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NOTE

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of capital letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

Documents of the Security Council (symbol S/ . . .) are normally published in quarterly *Supplements of the Official Records of the Security Council*. The date of the document indicates the supplement in which it appears or in which information about it is given.

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.

1968th MEETING

Held in New York on Tuesday, 9 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/1968)

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 and 1967th meetings], I invite the representatives of Egypt, Israel, Jordan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Bangladesh and Mauritania, as well as the representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization, 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 Council table, and Mr. Abdel Meguid (Egypt), Mr. Nuseibeh (Jordan), Mr. Allaf (Syrian Arab Republic), Mr. Kaiser (Bangladesh), and Mr. El Hassen (Mauritania) took the places reserved for them at the side of the Council chamber.

2. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Spanish*): I wish to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Indonesia, Morocco

and Nigeria in which they request that, under rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure, they be invited to participate in the debate. In accordance with the Council's practice, the relevant provisions of the Charter and the provisional rules of procedure, if I hear no objection I propose to invite those representatives to participate in the debate without the right to vote.

3. I invite the representatives of Indonesia, Morocco and Nigeria to take the places reserved for them at the side of the Council chamber, on the usual understanding that they will be invited to take a place at the Council table when it is their turn to address the Council.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Marpaung (Indonesia), Mr. Bengelloun (Morocco) and Mr. Harri-man (Nigeria) took the places reserved for them at the side of the Security Council chamber.

4. Mr. OVINNIKOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (*interpretation from Russian*): The situation in the Arab territories occupied by Israel, which once again, for the third time this year, is being considered by the Security Council, is intolerable.

5. First of all, it is characterized by barbarous repression of the Arab population by the Israeli authorities. This is absolutely inadmissible both from the standpoint of the fourth Geneva Convention of 1949¹ and because it constitutes a violation of elementary human rights. Furthermore, an intrinsic feature of the situation in the territories is the open plundering by Israel of the natural resources of the occupied lands. This is also a flagrant violation both of universally acknowledged norms of international law and of the numerous decisions of the United Nations on sovereignty over natural resources. The situation in the territories has led to the trampling underfoot of the religious feelings of the Moslem population. This likewise is inadmissible.

6. But for all the importance of those aspects, none of them is the most important. The political problem is pre-eminent, the problem, now in its ninth year, of Israeli occupation of the lands of others, lands seized by force of arms. Furthermore, in the present circumstances, the occupation has become virtually an annexation of Arab territory. That is the essence of the matter.

7. As was correctly pointed out by the representative of Syria, Mr. Allaf, in his statement to the Council of 1 November [1966th meeting], it is no longer simply a question of even creeping annexation by Israel; it is a question of galloping annexation. All the signs indicate that Israel intends to detach and directly appropriate at least a considerable portion of the occupied Arab territories.

8. Striking proof confirming the annexationist plans of Israel with regard to the occupied Arab lands is contained in the recent article by the Foreign Minister of Israel, Mr. Allon, published in the October issue of the American magazine *Foreign Affairs*. It cannot be disregarded. That article openly states that Israel intends to annex the following territories which belong to the Arabs: first, a considerable portion of the West Bank of Jordan; secondly, the Arab part of Jerusalem; thirdly, the Golan Heights in Syria; fourthly, a considerable portion of the territory in Sinai along the Egyptian-Israeli truce line of 1949, and also the so-called corridor along the south-eastern part of the Sinai Peninsula as far as Sharm El-Sheikh.

9. These are not just theoretical ambitions on the part of Israel, but clear-cut annexationist designs. This is demonstrated primarily by the continued establishment of new Israeli settlements in the occupied Arab territories. As is apparent from the public statements of Israeli Prime Minister Rabin and Israeli Foreign Minister Allon—statements already mentioned in the Council—those settlements are not being created only to be eliminated subsequently; on the contrary, according to Israel's plans they are meant to stay there for ever. In 1976-1977 alone, another 29 such settlements are planned in the Arab territories. This is striking evidence of the transformation of occupation into annexation, and this is precisely the issue upon which the Council should primarily focus its attention.

10. How has such a situation become possible? Why is Israel not only making open claims to considerable areas of Arab territory but also virtually now annexing them? The answer is clear: it has occurred only because the goal of a comprehensive settlement in the Middle East has been replaced by so-called step-by-step diplomacy. That is precisely why Israel and its friends have been able initially to avoid answering the question: "Would Israel withdraw its troops from all Arab territories occupied in 1967?" It is precisely that kind of diplomacy, moreover, which has enabled Israel, without let or hindrance, to prepare for the subsequent annexation of considerable areas of Arab territory.

11. The position of principle of the Soviet Union against replacing a comprehensive settlement by separate agreements is very well known. Suffice it to recall the Soviet Government's statement of 28 April 1976 in this connexion:

"If last year's separate deals with regard to separate, individual, insignificant zones of territory

occupied by Israel created in anyone's mind an illusion of pacification in the Middle East, at least now everyone can see that those deals, which left aside the key issues of a Middle East settlement, not only have not brought more order into the situation, but have served to complicate it even further."

12. Accordingly, the Soviet Union has always considered that substituting something else for a comprehensive settlement cannot but do real harm to the interests of the Arab States and peoples.

13. Recently, some extremely convincing evidence of the justice and correctness of these warnings issued by the Soviet Union has emerged, and we wish to dwell on that particularly.

14. It has now become known exactly what was said to Israel by the initiators of this diplomacy and how they explained the real aims of the step-by-step tactics. In a book published just a few months ago, an Israeli journalist, Matti Galan, makes it clear that on 16 December 1974 Israeli ministers were told "that the aim of the disengagement talks was to circumvent the need to talk now about borders and final arrangements".* They were also told: "that the failure of the disengagement talks would break open the dam holding back the pressures on Israel, this time not for a partial retreat but a complete retreat to the June 4, 1967 borders."* In this case we are dealing not with a quotation from some talks but with a report of such talks.

15. However, in a recently published book by the American journalist Edward Sheehan, there appears a direct quotation of the following explanation given to the Foreign Minister of Israel, Mr. Allon, on 22 March 1975, when he was being persuaded to consent to a new disengagement agreement:

"Our strategy was to save you from dealing with all those pressures at once. If that was salami tactics—if we wanted the 1967 borders—we could do it with all the world opinion and considerable domestic opinion behind us. The strategy was designed to protect you from this. We have avoided drawing up an overall plan for a global settlement."*

It was typical that the authenticity of those statements was not challenged, either in Israel or in the United States. So that is almost documentary confirmation of the correctness of the warnings of the Soviet Union.

16. There is further proof that step-by-step diplomacy is not only the antithesis of a comprehensive settlement but actually undermines it. Its result, as has been stressed by the Soviet Government, has been the deliberate shelving of some key issues of a Middle

* Quoted in English by the speaker.

East settlement. Its result has been the further consolidation of Israel's position in the occupied Arab territories, a problem which the Security Council and the Arab countries and peoples are now having to face.

17. Today, therefore, it is clearer than ever before that the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East calls for a comprehensive political settlement in that region. There is not and cannot be peace in the Middle East until the causes that engendered the Middle East conflict have been removed. In order to eliminate them, three fundamental conditions must still be fulfilled: first, the withdrawal of Israeli troops from all Arab territories occupied as a result of Israeli aggression in 1967; secondly, the satisfaction of the lawful national demands of the Arab people of Palestine, including their inalienable right to create their own State; thirdly, international guarantees of the inviolability and security of the frontiers of all States of the Middle East and their right to an independent existence and development.

18. It is the conviction of the Soviet Union that the intensification of the tension in the Middle East as a result of the continued annexation of Arab territories calls for urgent efforts to ensure a reversal of the situation, from war to peace, and that is why the Soviet Union recently once again appealed to all parties directly involved in the Middle East conflict, to all participants in the Geneva Peace Conference, to resume the work of that body, which has been recognized by all the interested parties as being politically acceptable. Anyone wishing to delay resumption of the work of the Geneva Conference would be assuming a heavy responsibility.

19. Only a just peace can become a lasting peace. There is no alternative to a comprehensive political settlement in the Middle East. There is no alternative to the immediate convening of the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East. As is stated in its proposal concerning a settlement in the Middle East and the Geneva Peace Conference, "The Soviet Union is convinced that a real possibility exists of eliminating the underlying causes of the Middle East conflict and agreeing on a comprehensive settlement. To this end, it is prepared to press on with the work, together with all the other participants in the Geneva Peace Conference" [see S/12208].

20. This is the context within which we should view the question of the situation in the Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967. From this standpoint, action based on considerations of principle by the Council assumes particular significance. Such action would clearly and unambiguously reject the one-sided actions of Israel in the occupied Arab territories and call for their immediate cessation. The Soviet Union is ready to support such a decision by the Security Council.

21. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Spanish*): The next speaker is the representative of Morocco, whom I invite to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

22. Mr. BENGELLOUN (Morocco) (*interpretation from French*): Mr. President, I should like first of all to convey to you our most sincere congratulations on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for the month of November and to express to you the joy of the delegation of Morocco in seeing you in this important post. You represent the great traditions of Latin America which has so many attachments and affinities with Arab civilization. In addition, thanks to your qualities as a diplomat, your experience and your skill, the present debate will not fail to reach a positive conclusion.

23. Once again the Council is meeting to consider the question of Israeli practices in the occupied Arab territories; and, if it has deemed it necessary to do so, it is because the situation in those territories has reached such a point that peace and security in the region and in the world are, in fact, threatened.

24. Indeed, the repressive measures against the defenceless populations are increasing and constantly being expanded. It has become commonplace to learn each day that the Israeli authorities have decreed the curfew, limited the displacement of persons, prohibited the publication of local newspapers, ordered the expulsion of Arab leaders, demolished homes, arbitrarily and blindly detained civilians, created everywhere in the occupied Arab territories civilian and paramilitary colonies to the detriment of the populations driven from their own lands, and closed schools and commercial establishments. What more can I say? The list is, unfortunately, inexhaustible. A quick glance at the report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories² speaks for itself so far as the seriousness of those inhuman practices against our brothers in those territories is concerned.

25. In making the Arab populations of the occupied territories feel the whole weight of oppression and arbitrariness and in committing senseless acts against them, Israel is, in fact, only fulfilling one part of a diabolical plan which has been established to destroy the national Palestinian entity in order then to have free access to annexing those territories.

26. Those acts constitute a flagrant denial of the spirit and letter of international law, of the Charter of the United Nations and of the fourth Geneva Convention of 1949,¹ all of which emphasize that the inalienable rights of man cannot be denied.

27. While the fourth Geneva Convention has as one of its aims in particular that of preventing a temporary situation born out of war from acquiring a permanent

character to the detriment of the occupied populations, we see that Israel, one of the signatories of that Convention—as if it was necessary to repeat it—is pursuing a systematic policy of annexation. Of this we have proof in the official statements of the Israeli authorities themselves. The Director-General of the Settlements Department of the Israeli Federation declared that 64 settlements had been established in the occupied territories since the 1967 war, some of which can accommodate up to 20,000 persons. Worse still, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Israel, in a statement reported in *The Jerusalem Post* of 13 June 1976, stated that “Those settlements were not established to be abandoned and there were many others to be installed, but colonizers were lacking”.

28. According to the newspaper *Ha'aretz*, of 27 April 1976, the Ministerial Committee for the settlement of the occupied territories, the President of which is the Minister without portfolio Mr. Israel Galilee, foresees the establishment within the next two years of 29 settlements, 13 of which are to be established before the end of the current year. It is to be noted that, even in the Gaza Strip, which is known to be over-populated, it is envisaged that four new settlements will be established. To that end, measures to expel and transfer the autochthonous inhabitants have been undertaken.

29. As regards the modification of the physical character of those territories, we should mention the pure and simple expropriation of Arab lands by semi-official bodies. The cases of the village of Nabi Samuel and the station of Khan Al-Ahmar, which were to serve for the establishment of Jewish settlements, are well known.

30. I should like now to recall in particular the fate reserved for Jerusalem, a city which is close to the heart of all believers, regardless of their religion, since it is the cradle of all religions. I think it useful to recall on this occasion that since July 1967, that is, only a few weeks after the occupation of the Holy City, His Majesty King Hassan II and His Holiness the Pope spoke of this serious problem and its painful repercussions throughout the Moslem world.

31. We note with regret that the situation has become worse in these past years. As everyone knows, the change in the demographic composition of that city has been effected by the transfer of the Arab population of the Arab sector and of the Jewish quarter of that sector to other areas in order to make the Holy City completely Jewish, just as Jewish settlements have been established all along the West Bank of Jordan in an attempt to follow the same procedure around Al-Khalil and Nablus.

32. In speaking of the Holy Places, I cannot remain silent with regard to the fate reserved for the property of the Moroccan *Waqf*, in particular the destruction

of the Moroccan quarter in the very shadow of the Wailing wall, following the occupation of Jerusalem in 1967, as well as whole villages belonging to the Moroccan *Waqf*. Indeed, a number of Moroccan pilgrims who had settled in the Holy Places of Palestine many centuries ago were left considerable property and agricultural lands the product of which was devoted to assisting indigent Moroccan pilgrims and needy people living near the Holy Places and to financing specific humanitarian tasks. That is what we in Islam call *Waqf*. The proceeds of those properties had always been managed by a local administration, which was accountable to the Ministry of the Moroccan *Waqf*. Since the Israeli occupation, those properties have been either demolished or confiscated by the military authorities. Morocco has never ceased to condemn Israeli practices, which tend to destroy every Islamic spiritual and humanitarian aspect of the Holy City, while maintaining its claims over the property of the *Waqf*.

33. We know that the serious troubles which broke out approximately a year ago in the occupied territories were caused directly by Israel's outright contempt for the religious feelings of Moslems and Christians. The Al-Aqsa Mosque, considered as the second Holy Place of Islam, was burned down under the eyes and with the knowledge of the occupation authorities. The Al-Haram Al-Ibrahimi Mosque was profaned with their knowledge and divided into two parts, the more important of which was left to the orthodox Jewish fanatics even though that Holy Place was erected by Moslems over 1,000 years ago.

34. Another notorious fact is that the Church of the Holy Sepulchre itself was not spared acts of profanation, including the theft of relics, the like of which had never been seen in over 1,000 years of Arab administration.

35. How can we believe that brothers who feel themselves painfully affected by such acts should not rebel against those who deliberately seek to depersonalize and dehumanize them?

36. The occupied Arab territories have been placed under the trusteeship of the Israeli Ministry of War, which has a free hand as regards their administration; in other words, the military governors can indulge in the most cruel oppression that the Palestinian people has ever known. It is thus that they have instituted military tribunals empowered to judge even minors and to deal with acts committed against so-called security, such as the flying of a Palestinian flag, the writing on walls of a slogan against the occupier or the singing of a patriotic hymn. They are liable to punishment of up to 10 years' imprisonment, inflicted by those tribunals, if they form student, charitable or other associations of a humanitarian character. Assistance to the families of political prisoners is considered to be assistance rendered to “unlawful” organizations and therefore prohibited.

37. The report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories speaks of the case of a teacher of Ramallah, Souad Abu Mayaleh, condemned on 26 April 1976 to 10 years' imprisonment for helping families in Gaza and Jerusalem. Administrative and preventive detention occurs daily on decisions taken by the military governors and the authorities of the Israeli army. Any person under preventive detention runs the risk of remaining under arrest for a period of six months before he goes to "trial".

38. The economic absorption of the occupied territories is the corner-stone of Israeli policy. In the field of agriculture, over half a million *dunums* of fertile land were confiscated by Israel, entailing the complete dismantling of Jordan's agricultural production. As for industry, it is at present oriented towards meeting the needs of the Israeli market and Israel aggravates the position of that industry by encouraging its businessmen to invest in it and granting subventions and tax exemptions.

39. We do not have to be sorcerers to understand immediately the meaning of that policy, which tends to exploit the potential of the territories so as to contribute to Israel's economic self-sufficiency without taking into account the genuine interests of the population.

40. How many resolutions concerning Israel's actions have been adopted by the Organization during the past quarter of a century—resolutions which Israel continues to ignore, reject and violate? It is evident that Israel continues to treat with complete contempt the decisions of the Organization and systematically refuses to co-operate with the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories.

41. Moroccans, and particularly those of my generation, know from experience that foreign occupation inevitably entails resistance and that that resistance inevitably leads to liberation. Thus, Morocco feels that it is in no one's interest to have this situation deteriorate from day to day, taking toll of an increasing number of civilian victims, and that it is desirable without further delay to adopt any measure likely to lead to a radical solution of this painful problem.

42. In our view, the only effective remedy that would put an end to the suffering of our Arab brothers lies precisely in Israel's withdrawal from all those territories. Everything possible must be done to ensure that human rights and fundamental freedoms are fully restored in accordance with the relevant international instruments.

43. The international community and the Security Council have no right to remain indifferent to the tragic situation that I have depicted. I appeal to world

public opinion to exert effective pressure on the occupier in order to make it comply with the relevant resolutions of the Organization, because if we let this serious situation deteriorate further we will run the risk of bringing about a dangerous upheaval, the effect of which no one can foresee.

44. It is for this reason that the Moroccan delegation insists that decisive action should be taken forthwith before something irreparable happens—all the more since we are dealing here with a question which is at the very heart of the Middle East problem, whose gravity we are all very well aware of and to whose repercussions on peace and world security we all give due weight.

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

46. Mr. MARPAUNG (Indonesia): Mr. President, let me first convey to you my delegation's warm congratulations on your assumption of the high office of President of the Council for this month. With a person of your wide experience and diplomatic skill presiding over these important meetings, we can all be confident that the deliberations of the Council will be guided towards a satisfactory conclusion. May I also congratulate your predecessor, the representative of Pakistan, Mr. Iqbal A. Akhund, who so ably presided over the Council last month. Allow me also, through you, to thank the members of the Council for having given my delegation the opportunity to participate in this meeting in the hope that our statement will contribute to the finding of a solution for a problem which has proved itself to be an intractable one.

47. The Council is once again considering the situation in the occupied Arab territories in response to a letter dated 20 October from the representative of Egypt to the President, in which he has drawn the Council's attention to the dangerous and explosive situation in these territories.

48. My delegation had hoped that at the end of the Council's debate on this issue last May, when the majority of the members called upon the occupying Power to refrain from measures deemed obstacles to peace, the situation in the occupied territories would improve and Israel would desist from any action which would prejudice the outcome of the search for peace in the region. However, it is clear that the situation has been deteriorating for some time and has become a cause for mounting concern. Israeli authorities have continued their repressive measures—the imposition of curfews, the condoning of acts of desecration of the Holy Places, the establishment of new settlements and so on, all in flagrant violation not only of various United Nations resolutions but also of the relevant Geneva Conventions.

49. It has been clear for a number of years that one of the central issues of the Middle East question is the unbearable situation in the Arab territories occupied by Israel. The Palestinian Arabs who have lived under years of alien military occupation have seen their lands confiscated, their villages obliterated, their freedom of movement curtailed and even their holy shrines desecrated, as a result of Israel's persistent policies of repression and coercion. The sacrilege committed in setting on fire the Al-Aqsa Mosque in 1969 and the continuation of brutal harassment of the devout seeking worship there underline the gravity of the situation.

50. Now the Council is seized of an explosive situation arising from the continuing acts of repression perpetrated by the Israeli authorities against the inhabitants in the occupied Arab territories. There is no need for me to repeat all the massive evidence which has been presented before the Council [1966th meeting] by the representatives of Egypt, Syria, Jordan, the PLO and other speakers who have precede me. The desecration of Al-Haram Al-Ibrahimi and the Holy Koran in Hebron are certainly serious violations in the eyes of the Moslem world. All these developments have led to protests and demonstrations on an increasingly large scale by the Palestinians in the West Bank, underlining the tension that flows from such occupation. And all these can only be explained by the very nature of the occupation and its seemingly indefinite extension, and the determined opposition of the Palestinians to its continuance. The growing opposition of the Palestinian population to occupation as well as the outcome of the last elections held in the West Bank and other occupied areas have more than symbolic significance.

51. Israel now faces mounting hostility from Arabs living in the territories it has occupied since 1967 and must recognize that this occupation can only aggravate the situation and circumvent the potential for peace. There can be no escape from the fact that if Israel continues its present policies, it alone will be responsible for the deterioration of the situation and the disruption of the chances for peace. And peace cannot prevail in that region unless Israel withdraws from all occupied Arab territories and recognizes the rights of the Palestinian people.

52. As a non-member of the Security Council and one not directly involved in a dispute under consideration by the Council, my delegation does not usually intervene in its debates. The deep solidarity felt by the people of Indonesia towards the Arab people in general and the Palestinian people in particular makes it incumbent upon my delegation to participate in the present deliberations. In fact, Indonesia's solidarity with the Arab people in the common struggle for the restitution of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and the restoration of fundamental freedom and justice in the Middle East is a matter of great pride to us. Our solidarity and our unflinching support

for the demand for freedom and justice are not based upon hostility towards any human entity but are based upon our commitment to the struggle against oppression and injustice.

53. Indonesia's position with regard to the problem of the Middle East has been stated many times. At the Seventh Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers held at Istanbul from 12 to 15 May last, the Indonesian Foreign Minister said:

"The Middle East problem cannot be considered apart from its root causes, which are mainly two-fold: The first is the injustice which has long been inflicted upon the Palestinian people, who are the indigenous inhabitants of what is today Israel. The second root cause is the continued occupation by force of territories belonging to three neighbouring Arab countries. As long as the Palestinians are deprived of their lands and homes, and as long as Israel insists on clinging to the fallacy of the right to occupy the land that rightfully belongs to others, it would be an illusion to imagine that the Middle East conflict will be resolved.

"The injustices inflicted upon the Palestinians must therefore be redressed. The second root cause, the continued occupation by force of arms of territories belonging to the three neighbouring Arab countries, must be terminated."

54. In the context of what I have stated earlier, my delegation cannot accept the Israeli practices in the occupied Arab territories. This is particularly so in view of Indonesia's tradition and deep respect for all religions, and we do not condone any kind of extremist behaviour. That is why we are surprised that the Israeli Government tolerates religious leaders preaching hatred and violence instead of love and peace.

55. Those who see facts as they are must recognize that time is running out, that a peaceful and comprehensive solution to the problem of the occupied Arab territories and the legitimate rights of the Palestinians must be found soon. The Arab peoples cannot wait forever for the United Nations to redress the injustice inflicted upon them for so long. There can be no question of Arab coexistence with occupation.

56. The Security Council, entrusted by the international community with the maintenance of international peace and security, must not forsake that trust, but must discharge the responsibility incumbent upon it and make a serious and concerted effort towards an overall settlement of the problem. My delegation appeals to the Council to take such decisions that would facilitate the initiation of a new era in the Middle East marked by genuine and lasting peace in the area. The dangers of failure by the Security Council to adopt realistic and constructive measures must be obvious to us all.

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

58. Mr. HARRIMAN (Nigeria): Mr. President, permit me first to join other speakers in extending my delegation's congratulations to you on your assumption of the presidency of the Council during this trying and turbulent period of the current thirty-first session of the General Assembly. I am convinced that your vast experience and diplomatic skill will go a long way in guiding the deliberations of the Council. In the same breath, let me, as others have done, congratulate Mr. Akhund of Pakistan for the apt manner in which he presided over the Council's meetings last month. Secondly, allow me to thank you, Mr. President, and the other members of the Security Council for inviting me to participate in the discussion of the situation in occupied Arab territories.

59. It is becoming increasingly distressing to my delegation that the effective and useful function which this noble Organization can perform is progressively being paralysed by the deliberate actions of some delegations which inject extraneous matters into very serious and straightforward issues. Let us hope that the time will come—and soon—when our debates in the Organization will again become productive and not counter-productive and when we shall sit in the conference rooms of this great assembly not to hear lectures on economics statistics, history and religious philosophy, such as we have been subjected to, but to face our responsibilities and obligations under the Charter.

60. My Foreign Minister, in his address to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session on 4 October, stated:

“Nigeria wishes once more to reaffirm its belief that there will be no durable and lasting solution of the Middle East problems except one which, *inter alia*, takes into account the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinians to a homeland of their own and the right of all States in the region to exist in peace within secure and recognized borders.”³

We have said this year after year; it is not new. He went on to say: “Nigeria reiterates its call for the total and unconditional withdrawal of Israel from all the Arab territories it occupied as a result of the 1967 Middle East war.”⁴ Again, this is what we have been repeating every year.

61. We could sit in this Chamber deliberating on this item indefinitely and there would still be a thousand and one incidents like those that occurred at the Al-Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron recently; there would still be riots and demonstrations; there would still be what we call “terrorism”, without any understanding of the basic motivations of the human will that is

repressed and debased. All these events are symptoms and they all point to one simple trauma in the case of Palestinian Arab territories: the occupation by the forces of Israel. The crux of the matter is Israeli occupation of Arab territories and Israel's illegal and inhuman actions in those territories.

62. In annex II of the letter dated 1 November 1976 from the representative of Israel to the Secretary-General [S/12223], he stated:

“Israel found itself in control of Judea and Samaria (the West Bank).” That was in 1967. Today, in 1976, after repeated calls and numerous United Nations resolutions and the 1949 Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian persons in Time of War¹ notwithstanding, Israel still finds itself in Arab territories. Is Israel trying to tell us that it has lost its sense of direction and cannot find its way out of occupied Arab land? Israel cannot honestly convince us of its genuine desire for peace in the Middle East, if it remains oblivious to international calls for withdrawal from these territories. Perhaps the Council should discuss the modalities for assisting Israel to find its way back into the defined borders that were carved out for it a few decades ago.

63. How much longer will Israel be arrogantly indifferent to the resolutions of the Organization? How much longer will Israel be insensitive to the aspirations of the Palestinian people? How much longer will it take Israel to learn from its own determination for a Jewish State? Why does Israel thwart all actions towards the creation of a State for the Palestinian people? That is difficult for me to understand.

64. It is obvious to the majority of the Members of the United Nations that the Palestinian people have the inalienable right to their homeland, and, as is true in the case of Israel itself, the onus is on us, the Member States, to ensure the demarcation of definite and distinct boundaries of the Palestinian State. Until we set about doing that, we shall continue to debate superficial issues, leaving the very sources from which these issues emanate virtually untouched. We shall continue to have incidents brought to the Security Council. We shall continue to have Palestinian resistance to the repression being perpetrated by the Israeli occupation.

65. Put simply, the Palestinian people will, in the face of the denial of their right to a homeland and in the light of repressive Israeli measures, be even more resolute in their struggle for self-determination, national independence, sovereignty and a return to their homes and property, from which they have been displaced and uprooted.

66. The argument that Arabs in occupied territories have better living conditions is, to my delegation, untenable. Living conditions have nothing to do with

the denial of rights, including the right of the Palestinians to their homeland. So long as the Palestinians continue to live as refugees in their own territories, no matter how well the Israelis feel the Palestinians are living, there will always be resistance to Israeli occupation.

67. Israel cannot honestly think that by further uprooting Arabs and creating and consolidating Jewish settlements in occupied Arab land, it can suppress the aspirations of the Palestinians. Nor can Israel think that alterations of a demographic, geographical and religious character in the occupied Arab territories can stem the Palestinian uprising or hoodwink the international community by creating a *fait accompli* through this process of occupation, usurpation and oppression. Israel's disrespect for and defiance of United Nations resolutions and its refusal to co-operate with United Nations committees set up to facilitate peaceful coexistence between Israel, Arabs living in the occupied territories and Israel's other neighbours will serve no function but to make the Palestinians more determined to resist.

68. The time has come when our deliberations have to produce tangible results. The time has come when we have to stop side-tracking issues. It is time that this noble Organization, and especially the Security Council, were sensitive and responsive to the burning, fundamental issues of which it is continuously seized. I stated at the sixty-first session of the Economic and Social Council, in Abidjan, that my delegation would continue to work in the direction of the removal of irrelevancies from resolutions, in order not to destabilize the United Nations and immobilize our work. The Council will lose credibility if it fails to

grapple effectively with issues before it. We must not let this continue. Appropriate measures must be taken against Israel to make it comply with United Nations resolutions.

69. Israel and those that give it succour must realize that they can no longer hold to ransom the more than 100 States Members of the United Nations. We must not let our limited and narrow interests permeate the fibres of the pillars that unite the Organization. In our duty to maintain international peace and security, we must at least appear to aspire to upholding the principles of the Charter to which we have all subscribed.

70. When countries from Africa like ours join the Palestinian people in their just struggle, it is not only because we have a common history and had to cope with a common situation, but also, and mainly, because Israel consistently refuses to abide by the decisions of the Council and continues to challenge and show disrespect for and defiance of African opinion. So long as that continues to be true and so long as Israel continues to collude with South Africa and to form this axis between Tel Aviv and Pretoria in the interest of the sixth world Power, which wishes to dominate our interests, we shall continue to fight.

The meeting rose at 5.25 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/31/218.

³ *Ibid.*, *Thirty-first Session, Plenary Meetings*, 16th meeting, para. 166.

⁴ *Ibid.*, para. 167.

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