adopted them.

87. The statement made earlier on behalf of the Security Council by you, Mr. President, was a categorical record of the Security Council's views on Israeli practices in the occupied Arab territories. It is the earnest hope of my delegation that it will not be long before those definitive views are translated into speedy action.

88. I wish, in conclusion, to express my profound appreciation to you, Mr. President, for the efforts which you so untiringly and ably made and to the members of the Council, whose profound grasp of the situation was clearly reflected in your statement.

89. I do not want to digress, but I should like to assure the representative of Israel that when we talk about the desecration of the holy Al-Ibrahimi Mosque we do not make any distinction as to whether the desecration occurred to Moslem shrines or to Jewish shrines. As I said in one of my earlier statements, we consider that Islam has its foundations in Judaism and in Christianity, and that one who desecrated a holy shrine, whether it was Jewish, Moslem or Christian, would become a non-Moslem. I think I made that clear, and I am surprised that the representative of Israel does not seem to have listened to what I said on that subject.

90. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Spanish*): I call upon the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics who wishes to speak in exercise of his right of reply.

91. Mr. OVINNIKOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (*interpretation from Russian*): The representative of Israel, Mr. Herzog, was either surprised or annoyed by the fact that the Soviet Union is showing interest in the situation in the Middle East. This interest is completely legitimate. In the first place, that region is very close to the borders of the Soviet Union. Secondly, in that region the elementary principles and norms of international law and the many resolutions of the United Nations, including those of the Security Council, are being trampled underfoot by Israel, and the Soviet Union is entitled to express its opinion here.

92. The object of the interests of the Soviet Union in the Middle East is simple and understandable; it is to achieve a just and stable peace in the Middle East, a peace that would be in the interest of the Arab countries and peoples, in the interest of the Arab people of Palestine and in the interest of Israel also.

93. The policy of the leaders of Israel is very short-sighted indeed. The Israeli leaders, encouraged by the fact that at the present time they are pushing their way through the occupied Arab territories, do not see the terrible alternative facing them, because they are short-sighted. These are the choices: either Israel withdraws its troops from the Arab territories occupied in 1967 and receives in exchange an international guarantee, or Israel will be forced to set free those territories without any guarantees. The responsibility, if the second alternative is adopted, will be borne by the leaders of Israel.

94. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Spanish*): The Security Council has now concluded its consideration of the item on the situation in the occupied Arab territories.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.

Notes

¹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, No. 973, p. 287.

² *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-first Session*, agenda item 55, document A/31/235, annex II.

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