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1933rd MEETING

Held in New York, on Thursday, 24 June 1976, at 10.30 a.m.

President: Mr. Rashleigh E. JACKSON (Guyana).

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, United States of America.

Provisional agenda (S/Agenda/1933)

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. The question of the exercise by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights:
Report of the Committee established under General Assembly resolution 3376 (XXX) (S/12090)

The meeting was called to order at 11.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The question of the exercise by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights:

Report of the Committee established under General Assembly resolution 3376 (XXX) (S/12090)¹

1. The PRESIDENT: In accordance with the decisions taken at the 1924th and 1928th meetings, I shall now invite the Chairman and the other members of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, the representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization and the representatives of Cuba, Egypt, the German Democratic Republic, Hungary, India, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, the Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates and Yugoslavia to participate in the discussion without the right to vote.

At the invitation of the President, the delegation of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and Mr. Terzi, (Palestine Liberation Organization) took places at the Council table; M. Alarcón (Cuba), Mr. Abdel Meguid (Egypt), Mr. Florin (German Democratic Republic), Mr. Hollai (Hungary), Mr. Jaipal (India), Mr. Sharaf (Jordan), Mr. Baroody (Saudi Arabia), Mr. Allaf (Syrian Arab Republic), Mr. Türkmen (Turkey), Mr. Humaidan (United Arab Emirates) and Mr. Petrić

(Yugoslavia) took the places reserved for them at the side of the Council chamber.

2. The PRESIDENT: I should like to inform the members of the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Afghanistan, Bahrain, Democratic Yemen and the Lao People's Democratic Republic, containing requests to be invited to participate without the right to vote in the Council's current discussion, in accordance with the provisions of Article 31 of the Charter and rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure. In accordance with the usual practice, I therefore propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion without the right to vote.

3. In view of the limited number of seats available at the Council table, I invite those representatives to take the places reserved for them at the side of the Council chamber on the understanding that they will be invited to take a place at the Council table when it is their turn to speak.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Siddiq (Afghanistan), Mr. Al-Saffar (Bahrain), Mr. Ashtal (Democratic Yemen) and Mr. Boulom (Lao People's Democratic Republic) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council chamber.

4. The PRESIDENT: The first speaker is the representative of Jordan. Accordingly, I now invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

5. Mr. SHARAF (Jordan): Mr. President, it is a source of deep satisfaction to my delegation that the present discussion of the Palestinian question is held under your leadership. Your country, Guyana, has emerged as an active and dedicated participant in the struggle of the large majority of nations for a new world political and economic order based on more equity and justice. It has struggled internally and on the international level for the cause of freedom, independence and equality. Mr. President, you have personally reflected the spirit and qualities of your country. Your eventful presidency has shown how the President, with a combination of vigour, tact and firmness, can steer the work of the Council in a positive and purposeful direction.

6. On the many occasions during the last two decades on which the Security Council has discussed

Palestinian rights, it has been a partial discussion dealing with Palestinian rights by implication or as a subsidiary topic. This time it is not so. The Council is, for the first time in many years, discussing the Palestine question. It is not discussing the 1967 war and the resulting occupation. It is not discussing the violations of the human rights of the people under occupation. It is discussing the root of the conflict in the Middle East, focusing on the starting point and on the essence of the problem.

7. The task of the Council is at once very simple and very complex. That is so because this is the nature of the Palestine question; it is at once very simple and very complex. It is simple because Palestinian rights are clear and distinct and Palestinian claims just and achievable. It is complex because of the circumstances surrounding those rights and the layers of suppression and misunderstanding imposed on them over the years.

8. The task of the Security Council is likewise simple because this task is defined and the direction is clear. The Council is considering the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, which contains simple and concrete proposals. The mandate of the Committee, as defined in General Assembly resolution 3376 (XXX) is:

“to consider and recommend to the General Assembly a programme of implementation, designed to enable the Palestinian people to exercise the rights recognized in paragraphs 1 and 2 of Assembly resolution 3236 (XXIX).”

9. Resolution 3236 (XXIX) defined these inalienable rights of the Palestinian people as: first, self-determination; secondly, national independence and sovereignty; and thirdly, the right to return to the homes and property from which the Palestinians had been displaced and uprooted. The Committee carried out its mandate and drew up its plan for the implementation of these rights in the light of the realities in the area and its view of the requirements of natural justice. The plan is now before the Council.

10. Yet the task of the Security Council is hard and complex because of the objective circumstances in the region and the world. For the Palestinian people are prevented from exercising their inalienable rights by a stubborn force which stands violently against these rights and has strong and extended roots in some of the most powerful nations of the world, through which it derives strength and continuous capability for intransigence.

11. No reasonable individual or nation can argue against Palestinian rights or justify the gross injustice which was inflicted upon the people. How can anyone deny the justice of the claim for redress by a people that had lived peacefully and prosperously in its

ancestral homeland only to find itself expelled overnight from that homeland, massively and through violence, by a violent and superior force of invaders? How can anyone fail to understand and support the legitimate claim of that people for repatriation to its homeland, for the reacquisition of its property and for national restoration in its own homeland? This is elementary justice. It is also the logic of an ultimately inevitable corrective process of history.

12. Yet the successful achievement of justice for the Palestinian people has been a most elusive goal during the last three decades. Year after year passed as hundreds of thousands of Palestinians continued to subsist in exile outside their homeland, struggling to survive and to continue to maintain faith and hope, while Israel stood arrogantly and defiantly on the Palestinian land, suppressing under its occupation many other Palestinians, deaf to their rights and their claims, poised for another violent thrust against its neighbours.

13. The case is simple but the road to a just conclusion has been agonizing and tortuous. So too is the present task of the Council likely to be. The Council has the facts before it. It has the report of the Committee in its hands. The moral considerations and political imperatives are clear. The framework of a just settlement for the Palestinian question and the Middle East problem does not raise any intellectual difficulty. But the Council has to come to grips with the practical requirements of a successful implementation of such a settlement, of which the primary requirement is collective will and readiness to act rather than escape of postpone.

14. My country's relationship with the Palestinian question has always been at the centre of the events in the Middle East and has been widely regarded as crucial to future developments. We in Jordan have always felt a special relationship with the people of Palestine and believed in their just cause. The imperatives of history and of geography have dictated this relationship and attitude. While the Arab peoples of the Middle East are as ancient as their civilization, their modern States are the products of the developments which took place during the earlier part of this century. Like their closer neighbours, the Jordanian people acquired their modern State in the early 1920s. This year Jordan celebrated the fifty-fifth anniversary of the establishment of the Jordanian State. While the Arab peoples of Jordan, Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, and the Arabian Peninsula were acquiring their independence and freedom, the Palestinian people were facing a reversed historical process in the 1920s, the 1930s and the 1940s. Colonialism was receding in the Arab world, particularly in the east, but in Palestine the settled and prosperous Arab people were confronted by a peculiar and unique situation, where invading forces were moving decisively not only to colonize them but to expel them violently from their homeland. As the Palestinian people were struggling against this

overwhelming invading force, the Jordanian people and the rest of the Arabs stood by them in feeling and emotion and in every other way which expressed solidarity. But colonialism in the 1930s and 1940s had not yet been reduced to its present state of relative impotence, and its resources were ample and superior. So the Zionist programme of colonizing Palestine and displacing its people, backed as that programme was by the enormous resources at the Zionists' disposal, succeeded, despite the resistance of the Palestinian people and the support of an agonized and not yet free Arab world. The massive Palestinian exodus took place in 1947 and 1948 and the first phase of the Zionist programme was achieved.

15. When the climax of the 1948 tragedy came, the Kingdom of Jordan joined the Arab countries that hastened to assist the Palestinian people in defending itself against the attempt to uproot it from its land by force. The Arab efforts were not successful, however, in rescuing the Palestinians and preventing their displacement. As the armistice was imposed by the United Nations, Jordan continued to feel a national duty to strive to protect the remainder of Palestine in the West Bank and Jerusalem from occupation and from the Israeli attempts to empty it of its inhabitants. The fear of danger and the unity of hopes and brotherhood culminated in a consensus between the Jordanian leadership and the leaders in the West Bank on establishing a political and constitutional unity, which was achieved in 1950 by constitutional means and through general elections. The unity was established without prejudice to the final goals of the Palestinian people and was based on Jordan's commitment to self-determination for the Palestinian people when circumstances permitted or whenever possible. The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan remained committed to that principle for over a quarter of a century. While tying its national life and policies to the Palestinian hopes and interests, it remained keenly aware of the fact that the Palestinian identity was an established historic reality that should not be obscured or denied.

16. When Israel unleashed its premeditated attack on its Arab neighbours in June 1967, Jordan, together with Syria and Egypt, had to absorb the major burden of the physical, human, emotional and political shock of that aggression and its aftermath. We struggled for many years to contain the expansion, rebuild our societies and economies and obtain an Israeli withdrawal. Jordan struggled with vigour and resilience to achieve these goals while maintaining its basic commitment to Palestinian rights. It was in that spirit and in solidarity with the rest of the Arab world that, as circumstances evolved, Jordan concurred with the unanimous decision of the Arab Summit Conference of Rabat in October 1974 and recognized the Palestine Liberation Organization as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, carrying the national and international responsibilities entailed in that capacity. We continue to support the brotherly Palestinian people in its efforts against occupation and exile

and for return, self-determination and freedom. We have not stopped nor will we stop our various forms of assistance to those under occupation who need every kind of support to maintain their national existence in their homeland under the most difficult circumstances.

17. One important point must be made in this context. The eagerness of the Arabs to stress their basic unity and their identification and partnership with the Palestinian people does not mean that the Palestinian rights in the land of Palestine no longer exist; nor does it change the nature or the geographical definition of those rights. It is necessary to emphasize this in view of the escalating attempt by Israel to argue that the solution of the Palestinian question must take place in the Arab world beyond the boundaries of Palestine. Israel cannot escape its responsibility for displacing so many Palestinians and occupying Palestinian territory by trying to force the Palestinians to seek an alternative homeland. Any just settlement which aims at enabling the Palestinian people to exercise its right to self-determination must proceed on the basis of this fact.

18. Is it not remarkable that Israel has managed for so long—ever since the adoption on 29 November 1947 of the partition resolution [*resolution 181 (II)*] by the General Assembly—to avoid defining its own borders? Between 29 November 1947 and the end of 1948, Israel occupied a substantial area beyond the limits of the area defined in the resolution. Now, since June 1967, Israel occupies the whole of the West Bank and Gaza. Thus, all of Palestine is under Israel's *de facto* jurisdiction.

19. The Palestinian right of self-determination must find its expression in Palestine in spite of Israel's unjust and indefensible opposition. The Security Council must help in this regard. It must support the principle, define its concrete requirements and mobilize the efforts of the United Nations to achieve that goal.

20. The achievement of Palestinian rights and the establishment of a just peace in the Middle East are inseparable goals. As the history of this question has proved time and again, peace cannot be achieved in the tortured and explosive Middle East until the injustice inflicted upon the Palestinian people is redressed and until they are enabled to exercise their right to repatriation and self-determination. Likewise, Palestinian rights cannot be achieved outside a comprehensive just settlement, which would include Israel's withdrawal from the Arab territories it occupied in June 1967 and the establishment of a just and durable peace. The components of a just peace in the Middle East are organically linked and inseparable.

21. The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People has shown understanding of this essential reality. While its report

focused on Palestinian rights, it made it clear that such rights can be achieved only in the context of a comprehensive just settlement in the Middle East. For no one can overlook the fact that the Arab involvement with the suffering and aspirations of the Palestinian people has altered the course of the history of our region and has decisively influenced the relationship of the Arab world with the world at large. The report of the Committee manifests an understanding of the basic issues in the Palestine question and makes an attempt to give positive answers to the main questions.

22. I wish on this occasion to pay a tribute to the vigorous and imaginative Chairman of the Committee, Ambassador Médoune Fall, and his colleagues on the Committee for their dedicated work and sense of commitment. We hope that the Council will consider the general question with seriousness and urgency. If an early, just and fundamental solution to the Palestinian question is not found, the area of the Middle East will continue to be a source of deep turmoil and serious potential threat to international security.

23. The United Nations, representing the international community, must throw its weight behind the requirements of a just settlement. The United Nations is not an observer. The international community is not unconcerned in the problem in the Middle East. The United Nations must be ready to mobilize its resources behind the implementation of a plan of justice in the Middle East. It must be ready to bear its responsibility, enforce its vision of peace and guarantee a future just settlement.

24. The PRESIDENT: The next speaker is the representative of Turkey. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

25. Mr. TÜRKMEN (Turkey): Turkey is a member of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, and it is for this reason that my delegation has asked to participate in this discussion.

26. Turkey's position regarding the question of Palestine and the rights of the Palestinian people is deeply rooted in history. In the last part of the nineteenth century, the leader of the Zionist movement, Theodor Herzl, approached the Ottoman Government with the aim of securing permission to establish a Jewish State in Palestine, which was then under the sovereignty of the Ottoman Empire. That demand was unequivocally rejected. At that time the overwhelming majority of the population of Palestine was Arab, and Palestine enjoyed self-government and local autonomy.

27. After the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire and the establishment of the Republic, the Turkish position remained unchanged. In 1947, we voted against resolution 181 (II) calling for the partition of Palestine. It has always been our view that the adop-

tion of that resolution and the circumstances surrounding the creation of the State of Israel constitute one of the greatest injustices of our times. As a result, the Palestinian people have been ruthlessly displaced and uprooted from their homes, compelled to live either as refugees or under foreign domination and occupation, while the world has totally ignored for more than a quarter of a century their right to self-determination and independence.

28. As a country situated in the area and with many links with the Arab peoples concerned, Turkey, from the very beginning, has been closely associated with the discussion of the question in the United Nations. We have been and still are a member of the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine, which was created by General Assembly resolution 194 (III) in 1948. In recent years, we have supported the endeavours towards recognition of the political rights of the Palestinians because of our conviction that this question lies at the heart of the problem of the broader question of achieving a just peace in the Middle East. In that larger context, we have always maintained that Israel should withdraw from all the territories it has occupied since 1967, and that a settlement should make it possible for all the countries in the area to safeguard their independence, their sovereignty and the security of their borders.

29. It has been pointed out by speakers who preceded me that the report the Council is called upon to discuss represents a landmark in the approach of the United Nations to the problem of Palestine. This, I believe, is true. Since it was founded, the United Nations has been dealing with the issue of Palestine in a continuous manner, but the question was considered for a very long time to be only one of refugees, an exclusively humanitarian matter. Even in this limited framework, the countless General Assembly resolutions calling for the return of the refugees remained unheeded. The war of 1967 added a new dimension to the problem by increasing the number of refugees and forcing the Palestinians in the West Bank, Jerusalem and Gaza to live under Israeli domination and occupation. Even if there were some commendable attempts to create a momentum in the settlement of problems arising from the wars of 1967 and 1973, the question of Palestine remained in the background. The Palestinians were not even considered a party in any eventual negotiating process.

30. The valiant people of Palestine, however, did not abandon its struggle to assert its rights. It put up a fierce resistance to Israeli domination and occupation and succeeded in rallying the support of world public opinion to its rightful cause. Resolution 3236 (XXIX) adopted by the General Assembly was a turning point in this evolution. In that resolution, the General Assembly reaffirmed the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people in Palestine, its right to self-determination, to national independence and sovereignty, and the right of the Palestinians to return to their

homes and property from which they had been displaced and uprooted, and recognized the Palestinian people as a principal party in the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. Subsequently, in resolution 3375 (XXX), the General Assembly called for the invitation of the Palestine Liberation Organization, as the representative of the Palestinian people, to participate on an equal footing with other parties in all efforts, deliberations and conferences on the Middle East held under the auspices of the United Nations. Finally, in resolution 3376 (XXX) the General Assembly decided to establish a Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, requested the Committee to consider and recommend to the Assembly a programme of implementation designed to enable the Palestinian people to exercise the rights recognized in resolution 3236 (XXIX), requested the Committee to submit its report and recommendations to the Secretary-General and requested the Secretary-General to transmit the report to the Security Council. The Council was requested to consider the question of the exercise by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights, and the Committee was authorized, taking into consideration the action by the Council, to submit to the Assembly, at its thirty-first session, a report containing its observations and recommendations.

31. The report of the Committee, now before the Council, is the product of intensive work and deliberations under the able chairmanship of Ambassador Fall. During the deliberations, there were perhaps some differences of emphasis, some varying perceptions as to the best method to be followed, but the report that emerged reflects, by and large, a consensus and is in conformity with the mandate assigned to the Committee. The Committee did not deviate from the resolution on the basis of which it elaborated a programme of implementation.

32. The report has been analysed comprehensively by the Chairman of the Committee and its Rapporteur [1924th meeting]. It would be redundant to elaborate once more on its content. However, there are some points which I should like to underline.

33. Paragraph 55 of the report is important, as it deals pertinently with the question of negotiations. It reads as follows:

“The opinion was shared that the prevailing situation in the Middle East should not be allowed to stagnate. There was a need to reconvene the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East, with the participation of all parties concerned, including the Palestine Liberation Organization, on an equal footing with the other participants, according to General Assembly resolution 3375 (XXX), in order to deal with the problem in all its aspects.”

34. Paragraph 56 concerns the role that the Security Council can play, and reads, in part, as follows:

“The suggestion was made that since the Security Council remained the only forum in which all parties to the conflict had been able to meet, this unique circumstance might be more actively utilized for constructive moves towards a settlement.”

In this paragraph the hope is also expressed that all the parties concerned will show statesmanship and a genuine willingness to negotiate.

35. The second part of the report contains the Committee's recommendations. These recommendations formulate the basic considerations and guidelines, urge the return of refugees in two phases and set out the prerequisites for the exercise of the rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination, national independence and sovereignty. It is our view that these recommendations are in conformity with United Nations resolutions. They embody, among others, the important principle, to which we fully subscribe, of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force.

36. It is our earnest hope that the debate in the Council on the question of the exercise of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people will be a constructive one. We cannot of course foresee the outcome of this debate. However, it should be pointed out that the report of the Committee, dealing with the core of the problem of the Middle East, contains many elements which can usefully be taken into consideration by the Council in its endeavours towards a just and lasting peace. The value of the report as a contribution in this respect should not be voided. On the other hand, as the representative of India has underlined in his statement [1928th meeting], the report, in its present form, is tentative and will be finalized in the light of the views expressed in the Council. The Council will, therefore, surely find a way which will not hamper, but promote, renewed efforts within the framework of the United Nations for a settlement which has eluded us for so long and for putting an end to an explosive situation representing a constant threat to peace.

37. The PRESIDENT: I should like to inform the members of the Council that I have just received letters from the representatives of Mauritania and Morocco in which they ask to be invited to participate in the discussion, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure. Accordingly, I propose, in accordance with the usual practice and with the consent of the Council, to invite these representatives to participate in the discussion without the right to vote.

38. In view of the limited number of seats available at the Council table, I invite the representatives of Mauritania and Morocco to take the places reserved for them at the side of the Council chamber, on the understanding that they will be invited to take places at the Council table when it is their turn to speak.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. El Hassen (Mauritania) and Mr. Zaimi (Morocco) took the places reserved for them at the side of the Council chamber.

39. The PRESIDENT: The next speaker is the representative of Bahrain, whom I now invite to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

40. Mr. AL-SAFFAR (Bahrain) (*interpretation from French*): Mr. President, first of all, I should like to thank you and all the other members of the Council for having permitted my delegation to take part in this debate on the question of the exercise by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights. My delegation is very happy to see you presiding over the Council. Your experience and your political and diplomatic qualities eminently qualify you for the task of presiding over the Council in its deliberations on such a difficult and complex question as the Palestine problem. Your assumption of the presidency of this Council is a tribute to your country, Guyana, which is playing a very important role in the United Nations and in the non-aligned movement. We have followed with a great deal of admiration the way in which the people of Guyana have succeeded in protecting their independence and asserting their national sovereignty.

41. On this occasion, when the Security Council has met to discuss this problem, my delegation would like to express its gratitude to the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People for the report introduced by its Chairman, Ambassador Fall of Senegal. In spite of all the difficulties and obstacles encountered, the Committee has succeeded in presenting us with the fruits of long and difficult work. I should also like to pay a tribute to all the members of that Committee, who have given their time to the preparation of a report which could serve as a point of departure in the search for a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. I must, of course, welcome and express my great appreciation for the participation of the representative of the Palestinian people, the chief victim of the Zionist invaders, in the work of this Committee. Throughout our work, his attitude was one of helpful and sincere co-operation with the Committee. As the Chairman of the Committee mentioned, the Israeli authorities have refused to co-operate with it in spite of the fact that they are one of the parties which should be particularly interested in a solution to the problem. It is precisely this persistent refusal of the Israeli authorities to co-operate with our Organization when it was trying to find a solution to the Middle East crisis which has made the problem so complex.

42. Nine years almost to the day after the occupation of the West Bank, Gaza and other territories of neighbouring Arab countries by Israeli armed forces, the Security Council has met to examine once again the fundamentals of the Middle East crisis. This is, furthermore, the first time that the Council has had before

it a report dealing with the problem of the Middle East from a comprehensive point of view. The objective of this report is simple and clear, namely, that the international community should act on the proposals made by the Committee in its report, which lays the foundation for a comprehensive solution of the entire problem of the Middle East, particularly the implementation of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

43. In all international bodies, the Israeli authorities have so far maintained that they were seeking peace and security in the region. Peace, for the Israeli authorities, is the recognition by the Arabs of the Israeli *fait accompli* in the occupied territories. Indeed, immediately after the Israeli aggression against the Arab countries in June 1967 and the occupation of their territories, Israeli leaders took a series of measures with the aim of annexing those territories once and for all. Those measures, which ranged from the annexation of Arab Jerusalem on 27 June and the destruction and expropriation of the property of the people to the establishment of Jewish settlements in the occupied territories, were accompanied by acts of brutal repression against the population of the occupied territories.

44. The General Assembly and the Security Council have adopted many constructive and objective resolutions in order to thwart the Israeli plans for annexation. But the Israeli authorities have never done anything to put those resolutions into effect. They have directed propaganda to world public opinion for the purpose of demonstrating that the Palestinian people in the occupied territories were satisfied with their lot and that they had never been so happy as under Israeli occupation. The representative of Israel has never ceased repeating this whenever the question of the occupation of Arab territories has come up for discussion in the United Nations.

45. The events which have occurred in recent months in the West Bank and Galilee have revealed the time situation. The popular explosion in Galilee at the end of March destroyed the myth of the supposed integration and loyalty of the Israeli Arabs. That event constituted an important turning point in the struggle of the Palestinian people. After a long period of forced silence, the population of Galilee rose up against the Israeli plans and challenged the judaization of the region. This is significant because this is a struggle for their survival and for the assertion of their Palestinian identity.

46. The demonstrations in the West Bank were a resounding denial of the argument about benevolent colonization put forward in Zionist propaganda. They were a response to the Israeli leaders, who often say that the Israeli Arabs live much better than the Arabs in the occupied West Bank and that the latter are living better than those in other Arab countries. How can we conceive that a people whose property has been

confiscated or destroyed, whose lands have been expropriated and which itself has been subjected to constant persecution can be happy?

47. The popular uprising in the West Bank was a collective expression of a people's opposition to the invasion and occupation of its territory. In spite of the brutality of the invaders, the Palestinian people have shown a will of iron in their determination to achieve their emancipation from the racist authorities in Tel Aviv and to assert their national identity. Many towns and villages flew the Palestinian flag during the demonstrations. Everywhere the demonstrators faced Israeli forces, and against this popular mobilization the army of occupation deployed troops, inflicted police violence and sometimes imposed a total curfew.

48. The results of the municipal elections in the West Bank in April showed how attached the Palestinian population was to its legitimate representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization, and to its principles.

49. The Security Council has the duty and responsibility to put an end to the policy of repression and the racist methods employed by the Israeli authorities against the people, and above all, to put an end to the occupation of the Arab territories.

50. In the light of the Committee's report, the Council is invited to adopt measures to give effect to the principles of the return of the Palestinians to their homes and of the right to self-determination. These principles are, in fact, recognized by the General Assembly, as can be seen from the many resolutions it has adopted in recent years. The Council should reassert those two principles and prevail upon Israel to accept and recognize them. They are fundamental to any settlement of the Middle East crisis. Consequently, Israel should create a favourable situation for the restoration of peace in the area. The report so competently introduced by the Chairman of the Committee provides us with appropriate ways and means of doing that.

51. In our view, the programme for the exercise of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people contained in the report is highly realistic because it takes account of the prevailing situation in Palestine. Although we take a different position on certain points in the report, we can say that it does contain positive elements which can bring us closer to a solution of the problem. The report does in fact reflect the position of the majority of States Members. It traces in outline the path to be followed to arrive at a solution based on the debates and discussions that have been held in the General Assembly and in the Security Council.

52. We are happy to see that this document goes to the very heart of the problem of the Middle East, which is the question of Palestine. For any approach or effort to find a solution to this problem which did not take

account of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people would be doomed to failure. We hope that the Council will take this historic opportunity to do everything in its power to restore peace to the region.

53. The PRESIDENT: The next speaker is the representative of Hungary. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

54. Mr. HOLLAI (Hungary): Mr. President, first of all I should like to extend to you and to all members of the Council sincere appreciation for the opportunity we have been given to express our views on the issue before the Council. It is a special pleasure for us, Sir, to see you, a most prominent diplomat of a State with which my country has friendly relations, presiding over our deliberations on this highly important question.

55. I also wish to convey our warm greetings and best wishes to the delegation of the Palestine Liberation Organization, representing the Palestinian people.

56. On behalf of my delegation, I should like to express condolences to the delegation of the United States on the senseless killing of the American diplomats in Beirut.

57. Hungary is a member of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and so, needless to say, the report of the Committee has our support and we fully endorse its recommendations.

58. As several speakers who spoke before me have stressed, among them the Chairman of the Committee, Ambassador Fall of Senegal, the work of the Committee was not and is not directed against anybody. All those who participated in the deliberations of the Committee proceeded from the basic conviction that the question of Palestine—the implementation of the legitimate and inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to a sovereign national existence, and a homeland and to return to their homes—is a corner-stone of any just and lasting peaceful solution of the Middle East conflict. To reach a just and lasting peace in the area must be the common goal of all peace-loving countries and of the United Nations. The Committee repeatedly invited all Member States and all interested parties to come and express their views on the possible ways and means of solving the question of Palestine. And in the very frank and open discussions in the Committee we felt the high level of integrity, morality and international responsibility of all those who participated in our work. In our opinion, the report of the Committee is a reflection of that constructive spirit.

59. In the last few months several tragic events and old and new tensions have once again made us aware of the fact that the Middle East continues to be a dangerous hotbed of war. Peace will never be born

out of injustice. Unless an end is put to the foreign occupation, to the flagrant injustices and untold sufferings that have afflicted the Arab people of Palestine for over a quarter of a century, there will be no peace in the Middle East. Without the long overdue implementation of the United Nations resolutions, we shall again be exposed to imperialist manoeuvres, and shall have to face increasingly dangerous crises.

60. In the opinion of the Hungarian People's Republic, the Committee's report an extremely important, well-balanced and realistic document. We shall highly appreciate the careful study of this document by the members of the Council, since the question of Palestine is a matter which basically concerns international peace and security, and it lies therefore, just and foremost, within the sphere of competence of the Council. We wish to express our sincere hope that the Council will endorse all the recommendations contained in the report. That would serve the interests of the Palestinian people, the interests of the whole Middle Eastern area and the interests of peace and security as a whole. And, may I add, it would even serve the interests of those countries and peoples that are not able or willing to realize it yet. There is no other way of living in security for any country but the way of good neighbourly co-operation.

61. My country has always whole-heartedly supported the just struggle of the Palestinian Arab people and its genuine liberation movement, the Palestine Liberation Organization, under the leadership of Yasser Arafat. We continue to support all anti-imperialist forces fighting for the final liquidation of the consequences of foreign aggression. We are ready to help the Palestinian people in building up their own independent State. It is our firm conviction that the participation of the Palestine Liberation Organization, the true representatives of the Palestinian people, on an equal footing with other parties, is really indispensable in all efforts, deliberations and conferences on the Middle East, as the report of the Committee also stresses.

62. We feel that there must be no further delay in achieving a final solution of the Palestinian issue. By endorsing the recommendations in the report of the Committee, the Council will lay the foundations for a new and peaceful era in the Middle East.

63. The PRESIDENT: I should like to inform members of the Council that I have received a letter dated 24 June from the representative of the Libyan Arab Republic [S/12113] in which he requests that Mr. Amin Hilmy II, Permanent Observer of the League of Arab States to the United Nations, be invited to participate in the Council's current discussion. Accordingly, if there is no objection, I propose, in accordance with the established practice, to extend an invitation to Ambassador Hilmy under rule 39 of the provisional rules of procedure.

It was so decided.

64. The PRESIDENT: I now invite the representative of Afghanistan to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

65. Mr. SIDDIQ (Afghanistan): It is with a sad heart that I mention the recent tragic event in which the United States Ambassador in Lebanon, Francis Meloy, and his distinguished colleagues lost their lives. I wish to extend the condolences and sympathy of my delegation to the United States delegation and also to the families of the bereaved.

66. Mr. President, I should like to express the warmest congratulations of my delegation on your accession to the presidency of this important organ of the United Nations. My delegation is convinced that because of your distinguished qualities as a skilful diplomat of a non-aligned country, qualities of which we are all well aware, the heavy and important work of the Council during this month will be carried out in a successful manner. I should also wish to thank you and, through you, all the members of the Council for having made it possible for my delegation to participate in this important debate.

67. As a Vice-Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, I do not have much to add to the lucid and comprehensive statement made by the Chairman of the Committee, Ambassador Fall of Senegal, or to the important statement made by the Rapporteur of the Committee, Mr. Gauci of Malta. Therefore, I should like to confine my statement to some brief remarks summarizing my delegation's position concerning the Committee's study and work on this issue.

68. When resolution 3376 (XXX) was adopted by the General Assembly, it reflected the determination of the majority of the Member States, on the basis of resolution 3236 (XXIX), to give a new thrust to the efforts of the United Nations to resolve the question of Palestine by the establishment of a Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. The formation of that Committee, on the basis of that resolution, has now led to the consideration of its report by the Security Council. In the resolution, it was envisaged that the Security Council should meet at the present time to consider measures that this important organ of the United Nations could take so that the people of Palestine could be enabled to exercise their inalienable rights.

69. We all know what those rights are. They were reaffirmed by the General Assembly in its resolution 3236 (XXIX) and, particularly, in paragraphs 1 and 2. In the consideration of this item, the Council has the benefit of having at its disposal the report of the Committee. This report is the result of the comprehensive work undertaken by the members of the Committee with the effective participation of the representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, as

well as the participation of the Arab countries directly involved.

70. The Committee's aim was to present to the international community concrete and realistic measures for an effective solution of the Palestinian problem. Those measures have been strictly drawn up on the basis of the mandate of the Committee laid down in resolution 3376 (XXX). In fact, the measures outlined in the report are for the elaboration of the guidelines envisaged by the General Assembly into a practical programme of action.

71. After a long time, the question of Palestine, which forms the core of the problem of the Middle East, has been thoroughly discussed in the Committee in a substantial manner. The Committee's consideration of the issues has been guided by previous decisions on this matter. Its report and, in particular, its recommendations now before the Council, are the product of serious work. The report was adopted by consensus in the Committee.

72. The report is based on the principles of justice and humanity, of the inalienable rights of a people and of a nation long denied the exercise of their undeniable rights of self-determination, national independence and sovereignty. It is in these respects that the report is biased. While the report fully takes into consideration the difficult situation in the Middle East as a whole, it provides for a comprehensive and constructive basis for the implementation of the inalienable rights of the people of Palestine, a fact which is crucial to the resolution of the Middle East crisis and of the Middle East problem as a whole.

73. These inalienable rights cannot be restored without granting the people the right to return to their homeland. Thus an individual Palestinian's exercise of his right to return to his fatherland is a prerequisite for the exercise of his people's right to self-determination, national independence and sovereignty. In that respect it should be stated that Israel is under a binding obligation to provide for the return of all the people of Palestine displaced as a result of the hostilities of 1948 and 1967. This obligation is based on the commitments of Israel under the United Nations Charter and General Assembly resolutions 181 (II) and 194 (III). This understanding is also reflected in General Assembly resolution 273 (III) and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It is obvious that the right of the Palestinian people to self-

determination could be implemented only if Israel withdrew from the land of Palestine. The occupation of Palestine has lasted for too long; in our view, the idea of a time-table for the withdrawal of Israel from the occupied territories is indeed essential. The Committee recommends that Israel withdraw from the territories occupied in June 1967 as a matter of urgency, and in any case no later than 1 June 1977.

74. The policy and position of the Government and the people of Afghanistan as far as the exercise of the inalienable right of the people of Palestine is concerned are well known. The policy of the Government of Afghanistan has been reiterated on numerous occasions, both at the United Nations and in other international forums when this question has been debated. As a member of the Committee, we have had occasion to express our views in detail. The recommendations outlined in the report of the Committee meet with the full approval of my delegation. Whether they receive the Council's support in the form of a decision depends on the outcome of the debate in the Council. However, my delegation would like to emphasize that in view of the primè responsibility of the Council for the maintenance of international peace and security in the region, it is of the utmost importance that a decision based on the recommendations of the Committee be adopted and that effective action be taken to serve the cause of the Palestinian people and the fulfilment of their inalienable rights.

75. In conclusion, I wish to state on behalf of my delegation that no long-lasting peace can be achieved in the Middle East unless and until the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination, national independence and sovereignty are restored, and until Israel withdraws from all the occupied territories without any preconditions.

76. Mr. SHERER (United States of America): I should like to extend my delegation's sincere appreciation to the representatives of Hungary and Afghanistan for their expressions of sympathy and condolences in connexion with the death of Ambassador Meloy and his colleagues.

The meeting rose at 12.25 p.m.

Note

¹ For the report see *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-first Session, Supplement No. 35.*

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