



DIVISION FOR PALESTINIAN RIGHTS

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1. Action taken by the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People

On 22 March 1983 the Chairman of the Committee, in a letter addressed to the Secretary-General drew his immediate attention to the Committee's deep concern regarding recent violations of legal and human rights of the Palestinians who reside in the occupied territories by Israel.

In another letter addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, on 30 March 1980, the Chairman of the Committee brought to his attention the widely reported illness among Arab schoolgirls in the occupied West Bank. Full text of the two letters are as follows:

Letter dated 22 March 1983 from the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People to the Secretary-General (S/15653-A/38122)

As Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, it is yet once again my bounden duty to bring to your immediate attention the Committee's deep concern at recent violations of legal and human rights of the Palestinians who reside in the occupied territories.

In this matter, the Committee has been reliably informed of certain matters which I am obliged to draw to your attention.

It has been reported that, on 10 March 1983, Israeli soldiers in full military uniform were discovered and prevented from detonating explosives intended for the destruction of the Al-Aqsa Mosque. On a previous occasion, on 4 March 1983, a time bomb was discovered at one of the gates of the same Mosque which had been set to explode at the end of Friday noon prayers.

In further activities, Israeli troops wounded a Palestinian youth as they opened fire on Palestinian demonstrators in Jerusalem on 12 March. On that occasion, a Palestinian woman and her five children were beaten by the Israeli troops for offering aid to the wounded youth. On the same date, in the Shufat refugee camp, north of Jerusalem, Israeli troops broke into the local school, attacked students and beat them severely. In Hebron, the Israeli occupation authorities ordered the closing of the Polytechnic Institute in retaliation for previous student participation in demonstration against the occupation.

Al-Khalil University and schools in Halhoul, Yatta, Beit Sahour and Nablus were also ordered closed. In Yatta, on 16 March, it was reported that Israeli

settlers were continuing to terrorize the population in the occupied territories. Booby trap bombs were discovered at the gate of the Haifa High School in the town of Jennine which were fortunately discovered and detonated.

On 17 March, it was reported that Israeli occupation troops opened fire on Palestinian anti-occupation demonstrators in Beit Sahour. One school was ordered closed until further notice, bringing the number of schools in the Bethlehem area closed by the Israeli occupation authorities to five.

At the same time, curfews remain on Palestinian refugee camps and Israeli troops have taken particularly brutal measures against the Dheiseh Camp.

In this entire matter, may I refer you to an item in the Jerusalem Post of 13-19 March which reviews this most serious wave of violent protests in recent months and the subsequent reactions by the occupying authorities.

This information is conveyed to you in order that you might be kept appraised of the escalating and highly intensified Israeli activities against those Palestinians under Israeli occupation.

In view of the accelerating gravity of action taken on the part of the occupying authorities, I should be most grateful if you would arrange to have this letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under item 33 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

Letter dated 30 March 1983 from the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People to the Secretary-General (S/15667-A/38128)

In my capacity as Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, it is my solemn obligation to draw to your immediate attention a distressing event in the occupied territories of the West Bank that has served to exacerbate tension in the region still further and, by extension, threaten world peace.

The event that I refer to concerns the widely reported illness among Arab schoolgirls in the occupied West Bank. Local residents believe the illness to have been induced by some kind of poison, perhaps even gas poisoning, in the girls' classrooms.

In this matter I refer you to an item in the New York Times of 28 March 1983 where it is reported that at least 250 Arab schoolgirls in five schools in Jenin and Araba suffered recently from dizziness, headaches, fainting spells and stomach pains. The mayor of Jenin has put the number affected at 400; the spokesman for the Israeli Civil Administration put it at about 250; the Israeli radio quoting Israeli officials reported the number as 317. Palestine Liberation Organization sources have quoted a figure of some 1,000 young people.

As you are aware, this deplorable event comes amid ever-rising tension in the West Bank, a territory of some 800,000 Arabs that was occupied by Israel in the 1967 war.

While it is reported in the New York Times of 29 March 1983 that the Israeli Health Ministry has found no traces of poison in the schools concerned in the occupied West Bank, the Washington Post in its issue of 30 March 1983 reports that a medical doctor at the Jenin hospital has said that he has treated some 70 patients, all showing symptoms of gas poisoning.

I am informed that investigators from the International Committee of the Red Cross and the United Nations have been called upon regarding the recent event. Pending results of any investigation that might be carried out, may I take this opportunity to urge, on behalf of the Committee, that you be so good as to exercise your office as Secretary-General to ascertain the full extent, cause and perpetrators of the abhorrent event. I might add that it is to the deep sadness of the Committee that it is particularly the young people in the occupied territories that have taken the brunt of those acts of repression and violation of human rights that have taken place over recent years in the West Bank.

In view of the immense gravity of the events I have discussed in this letter I should be most grateful to have it circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under item 33 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

2. Action taken by the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People acting as the Preparatory Committee for the International Conference on the Question of Palestine

The Preparatory Committee held a meeting on 22 March 1983 and adopted guidelines for conduct of work in the regional meetings related to the International Conference on the Question of Palestine. It also recommended the provisional agenda and documentation for the African and Latin American regional preparatory meetings.

In the meeting of the Preparatory Committee held on 8 April 1983, agendas for the West Asian and Asian regional preparatory meetings were approved. At that meeting of the Preparatory Committee the report of the African Regional Preparatory meeting, held at Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania, 29 March - 2 April 1983 was considered and approved.

At the meeting of the Preparatory Committee held on 22 April 1983, the report of the Latin American Regional Preparatory meeting, held in Managua, Nicaragua, 11 to 15 April 1983, was adopted. At that meeting documentation of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine was also discussed.

3. Regional preparatory meetings for the International Conference on the Question of Palestine

A. African Regional Preparatory Meeting for the International Conference on the Question of Palestine

The first of a series of five regional preparatory meetings authorized by General Assembly resolution 37/86 of 10 December 1982, endorsing the recommendations of the Preparatory Committee for the Conference, was held at the Arusha International Conference Centre, United Republic of Tanzania, from 28 March to 1 April 1983. The aim of the meeting was to secure active involvement of the Governments of the States of the African region in the preparation for the International Conference on the Question of Palestine and its theme was "Political and Juridical Aspects of the Question of Palestine".

In the African Regional Preparatory Meeting delegations of 20 African States, the Palestine Liberation Organization as a principal party to the question of Palestine, the League of Arab States, the Organization of African Unity as well as a number of national liberation movements, United Nations bodies and offices and non-governmental organizations participated. The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People was represented by a delegation composed of representatives of Nigeria, Guinea and the Palestine Liberation Organization. The meeting adopted its agenda containing the following substantive items:

1. Comprehensive review of the Question of Palestine:
 - a. the Palestinians;
 - b. The right to self-determination;
 - c. The role of the United Nations.
2. National liberation movements in the African context and the Palestine Liberation Organization.
3. Application of laws in determining the rights and opportunities of citizens: a comparative analysis of the Palestinian and African experience.
4. Recommendations for action.

The documentation for the meeting included various papers prepared by consultants on behalf of the Secretariat of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine dealing with the substance matter of the agenda item as well as relevant reports of United Nations bodies and pertinent resolutions.

At the first session the following officers were unanimously elected:

H.E. Salim A. Salim (United Republic of Tanzania) - Chairman;

H.E. Mohammed-Tahor Bouzarbia (Algeria);

H.E. Emmanuel Ndahomono (Zambia) - Vice-chairman, and

H.E. Latyr Camara (Senegal) - Rapporteur.

At the opening session the meeting was addressed by Mrs. Lucille Mair, Secretary-General of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, H.E. E.M. Sokoine, Prime Minister of the United Republic of Tanzania, H.E. M.J. M. Braidi, Representative of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, Mr. Shafiq al-Hout, representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization and H.E. Salim A. Salim, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the United Republic of Tanzania.

After a comprehensive exchange of views on the various aspects of the question of Palestine, the meeting unanimously adopted the Arusha recommendations and a special resolution on Lebanon. It also adopted its report by consensus. The text of the Arusha recommendations is reproduced below.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE

Recommendations and decisions adopted by the African regional preparatory meeting held in Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania, 29 March to 1 April 1983 (A/CONF. 114/PC 9)

I. ARUSHA RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE AFRICAN REGIONAL PREPARATORY MEETING FOR THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE

The plight of the Palestinian people is one that is viewed with profound sympathy by the independent States of Africa. A deep interest and active involvement in the search for a just, comprehensive, and lasting solution to the problem of Palestine through all means, represent the natural and understandable response of Africans who themselves have experienced colonial domination. It is therefore only logical that the African States regard as vital and timely the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, which is scheduled to be held at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris from 16 to 27 August 1983. Likewise it is fitting that the African States should fully support the Conference objective of increasing international awareness of the facts concerning the question of Palestine as a significant step to a just, durable and comprehensive resolution of conflict in the Middle East.

The African regional preparatory meeting, which was held in Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania, from 29 March to 1 April 1983, cognizant of the peculiar historic conditions that led to the usurpation of the Palestinian national homeland, affirms the position reiterated by the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity on the question of Palestine, and recognizes:

(a) The Palestinian people's inalienable right to self-determination in Palestine, including the right to an independent and sovereign State, in accordance

with United Nations General Assembly resolution 181 (II) of 29 November 1947 and more recently endorsed by United Nations General Assembly resolution ES-7/2 of 29 July 1980;

(b) The inalienable right of the Palestinians to return to their homes and property in Palestine, from which they have been displaced and uprooted, and the right to compensation of those choosing not to return;

(c) That the attainment of the exercise of these inalienable rights is the sine qua non for a just solution of the question of Palestine and a lasting peace in the Middle East;

(d) That the question of Palestine is the core of the Middle East problem;

(e) The Palestine Liberation Organization as the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people;

(f) The right of the Palestine Liberation Organization to participate on an equal footing in all international conferences, organs, agencies, and endeavours of the United Nations in conformity with relevant United Nations resolutions;

(g) The illegality of the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories of the West Bank and Gaza;

(h) The imperative necessity for the total and unconditional Israeli withdrawal from all territories occupied by Israel since 1967, including Jerusalem, for a comprehensive and just solution to the conflict in the Middle East;

(i) The legitimacy of the struggle of the Palestinian people under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization against foreign domination and alien subjugation by all available means, including armed struggle, in accordance with United Nations General Assembly resolution 3070 (XXVIII) of 30 November 1973.

Accordingly, the African Regional Preparatory Meeting, recalling the experience of the African people in their struggle against colonialism and for self-determination and national independence, recommends that the African States:

(1) Take additional initiatives in the Organization of African Unity to support the Palestinian national struggle;

(2) Establish diplomatic relations with the Palestine Liberation Organization and accord its representatives full diplomatic status;

(3) Encourage African workers' organizations to seek ways and means to find common cause with Palestinian workers;

(4) Encourage organizations such as those of women, youth, students, and teachers, to undertake exchanges and other joint programmes of action with their Palestinian counterparts;

(5) Urge African jurists to initiate with their Palestinian counterparts, consultations, research and investigations on the juridical aspects of problems affecting the southern African and Palestinian struggles, in particular the detention of political prisoners and the denial of prisoner-of-war status to detained members of the national liberation movements of southern African and Palestine;

(6) Encourage the formation of national support committees with the people of Palestine;

(7) Request the African news media to engage in special and extensive coverage of the Question of Palestine;

(8) Consider ways and means of meeting the threat that Israel poses to Africa's security in view of Israel's close collaboration with the apartheid régime;

(9) Participate actively and at a high level in the International Conference on the Question of Palestine in support of the achievement of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

With respect to the United Nations, after full and careful deliberation, the African Regional Preparatory Meeting:

(1) Considers the recommendations of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly at its thirty-first session and subsequently, to be a programme capable of enabling the Palestinian people to exercise their inalienable rights in Palestine as well as a firm basis for a just, comprehensive and lasting resolution of conflict in the Middle East;

(2) Calls upon the Security Council to endorse and to implement the aforementioned recommendations as a matter of utmost urgency, recalling that they have not yet been approved as a result of a negative vote by a permanent member of the Security Council;

(3) Welcomes the Arab Peace Plan adopted at the twelfth Arab summit held at Fes, Morocco, on 9 September 1982 as an important contribution to the search for a just, comprehensive and lasting settlement of the Middle East conflict and considers this plan as being in conformity with the resolutions of the United Nations aimed at settling the Question of Palestine;

(4) Takes note that the Council of Europe on 22 March 1983 affirmed the disposition towards peace of the Arab Peace Plan;

(5) Urges the Security Council to consider applying sanctions against Israel in order to compel it to withdraw from all Arab territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem, in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the United Nations;

(6) Requests the Security Council to take urgent action to bring about an immediate and total cessation of Israel's policies in the occupied territories, and in particular the settlements, since the policy of settlements is an obstacle to the attainment of peace in the region;

(7) Calls upon the Security Council to reactivate as a matter of priority the Commission established by its resolution 446 (1979) of 22 March 1979 to examine the situation relating to Israeli settlements in Arab and Palestinian territories occupied since 1967;

(8) Considers the continued presence of Israel in the occupied Arab territories, including the Palestinian territories of the West Bank and Gaza, as exacerbating instability in the region and posing a threat to international peace and security;

(9) Urges the Secretary-General, in consultation with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, and pending the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967, including Jerusalem, to undertake effective measures to guarantee the safety and security and legal and human rights of the Palestinian refugees in the occupied territories;

(10) Urges the United Nations to take the necessary action to ensure that all Palestinian and Lebanese political prisoners detained by Israel be accorded the status of prisoners of war in accordance with the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949.

II. SPECIAL RESOLUTION ON LEBANON DATED 1 APRIL 1983

The African Regional Preparatory Meeting expresses its grave concern at the situation in Lebanon arising from Israel's invasion of that country and its continued occupation of the Lebanese territory.

The Meeting considers these Israeli actions in Lebanon as constituting a threat to international peace and security.

The African Regional Preparatory Meeting therefore requests the United Nations Security Council to take appropriate measures in order to compel Israel to implement the resolutions of the Security Council demanding the immediate, total and unconditional withdrawal of Israel from the entire Lebanese territory.

III. MESSAGE DATED 30 MARCH 1983 FROM THE AFRICAN REGIONAL PREPARATORY MEETING CONCERNING RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL, THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS, THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION AND THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS COMMITTEE

The African Regional Preparatory Meeting of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine meeting in Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania, expresses its gravest concern at current developments in the Palestinian Arab Territories illegally occupied by Israel.

Particular concern is felt regarding the report of the poisoning of schoolchildren, in the Jenin and Hebron areas in the West Bank where some 300 schoolgirls have had to be hospitalized.

The African Regional Preparatory Meeting demands an immediate and impartial investigation into this incident by the World Health Organization and the International Red Cross.

The African Regional Preparatory Meeting considers such an urgent investigation necessary to establish the facts and to bring to an end a chain of events which could only exacerbate tensions and create a threat to peace and security.

B. Latin American Regional Preparatory Meeting for the International Conference on the Question of Palestine

The Latin American Regional Preparatory Meeting was held at the Cesar Augusto Silva Conference Centre in Managua, Nicaragua from 11 to 15 April 1983. Delegations from 18 Latin American States, the Palestine Liberation Organization as a principal party to the Question of Palestine, the League of Arab States and a number of United Nations organs and offices as well as non-governmental organizations attended the meeting. The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People was represented by a delegation headed by the Committee's Chairman, Ambassador Massamba Sarré of Senegal. The Latin American Regional Preparatory Meeting was devoted to "Palestine and International Law" and adopted the following substantive agenda:

1. Comprehensive review of the Question of Palestine;
 - a) The legal status of the Palestinians
 - b) The right to self-determination.
2. The rights of the Palestinian under international law;
 - a) Human rights
 - b) Status of political detainees.

3. Recommendations for action;

The documentation before the meeting included various papers dealing with the substance of the agenda items which were proposed by consultants and were introduced by the legal expert consultants Professors W.T. Mallison and Sally Mallison. The meeting at its final session unanimously elected the following bureau:

H.E. Ernesto Castillo, Minister of Justice of Nicaragua as Chairman;
H.E. Oscar Oramas-Oliva of Cuba, H.E. Cotubanamá Dipp of the Dominican Republic, H.E. Hernán Escudero of Ecuador as Vice-Chairman, and
H.E. Cecil Stanley Pilgrim of Guyana as Rapporteur.

At the same session, the meeting was addressed by Mrs. Lucille Mair, Secretary-General of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, H.E. Dr. Sergio Ramirez Mercado, Member of the Junta for National Reconstruction of the Republic of Nicaragua, H.E. Massamba Sarré, Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, Mr. Zehdi Labib Terzi, representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization and H.E. Ernesto Castillo, Minister of Justice of Nicaragua. After an in-depth discussion of the agenda items the meeting drew up its recommendations with special emphasis on the international law aspects and adopted them unanimously (the text of the recommendations is reproduced below). The meeting also adopted its report.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE

Recommendations for action adopted by the Latin American Regional
Preparatory Meeting held in Managua, 11-15 April 1983

(A/CONF. 114/PC/10)

The continued erosion and denial of the basic human rights of the Palestinian people underscore the timeliness of the regional meeting of Latin America, preparatory to the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, which is scheduled to be held at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris from 16-27 August 1983. The States of the region, therefore, endorse the objectives of the Conference, and support the search for a just, lasting and comprehensive solution to the question of Palestine.

I

The Latin American Regional Preparatory Meeting, noting that the Palestinian people have been denied their inalienable rights, affirms the position reiterated by the United Nations on the question of Palestine and recognizes:

(1) The Palestinian people's inalienable right to self-determination in Palestine, including the right to an independent and sovereign State, in accordance with United Nations General Assembly resolution 181 (II) of 29 November 1947 and repeatedly reaffirmed by the General Assembly, more recently by its resolutions ES-7/2 of 29 July 1980 and 37/86 D and E of 10 and 20 December 1982 respectively;

(2) The inalienable right of the Palestinians to return to their homes and property in Palestine, from which they have been displaced and uprooted, and the right of compensation of those choosing not to return;

(3) That action by the Security Council on the recommendations of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, as endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 31/20 of 24 November 1976 and subsequently, is long overdue;

(4) That the attainment of the exercise of these inalienable rights is the sine qua non for a just solution of the question of Palestine and a lasting peace in the Middle East;

(5) The Palestine Liberation Organization as the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, has the right to participate on an equal footing in all international conferences, organs, agencies, and endeavours of the United Nations in conformity with relevant United Nations resolutions;

(6) That the continued occupation by Israel of the Palestinian territories of the West Bank and Gaza is illegal;

(7) The imperative necessity for the total and unconditional Israeli withdrawal from all territories occupied by Israel since 1967, including Jerusalem, for a comprehensive and just solution to the conflict in the Middle East;

(8) The legitimacy of the struggle of the Palestinian people under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization against foreign domination and alien subjugation by all available means, including armed struggle, in accordance with United Nations General Assembly resolution 32/14 of 7 November 1977.

II

The Latin American Regional Preparatory Meeting, cognizant of the gross violation of recognized principles of international law and of the human rights of the Palestinian people, and after full and careful deliberation on the question of Palestine with a specific focus on international law:

(1) Considers the recommendations of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly at its thirty-first session and subsequent sessions as a firm basis to enable the Palestinian people to exercise its inalienable rights in Palestine, on recognized principles of International Law;

(2) Welcomes the Arab Peace Plan adopted at the twelfth Arab summit held at Fez, Morocco, on 9 September 1982 as an important contribution to the search for a just, comprehensive and lasting settlement of the Middle East conflict and considers this plan as being in conformity with the resolutions of the United Nations aimed at settling the Question of Palestine;

(3) Takes note that the Council of Europe on 22 March 1983 affirmed the disposition towards peace of the Arab Peace Plan;

(4) Considers that the first paragraph of decision 3.9 of the Palestine National Council held in Algeria from 14-22 February 1983, reiterating the

adherence of the Palestinian people to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and to resolutions relevant to the question of Palestine, should contribute to the endeavours to attain a just solution to the question of Palestine conducive to a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East;

(5) Recognizes that the process of enabling the Palestinian People to exercise its rights in Palestine is a significant contribution to the restoration of the rule of law in international relations;

(6) Reiterates the stipulations provided for in General Assembly resolution 181 guaranteeing to all persons equal and non-discriminatory rights in civil, political, economic and religious matters and the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of religion, language, speech and publication, education, assembly and association;

(7) Urges the Security Council to investigate and report on the actions committed by Israel against the Palestinian people in violation of the stipulations mentioned in paragraph 5 above;

(8) Expresses concern that the laws applicable in the occupied Arab territories have been totally eclipsed by a plethora of military orders that have established de facto a new legal régime in violation of The Hague regulations of 1907, and the Geneva Civilian's Convention of 1949;

(9) Expresses concern that the Palestinians and other Arabs in the occupied territories are deprived of juridical and other kinds of protection; that they are victims of legislation based on "security" considerations, involving mass arrests, torture, destruction of houses, and the expulsion of people from their homes, which constitute flagrant violations of applicable humanitarian law.

(10) Recognizes the necessity that all Palestinian and Lebanese prisoners detained by Israel be accorded the status of prisoners of war in accordance with the Geneva Prisoners of War Convention of 1949, if combatants, and in accordance with the Geneva Civilian's Convention of 1949, if civilians;

(11) Recognizes that the establishment of Israeli settlements in the occupied territories and the consequent transfer of parts of the Israeli civilian population into these territories constitute a breach of article 49 of the Geneva Civilian's Convention of 1949, and are contrary to The Hague regulations of 1907 concerning the Laws and Customs of War on Land, now recognized as customary law, and constitute a serious obstacle to a just and comprehensive solution to the question of Palestine;

(12) Expresses concern that the exclusivist nature of Israeli law debars Palestinians from economic activity and access to national resources on Palestinian territory, in consistent violation of General Assembly resolutions on the right of the Palestinians to permanent sovereignty over their natural resources;

(13) Calls upon the Security Council to endorse the recommendations of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People as a

matter of utmost urgency, and to invoke all the relevant provisions provided for in the United Nations Charter to secure their rapid implementation, since up to now it has been prevented from doing so by the negative vote of one of its permanent members;

(14) Calls upon the Security Council to consider the report of the Commission established by its resolution 446 (1979) of 22 March 1979, which examined the situation relating to settlements in the Arab territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem, with a view to implementing its recommendations;

(15) Urges the Security Council to re-activate the above-mentioned Commission to monitor the ongoing establishment of illegal settlements and their implications for the Palestinian people's access to their natural resources;

(16) Recommends that relevant organs, bodies and agencies within the United Nations system reconsider their programmes with a view to intensifying and expanding the level of their economic, legal, educational, and health assistance to the Palestinian people as concrete measures of securing their rights;

(17) Requests the organs, bodies and agencies within the United Nations system to expand the dissemination of information on the violations of Palestinian rights and of International Law so as to increase public awareness regarding the need and the urgency of securing Palestinian rights; and thereby contributing significantly to the rule of law in international relations;

(18) Urges the Secretary-General, in consultation with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, and pending the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967, including Jerusalem, to undertake effective measures to guarantee safety and security and legal and human rights of the Palestinian refugees in the occupied territories;

(19) Urges the General Assembly to establish a special legal aid fund to assist Palestinians in securing their rights under occupation;

(20) Urges the Member States to take cognizance of their obligations under existing international law, in particular with regard to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 which require States parties to respect and to ensure respect for those Conventions in all circumstances;

(21) Urges the secretariat of the Conference to prepare a study on the conditions of women and children in all the occupied territories.

III

Accordingly, the Latin American Regional Meeting, in conformity with the traditions of struggle by Latin American peoples against foreign domination, recommends that the States of the region:

(1) Take diplomatic and other initiatives in bilateral and multilateral fora to assist greater understanding of fundamental issues under international law which pertain to the question of Palestine;

(2) Consider establishing diplomatic relations with the Palestine Liberation Organization;

(3) Participate actively and at a high level in the International Conference on the Question of Palestine in support of the achievement of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people;

(4) Encourage the media and other institutions to disseminate relevant information to increase public awareness and understanding on the question of Palestine;

(5) Encourage the study of the legal aspects of the question of Palestine in the institutions of higher education throughout the region;

(6) Urge the various jurists' associations of the region to establish special investigative commissions to determine the violations of the Palestinians' legal rights and to disseminate their findings accordingly;

(7) Encourage organizations such as those of women, teachers, workers, youth and students to undertake exchanges and other programmes of joint action with their Palestinian counterparts;

(8) Encourage women's associations in particular to investigate the conditions of Palestinian women and children in all occupied territories;

(9) Encourage the formation of national committees in support of the Palestinian people;

(10) Encourage the observance of 29 November as the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian people.

IV

The Latin American Regional Preparatory Meeting takes note of the recommendations adopted by the African Regional Preparatory Meeting held in Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania, 29 March-1 April 1983.

4. The Seventh Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at New Delhi, India, from 7 to 12 March 1983, considers the question of Palestine, the question of Lebanon and the situation in the Middle East

The following paragraphs were adopted in the Political Declaration on the Question of Palestine, Question of Lebanon and the Situation in the Middle East: (A/38/132-S/15675)

X. QUESTION OF PALESTINE

82. The Heads of State or Government reaffirmed that the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries as a whole has undertaken to give its support to the Palestinian people for the liberation of their homeland and the recovery of their inalienable national rights.

83. The Conference reaffirmed that the Zionist occupation of Palestine and the usurpation and denial of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people are the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict. The Conference affirmed that a just and durable peace in the Middle East cannot be established without the total and unconditional withdrawal of Israel from all Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied by it since 1967, including Jerusalem, and without the achievement of a just solution of the problem of Palestine on the basis of the attainment and exercise in Palestine of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including the right of return, self-determination without external interference and the right to national independence and sovereignty, including the right to establish the Palestinian Independent State in its homeland, Palestine.

84. The Conference reaffirmed that the Palestine Liberation Organization is the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and that it has the right to participate on an independent and equal footing in all endeavours, international conferences, activities and international bodies, organs and agencies on the basis of resolutions of the United Nations relevant to the question of Palestine with a view to ensuring the attainment and exercise in Palestine of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. Consequently the Conference rejects all plans, arrangements and agreements which are not in conformity with the provisions referred to above.

85. The Heads of State or Government welcomed the resolutions of the sixteenth session of the Palestinian National Council, held in Algeria from 12 to 22 February 1983, which reaffirmed the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and the unity of the Palestinian people under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization, its sole and legitimate representative. The Conference also affirmed its full solidarity with the Palestine Liberation Organization, which has confronted Zionist aggression courageously and come through that ordeal stronger, more resolute and determined to fight until the rights of the Palestinian people are realized.

86. The Conference stressed the urgent need to undertake endeavours to achieve a just and comprehensive peace on the basis of the principles enunciated above in this Declaration. No action should be taken which is inconsistent with these principles or would adversely affect the struggle of the Arab countries for the liberation of their territories and of the Palestinian people for the liberation of their homeland, Palestine, and the exercise of their inalienable rights therein.

87. The Conference strongly condemned Israel for its continued occupation of Palestinian and other Arab territories and for its persistent acts of repression against the Palestinian people, and demanded the United Nations Security Council invoke the powers vested in it with a view to imposing on Israel the relevant sanctions prescribed in the United Nations Charter until Israel withdraws from all occupied Palestinian and Arab territories, demolishes all Israeli settlements established in these territories and complies fully with the relevant decisions of the Security Council.

88. The Conference especially condemned Israel for the acts of genocide perpetrated against the Palestinian people in the Sabra and Shatila camps in Lebanese territory under occupation by Israeli armed forces.

89. The Conference also decided to request the international community to set up a war crimes tribunal in order to try Israel under international law for the crimes committed against the Palestinian people in all the territories which it has occupied since its establishment in 1948.

90. The Conference referred to the responsibility of the Government of the United States of America for violating the commitments it had undertaken to guarantee the safety and security of Palestinian refugees.

91. The Conference reaffirmed its firm opposition to the policy and practices of Israel in the occupied Arab and Palestinian territories, including Jerusalem, and sharply condemned them. It condemned in particular and viewed as illegal the establishment of Israeli settlements in these territories since this constitutes a serious obstacle to a just and comprehensive solution to the question of Palestine and the Middle East crisis.

92. The Conference reaffirmed in this context its total rejection of all the Israeli policies designed to modify the geographical characteristics, demographic composition or legal status of the Arab and Palestinian territories occupied by Israel since 1967. The Conference decided not to recognize any change made by Israel in the above territories and called on all States not to recognize such changes and to refrain from any co-operation with Israel that might encourage it to pursue its policies and practices in the occupied Arab and Palestinian territories.

93. The Heads of State or Government reaffirmed the resolution of the Conference of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Non-Aligned Countries, held in New Delhi in 1981, which had firmly condemned the hostile attitude of the United States of America towards the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and the Palestine Liberation Organization and towards the total and unconditional withdrawal from all occupied Arab and Palestinian territories, including Jerusalem. That attitude violated the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and the General Assembly resolutions on the questions of Palestine and the Middle East and was an obstacle to the establishment of a just peace in the region.

94. The Conference condemned the policy which the United States is striving to impose in the region and which is prejudicial to the liberation of the occupied Arab and Palestinian territories, including Jerusalem, and to the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people.

95. The Conference also condemned the support given by the United States of America to the Israeli entity in all fields, especially the military and the political fields. The Conference affirmed that the pursuit of this policy harmed the relations and interests which linked the non-aligned countries on the one hand with the United States on the other.

96. The Heads of State or Government noted with satisfaction the efforts made by the United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People in the search for a just solution to the question of Palestine. The Conference welcomed the measures taken by the Committee in accordance with General Assembly resolution 37/86 to organize the International Conference on the Question of Palestine to be held in Paris in August 1983. The Conference also declared its conviction that this Conference would make a positive contribution to realizing the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people. The Conference called upon all members to take an active part, and to be represented at a high level, in the International Conference and in the regional preparatory meetings so as to contribute to the success of that Conference.

97. The Conference called upon the Security Council to implement the United Nations General Assembly resolutions on the question of Palestine, and in particular resolution 37/86 (D and E). It called upon the United Nations Secretary-General to implement the provisions of resolution 37/120 (I and J) as soon as possible.

98. The Conference decided to set up a Committee at the level of Heads of State, to co-operate with the seven-member Arab Committee to support the rights of the Arab Palestinian people in accordance with international law and the will of the non-aligned countries and their peoples. The Committee would work with the various forces influential in the Middle East conflict for the achievement of a just, durable and comprehensive peace in the Middle East which would enable the Palestinian people to exercise their rights in freedom and sovereignty in their independent homeland. The Committee would comprise the following members: Algeria, Bangladesh, Cuba, India (Chairman), Palestine Liberation Organization, Senegal, Yugoslavia and Zambia.

XI. QUESTION OF LEBANON

99. Having considered the grave situation confronting Lebanon, which constitutes a threat to international peace and security in the region and the world, the Conference

- (a) Declares its solidarity with the Lebanese people and Government;
- (b) Reaffirms its support for the safety of Lebanon, for its territorial integrity, independence and right to exercise sovereignty throughout its territory within its internationally recognized boundaries;
- (c) Calls upon all States to support Lebanon in the implementation of Security Council resolutions 508(1982) and 509(1982) in order to ensure the withdrawal of Israeli forces from all Lebanese territory;
- (d) Calls upon all States to endorse Lebanese efforts to secure the withdrawal of all non-Lebanese forces whose presence in Lebanon does not have the support of the Lebanese legal authority;
- (e) Reaffirms its support for Lebanon in its efforts to reconstruct its economy and strengthen its public institutions in order to attain its national aspirations.

XII. SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

100. The Heads of State or Government expressed concern over the deterioration of the situation in the Middle East caused by Israel's habitually aggressive and expansionist policies in the region. They were of the view that this situation threatened a new Israeli aggression and posed a grave threat to international peace and security. They reaffirmed the solidarity of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries with the struggle for the liberation of the occupied Arab territories and the restoration of the usurped rights

101. The Conference considered it necessary to reaffirm all the principles and resolutions previously adopted by the Non-Aligned Movement in regard to the question of Palestine and the Middle East situation and especially since Israel's aggression of 1967. It reiterated that the question would not be resolved and that peace would not be established in the region unless all the following principles were observed simultaneously:

- (a) The question of Palestine is the core of the Middle East problem and the root cause of the Arab-Israeli conflict.
- (b) The question of Palestine and the Middle East problem form an indivisible whole and cannot be dealt with or resolved separately. In view of this, a partial solution or a solution confined to some aspects of the conflict to the exclusion of others is not possible. Nor is it possible to establish a partial peace. Peace should be just and comprehensive.
- (c) A just peace in the region can only be based on Israel's total and unconditional withdrawal from all occupied Palestinian and Arab territories and the restoration of all the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to return to their homes, the right to self-determination without foreign interference and the right to establish their own independent and sovereign State in their national territory on the basis of General Assembly resolution 3236 (XXIX) of 22 November 1974.
- (d) Jerusalem is part of the occupied Palestinian territory and Israel should withdraw completely and unconditionally from it and restore it to Arab sovereignty.
- (e) The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) is the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and it alone has the full right to represent this people and to participate fully in all international conferences, activities and events relating to the question of Palestine and the Arab-Israeli conflict, in order to secure the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people and to solve the Middle East problem. No solution can be considered comprehensive, just or acceptable without the participation of the Palestine Liberation Organization on an independent and equal footing in its elaboration and acceptance.
- (f) All the measures taken by Israel in the Arab and Palestinian territories since their occupation covering installations and all changes affecting political, cultural, religious, demographic, physical, geographical and other features are null and void and illegal.

- (g) All settlements set up or to be set up by Israel in occupied territories are null and void and illegal and are considered as an obstacle to peace. They should, therefore, be pulled down immediately and no new settlements should be set up and the proliferation of existing settlements should not be allowed.
102. (a) The Conference expressed its support for and adopted the Arab Peace Plan proclaimed at the Twelfth Arab Summit Conference held at Fes, Morocco, and emphasized that this Plan, being based on international legitimacy and on the principles of right and justice, constitutes a framework for establishing a just and durable peace in the Middle East.
- (b) The Conference reaffirmed that the Non-Aligned Movement considered that the question of Palestine and of the territories occupied since 1967 is a common cause to all non-aligned countries. The Conference, therefore, resolved that any deviation from the resolutions of the Conferences of non-aligned countries relating to the Middle East problem and the question of Palestine would affect the unity of the Non-Aligned Movement in its struggle against colonialism, foreign occupation, racism and zionism. It would also be considered as swerving from the determination of the non-aligned countries to bring to an end the occupation of Arab-Palestinian territories by Israel and to help the Palestinian people to secure its inalienable national rights.
- (c) The Conference condemned any agreement or treaty which violates or infringes the rights of the Arab nation and the Palestinian people as recognized by the Non-Aligned Movement, and in accordance with international law, the United Nations Charter and its relevant resolutions and which prevents the liberation of Jerusalem and the occupied Arab and Palestinian territories and the full exercise of, and attainment by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights.
103. (a) The Conference reaffirmed its firm opposition to and condemnation of Israeli policies and practices in the occupied Arab and Palestinian territories, including Jerusalem. It especially condemned the establishment of Israeli settlements in these territories, considering them to be illegal and to constitute a serious obstacle to the achievement of a just and comprehensive settlement of the question of Palestine and the Middle East problem.
- (b) The Conference condemned the Israeli invasion of Lebanese territory and the crimes perpetrated by the Israeli forces, such as killing and destruction, in this non-aligned country.
- (c) In this respect, the Conference reaffirmed its categorical rejection of all Israeli policies aimed at changing the geographical features, the demographic character or the legal status of the occupied Arab and Palestinian territories. The Conference resolved not to recognize any changes made by Israel in the aforesaid territories and called upon all States not to recognize them and to refrain from any co-operation with Israel that might encourage it to pursue its policies and practices in the occupied Arab and Palestinian territories.
104. (a) The Conference strongly condemned Israel for its refusal to comply with the resolutions of the United Nations Security Council and General Assembly relating to the occupied Syrian Golan Heights. The Conference affirmed that Israel's decision to annex these Heights and the measures taken to implement its decision are null and void and without any legal validity. They have no legal effect and are not recognized.

- (b) The Conference called upon all States members of the United Nations that have not yet taken any measure to implement General Assembly resolution ES-1/9 of 5 February 1982 to do so in order to join in the just struggle of the Syrian nationals in the occupied Syrian Golan Heights. The Conference invited the Security Council to take the necessary action to compel Israel to implement resolution 497(1981).
- (c) The Conference expressed the full support of the members of the Non-Aligned Movement for and their solidarity with the just struggle of the Arab nation against Israeli occupation, aggression and threats and for the attainment of the national inalienable rights of the Arab people of Palestine and the liberation of the occupied Arab and Palestinian territories. On this occasion the Conference denounced the attack launched by Israel and the United States of America against the right of Syria to secure the means to defend itself. The Conference noted that that attack could be considered as the prelude to a premeditated assault against Syria and other Arab States.

105. (a) The Conference strongly denounced the exploitation by Israel of the natural resources and wealth of Palestine and the occupied Arab countries in defiance of the Hague and Geneva Conventions and called upon all countries to take the necessary action in order to refrain from any co-operation that would enable Israel to continue to exploit such wealth and resources unlawfully.

- (b) The Conference condemned Israel for its intention to cut a canal between the Dead Sea and the Mediterranean Sea. It affirmed that this project constitutes a dangerous activity among the aggressive actions undertaken against the legitimate rights and vital interests of the Palestinian people and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, as well as a threat to global peace and security. The Conference invited all countries to denounce this project and refrain from providing any support or assistance which might allow Israel to implement it.

- (c) The Conference declared that the Geneva Conventions of 1949, and in particular Convention No.4 regarding the protection of civilians in time of war and the Protocols 1 and 2 annexed to the Conventions adopted in 1977, should be applied to all the occupied

Arab territories and Palestine, including Jerusalem. The Conference condemned Israel for its persistent violation of those Conventions and of the basic rights and freedoms of the inhabitants of the territories mentioned in having displaced them, destroyed their homes and confiscated their property. The Conference condemned the refusal of Israel to receive the tripartite committee set up under Security Council resolution 446(1979) to inquire into conditions in settlements in the occupied Arab territories and its refusal to comply with Security Council resolution 452(1979).

- (d) The Conference condemned all those policies, and particularly the policy of the United States of America, which help Israel to continue its occupation of the Arab and Palestinian territories and which jeopardize the exercise by the Palestinian people of their inalienable rights. In this connection the Conference noted that the United States of America was continuing to support Israel in several fields.

- (e) The Conference also noted that the United States of America, by exercising its right of veto in the Security Council in a manner contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, prevents the Security Council from taking steps to implement the principle of the non-admissibility of acquisition of territories by force and to enable the Palestinian people to recover their inalienable rights. The Conference therefore calls on the United States of America to abandon its abuse of the right of veto.
- (f) The Conference expressed its profound concern at the establishment of a "strategic alliance" between the United States of America and Israel and affirmed that the alliance strengthened the aggressive role of Israel, which threatens the stability of the countries of the Middle East and global peace and security and encourages Israel to pursue its policy of annexation, aggression and racial discrimination.
- (g) The Conference expressed its deep concern at the build-up of conventional and nuclear weapons in Israel, which is designed to reinforce Israel's situation as a base for colonialism and racism in the third world in general and in Africa and Asia in particular. By taking such measures Israel imperils global peace and security. The Conference called for the implementation of United Nations General Assembly resolutions 33/71 of 14 December 1978 on military and nuclear co-operation with Israel and 37/82 of 9 December 1982 on Israeli nuclear armament.
- (h) The Conference condemned Israel for pursuing its policy of aggression and annexation against the Arab countries and the Palestinian people and called on all countries, including the United States of America, to put an immediate end to their military, political and economic assistance and to the provision of human resources to Israel. The Conference called on all countries to refrain from providing assistance and facilities for implementing Zionist plans for the immigration of Jews from all over the world to Palestine and the occupied Arab territories. The Conference condemned all imperialist or colonialist forces of military intervention which have constituted or constitute a threat to the security and independence of Arab countries and interference in their internal affairs.
- (i) The Conference expressed its deep concern at the increase in collaboration between the Zionist entity in Palestine and the racist regime of South Africa, especially in the military and nuclear fields. It strongly condemned this collaboration and solidarity and called on all countries of the Movement to sever relations with the above two regimes in all fields and to isolate them completely.

106. (a) The Conference called upon the Security Council to recognize the inalienable national rights of the Palestine people, including its right to self-determination and its right to establish an independent Arab state in Palestine, and to facilitate the achievement of these rights. The Conference also called upon the Council to implement the principle of the non-admissibility of the acquisition of territories by force, by taking the necessary measures to achieve the withdrawal of Israel from all Palestinian and Arab territories it has occupied since 1967. The Conference called upon the members of the Security Council to play their role and discharge their responsibilities so that the Council may take appropriate measures in conformity with the United Nations Charter to establish and guarantee peace and security in the Middle East.

- (b) After reviewing the history of the Middle East since the establishment of Israel in Palestine in 1948, the Conference considered that Israel's aggressive, expansionist and colonialist policies and practices in the occupied territories against the Arab nation in general and the Arab people of Palestine in particular, its continued violation of the United Nations Charter and the principles of international law and international agreements and treaties and its persistent refusal to implement the United Nations resolutions relating to the Middle East demonstrated that Israel is not a peace-loving member and does not fulfil the requirements of the United Nations Charter and the resolutions of international organizations. The Conference therefore considered that it is high time for the United Nations to take the necessary measures under Chapter VII of the Charter. The Conference called upon the Security Council to convene to take the measures referred to against Israel for not carrying out the resolutions of the Security Council and for imperilling international peace and security by its conduct.
 - (c) The Conference called upon all countries that support the liberation of occupied countries and the Palestinian cause to take all appropriate measures against the countries that encourage Israel to pursue its policy and practices, especially the United States of America.
 - (d) The Conference recalled the decision taken by the Heads of State or Government at their meeting in Algiers, urging non-aligned countries to work for a boycott of Israel in the diplomatic, economic, military and cultural fields and in the sphere of maritime and air traffic in accordance with the provisions of Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter. Considering the reasons that led to the adoption of this resolution, the Conference stressed the need to continue to implement it and urged member countries of the Movement to adhere to it and apply it strictly.
107. (a) The Conference affirmed the commitment of the countries of the Non-Aligned Movement to strengthen their support for the confrontation Arab states and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, in order to enable them to fulfil the requirements imposed on them by the liberation struggle and to defend their lands and their independence against Israeli aggression and threats. The Conference urged friendly countries and the organizations that have participated in the national liberation struggle to continue to give it their support.
- (b) The Conference expressed appreciation of the effective solidarity offered by all States and powers that support the struggle of the Palestinian people and the Arab nation, especially the countries of the Organization of African Unity, the socialist countries and the Organization of the Islamic Conference. The Conference also praised the advanced European stand on the problem of the Middle East and Palestine. The Conference called upon those countries and powers to intensify their political, diplomatic and material support for the Palestinian people and the Arab countries in their efforts to re-establish all their national rights and recover all the occupied Arab territories.

The Rapporteur of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, Ambassador Victor Gauci of Malta, represented the Committee at the Seventh Conference of Heads of State or Government of the Non-Aligned countries. The following statement was distributed by the Rapporteur of the Committee at the Non-Aligned Summit Conference.

On behalf of the United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, I wish to thank you, and the entire membership of the Non-aligned Movement, for inviting the Committee to participate in this exceptionally important Summit meeting. I take the opportunity also to convey our thanks to the Government of India for the generous hospitality it has extended to us here in New Delhi.

The invitation to the Committee is in itself yet one more practical manifestation of the truly pivotal role which the Non-aligned Movement has always granted to the question of Palestine - a question that has featured prominently on the Movement's agenda since the early sixties. It climaxed last year when during 1982, two specific meetings of the Co-ordinating Bureau were devoted entirely to consideration of this question, one in Kuwait in April, and the other in Cyprus in July. Both these meetings were in direct response to the grave situation in the Palestinian and other Arab territories under Israeli repression.

The Committee draws great encouragement from this consistent interest on the part of the Non-aligned Movement. We are beholden to the Movement for the major initiatives on the question of Palestine that it has launched in the past few years. The Committee is most appreciative, also, of the unstinting encouragement and support that the Movement has given to the Committee's work.

That support is expressed tangibly not only in the comprehensive declarations that have been adopted on the question of Palestine in various Non-Aligned Meetings, but also at the United Nations, where almost every member of the Non-aligned Movement, has, particularly at the latest session, now voted in favour of the Committee's own recommendations, which have been strongly endorsed by the General Assembly repeatedly since 1976.

At the latest session of the Assembly, I gave a statistical analysis of the voting pattern on the Palestine question since the Committee's recommendations were first elaborated. One important feature of that pattern is that our steadily increasing support has been solidly inspired and maintained by the Non-aligned and developing countries. This unity in our ranks ultimately will assist the Palestinian people in attaining their inalienable rights. Thanks to the collective efforts of all concerned, this objective has gained quasi - universal recognition, but opinions still vary on the best way for implementation.

Impressive as these gains are, we cannot rest upon our laurels. We need continually to review developments and to maintain pressure with one voice for a just solution. We also need to probe new avenues for gaining further support even outside our own ranks. Unity between us on the approach to a just solution is therefore paramount. Any bickering amongst us, any division, renders comfort mainly to those who conveniently want no solution to the problem, to those who consistently stand opposed to the practical attainment by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights.

We have now reached a critical phase. In solid ranks, we need to push forward in a determined effort to achieve our final objective, to gain over to our side, with justice and diplomacy, those remaining influential countries who are still hesitant to recognize and to insist on attainment of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people as the fundamental key to a solution for the wider Arab/Israeli conflict.

The vote last year was particularly significant, because overwhelming majorities were attained for the resolution of Palestine advanced by the Committee. The validity of the pragmatic approach advocated by the Committee was evident when the voting tally on every single resolution tabled by the Committee surpassed anything we had achieved previously.

The lesson is clear. We have to remain united and pragmatic in our approach. We need to remain united if we are to advance our goals even further, until our objective is achieved.

We must with utmost candour admit that while we can derive satisfaction from the fact that we in the Movement are largely united in our aims, events in the region and the absence of practical progress towards the attainment by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights leave little room for complacency.

The momentous, tragic events of 1982 left no doubt in our minds as to the extent to which Israel would go to achieve its own objectives. Those events, which claimed the lives of thousands of victims, strengthen our resolve to work even harder to attain our stated objectives, which, we are bound to recall, are so firmly founded on justice, international law, and the decisions of the United Nations. We mourn the victims again today, and renew our pledge towards final victory, so that the supreme sacrifice they paid will not have been in vain.

The Committee is convinced that we have now reached a critical stage on the question of Palestine at the United Nations; henceforth we must focus exclusively, relentlessly and unmistakably on Israel-- on the country which is violating the rights of the Palestinian people by its repeated illegal acts in the occupied territories, by its defiance of United Nations resolutions, by its refusal to halt the shameful repression of the Arab and Palestinian people in the occupied territories, and by its constant resort to military action even while allegedly professing peace.

The Committee considers it a principal duty to arouse influential public opinion even further, especially in a few remaining countries, and to urge these countries forcefully to demand justice, peace and early positive action. Against such a combination of moral pressure, even the most intransigent nation cannot remain indifferent for long. The cracks in the walls are beginning to show, both in the countries supporting Israel, and even in Israel itself. We should capitalise on this favourable groundswell of popular support for the justice of the Palestinian cause, by all diplomatic means.

In this connection, as you are aware, in August this year, the International Conference on the Question of Palestine will take place in Paris.

The Committee, in its capacity as Preparatory Committee for that Conference, is actively involved in the necessary preparations; these include regional seminars, governmental meetings and other media events which are intended to give maximum publicity to the objectives of the Conference. Practically every week from now on till August there will be some meeting on Palestine. It is the Committee's fervent hope that all members of the Non-aligned movement will participate actively, not only in the Conference itself, but also in the preparatory regional meetings.

We desire to attain a maximum input and understanding from each region, which will climax, with universal participation at the highest level, in the Conference itself. It would thus be a truly universal effort to find a solution to a burning question of justice, law, humanity and politics which threatens universal repercussions if allowed to remain festering, as in the past. Without a doubt, as far as the United Nations is concerned, a marathon effort has been mounted this year on the question of Palestine. This includes several objective and in-depth studies of the origin and the various aspects of the question, which we respectfully bring to the attention of all Members. Thus all nations will be informed and be well prepared.

The Committee also relies heavily on the members of the Non-aligned to participate actively in the Conference, and to solicit universal participation in a real contribution towards a peaceful solution to the question of Palestine, based on the recommendations of the Committee. The higher the level of participation, the greater the impact and the better the chances of eventual success. In this connection, there should be an addition to the words "and to be represented at a high level", in the English version of the Political Document or paragraph 96, so as to conform to the original version in Arabic.

At the same time the Committee hopes that the Non-aligned Movement will continue to bring pressure on the Security Council to take positive

action on this important question, so as finally to break the deadlock which has stalemated our efforts up to now. The failure so far of the Security Council to take positive action has been gravely detrimental to the Palestinian cause -- while the Council fiddled, Palestine burned. We must galvanize the Council to assume its responsibilities, for the Council can put an end to the tragedy and suffering, but only if it acts in concert. Malta for its part will continue to strive ceaselessly for positive action.

In considering this question, cognizance must be taken of the various initiatives that have been proposed publicly. While none of them have proved fully acceptable to all parties, there is no doubt that each contains elements which can be part of a just and durable settlement. Efforts should be made to draw on positive aspects of these proposals in our search for a just and long-lasting solution.

What we all have to keep in mind is that time is running out. Recent events have made it clear that we have reached a point of no return. Swift, decisive action is essential. Vacillation, disunity or delay can only compound the tragedy of the Palestinians. We have much to do between now and next August -- and we need the contribution and co-operation of all if we are to progress. I am convinced that this will be forthcoming in the best traditions of the Non-aligned Movement.

In conclusion, may I, once again, express my thanks on behalf of the Committee for the invitation to participate at this meeting; it gives us an opportunity to outline before such a distinguished audience our objectives for the attainment of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people -- the right to return, the right to self-determination and independence, and the right to establish a State in Palestine. We are convinced that this great Movement, which represents two-thirds of humanity, has a signal role to play in the attainment of justice, equity and peace for the heroic Palestinian people, who have suffered so much for far too long.

5. Western European Parliamentarians held Preparatory Meeting for the International Conference on the Question of Palestine

A two-day preparatory meeting of Western European parliamentarians on the International Conference on the Question of Palestine was held on 25-26 March, 1983, at the Dutch Parliament building in the Hague. The meeting was organized at the initiative of the Parliamentary Association for Euro-Arab Co-operation, in co-operation with the Secretariat of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine.

The preparatory meeting was intended as an opportunity for members of the national parliaments of Western Europe and the European Parliament to consult on how Western Europe, and more specifically its parliamentarians, may contribute actively to a settlement of the Middle East problem that takes into account the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the United Nations.

The President of the Hague meeting was Klaas de Vries, Co-Chairman of the Parliamentary Association for Euro-Arab Co-operation and Member of the Second Chamber of the Netherlands Parliament. Some 30 members of the national parliaments of Belgium, Denmark, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland and the United Kingdom and of the European Parliament participated in the session.

Among the speakers at the opening meeting were Mr. Massamba Sarré, Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and of the Preparatory Committee for the International Conference on the Question of Palestine and Mrs. Lucille Mair, Secretary-General of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine. Also present at the meeting were a representative of the Dutch Foreign Ministry, representatives of the diplomatic corps and representatives of non-governmental organizations and the press.

At the conclusion of the meetings the following press communique was issued:

Thirty Western European Parliamentarians from a wide variety of political parties in eleven national parliaments and the European Parliament today asked the two co-chairmen of the Parliamentary Association for Euro-Arab Cooperation, Klaas de VRIES (Holland) and Michele ACHILLI (Italy) to lead the Association's delegation to the United Nations International Conference on the Question of Palestine in Paris (August 16 - 27)

The United Nations Conference will be of particular value if a constructive dialogue between the P.L.O. as the representative of the Palestinian people and those courageous peace forces in Isreal which recognise Palestinian national rights leads to a psychological breakthrough in the barrier between the two peoples.

The participants saluted the pioneering work in this field of Dr Issam SARTAWI and Mr Uri AVNERY.

The Association which has always advocated Palestinian national rights including the right of establishing a sovereign Palestinian state in Palestine, decided to maintain on a permanent basis its contacts with those forces in Isreal which fight for peace with justice.

The parliamentarians looked forward to the participation of all Western European governments in the Paris conference.

The Conference welcomed the European Council's conclusions of March 22 on the Middle East, especially the recognition that the Arab Summit meeting at Fez demonstrated a readiness for peace and that the conclusions of the Algiers meeting of the Palestine National Council could and should contribute to the peace process.

The parliamentarians pointed out that the P.L.O. had recognised the principles of all U.N. resolutions and had endorsed the Fez and Brezhnev proposals thereby implying recognition of Isreal's right to exist. Western European governments should acknowledge the inescapable fact that the P.L.O. represents the Palestinain people and should maintain government contact with the P.L.O. at the highest level.

The participants emphasized that the Western European governments should assure their role in the search for an overall peaceful solution of the Middle East conflict. They underlined amongst others that their governments both individually and through EC should be more forceful in making their position as expressed in the resolutions of its ten member states understood by the United States government and public opinion, and urge the American government to implement its own recommendations especially those concerning the need for Israel to cease immediately from enlarging settlements or creating new ones in the territories contrary to international law.

The parliamentarians thanked Mrs MAIR, Secretary General of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine and Ambassador SARRE, Chairman of the U.N. Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian people for their vital support in arranging the Hague conference, Mr Adnan OMRAN, Deputy Secretary General of the Arab League for expressing the League's point-of-view and the Dutch States General for generously providing its facilities.

Full text of the statement of Mr. Massamba Sarré is reproduced below:

Mr. President, Excellencies, honourable members of Parliament, Ladies and gentlemen.

I wish to thank you, the Members of the Parliamentary Association for Euro-Arab Co-operation, for the kind invitation you have extended to me to address this august gathering.

The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, of which I have the honour to be the Chairman and on whose behalf I speak today, especially welcomes this initiative you have taken in a field to which we have devoted considerable time and energy.

As you are aware, the question of Palestine has been before the United Nations for over a generation and still no solution has been found. We are all conscious of the urgent need for a solution of this problem. but ^{that} /solution,

has persisted in eluding us. The tragic events in Lebanon last year underlined the urgency of a solution. They brought home to us the fact that the situation is fraught with possibilities which can have dire consequences for all of mankind. They added a new dimension to the problem and made us aware even more forcefully that time was running out, that the longer a solution to the problem of Palestine was postponed, the greater the danger to civilisation as we know it. Past events in the tragic history of the Palestinian people pale

before the magnitude of the tragedy that was enacted in Lebanon in the months of June to September last year. Now, as never before, the absolute necessity for the attainment by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights has been forcefully thrust upon us. Now, more than ever, the question of Palestine requires our special attention.

This is not a question that suffers from a lack of attention. It is a question that has been before the international community since 1947. We must ask ourselves why, in spite of an active interest in finding a solution to this problem, the international community has not been successful. We know all that we are agreed on the broad principles. They are the broad principles of international law and morality.

Possible solutions have been suggested for the last 36 years. All these suggestions have some merit in them but failed because ^{the} circumstances of the moment were not favourable. Against the broad principles of justice, narrow political interests have intruded and prevailed. With each passing year a complex problem has become more complicated. We are faced with confusion more confounded by time and the inexorable march of events in the region.

Seven years ago the Committee, in fulfilment of its mandate from the General Assembly of the United Nations, came up with a set of recommendations. On arriving at those recommendations the Committee was guided by the following principles:

- (a) Since the question of Palestine is at the heart of the Middle East problem, no solution can be envisaged without taking fully into account the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people:
- (b) The realization of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to return to their homes and of their right to self-determination, and national independence and sovereignty will also contribute to a settlement of the Middle East crisis:

- (c) The participation of the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people, on an equal footing with other parties, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 3236 (XXIX) and 3375 (XXX) is essential in all efforts, deliberations and conferences on the Middle East which are held under the auspices of the United Nations:
- (d) The acquisition of territory by force is inadmissible, and consequently it is Israel's obligation to withdraw completely and speedily from all territories so occupied.

The aims of these recommendations are:

- To
- (i) /Facilitate the exercise of the acknowledged rights of the Palestinian people and endorse the role of the Palestine Liberation Organization as the sole representative of the Palestinian people:
- To
- (ii) /Promote a peaceful solution satisfying all the States and peoples of the Middle East:
- To
- (iii) /Take advantage of all the opportunities afforded by the United Nations for promoting peace and safeguarding security in overseeing the changes recommended: and
- To
- (iv) /Ensure strict respect for the provisions of international law and the relevant United Nations resolutions.

It will be noted that contrary to persistent protestations that Israel's interests were not safeguarded, the recommendations aimed at a peaceful solution satisfying all States and peoples of the Middle East.

The Committee's recommendations have been endorsed repeatedly by the General Assembly but despite the moral and legal authority they command their implementation has remained blocked due to the inability of the Security Council to take any decision owing to the veto of one of its permanent members.

This has been most discouraging. Just as discouraging is the fact that the many solutions proposed have not found acceptance either. Many of them contained positive elements which could form the basis of a just and durable solution. No significant progress, however, has hitherto been made.

The Committee has felt all along that on the question of Palestine, the facts speak for themselves and that a knowledge of the facts as they really are would and not necessarily as they are reported. / help to ensure that justice will be done and the Palestinian people will attain its rights.

We have always felt the need for objective information as a means to build up public opinion but this has unfortunately not always existed.

It was to remedy the lack of such objective information that the Division for Palestinian Rights has been created within the United Nations secretariat to work in consultation with and under the guidance of the Committee. That Division publishes studies on the question of Palestine seeking to promote a better understanding of the problem. It also organises three seminars a year in the various regions in order that the international public may become familiar with the question. At those seminars there is always a panel which deals with public opinion within the region and this reveals the importance that the Committee attaches to the question of information overall.

Two such seminars have been organised in Europe - one in Vienna, Austria, in 1980 and the other in Valletta, Malta, in 1982. At these seminars the development of opinion in Western Europe has been carefully studied and it is heartening to note/some progress has been observed./ the Venice Declaration of June 1980/which was a major step forward in Western Europe's approach to the Question of Palestine. It tallied on many points with the Committee's recommendations and with a number of resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly. It showed, above all, a better understanding of the aspirations of the Palestinian people and a certain willingness to take bold and original initiatives to solve the problem.

That progress has been reflected, also, in the votes in the General Assembly at the last session of that body in December 1982. Progress of this nature, if sustained, will bear fruit.

Two important documents were issued at the end of the United Nations seminar in Valletta last year. One of these was the Valletta Appeal to Western Europe for Justice in Palestine, which appealed to the governmental organisations and people of Western Europe to urge their governments urgently to adopt an impartial approach to the Question of Palestine and to assume their proper role in restoring the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people on the basis of the recommendations of the United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, thereby promoting a peaceful solution to a problem which had endangered international peace and security for an entire generation.

The second document was signed by nine members of Parliament from Belgium, the United Kingdom, Italy, Greece, France and Malta, who participated in the Seminar. It called for an initiative which would include official recognition of the Palestine Liberation Organization as the sole representative of the Palestinian people and should be based on United Nations resolutions in favour of recognition of the inalienable national rights of the Palestinians as constituting the basis of a just and lasting peace in the Near East. In the Appeal, the signatories also invited all those forces that are concerned for justice and peace to organise a European Conference to be held in Athens in November 1982. The Conference did not take place, but its aims and objectives could well be achieved today at this important meeting, and at the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, in August this year.

Western Europe has an important role to play in the search for solutions to the problem of Palestine. It is sad that hitherto, in the recent past, it has not exercised that role. It is in the hope of eliciting some constructive action by the countries of Western Europe that we felt that it was important to hold the International Conference on the Question of Palestine in Europe. It is our hope also that we have maximum participation by the West European States. They have all a constructive contribution to make, and we look forward to their proving to be a vital factor in the equation of Palestinian survival.

This meeting is one of the many preparatory meetings for that International Conference. In my own personal view, it could well be the most important of the many Preparatory meetings we shall hold in the next few months. The action you decide on at this meeting will have a profound effect on the Conference and contribute actively to the attainment of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

It is time that justice was done to the Palestinian people. The tragic events of 1982 have not broken their indomitable spirit nor has the validity of their aspirations suffered one iota. Their inalienable rights remain inviolate and the importance of their implementation has been even more forcefully brought home to us. In fact, it is logical to conclude that that meaningless slaughter of innocents could have been avoided if the Palestinians had been permitted to exercise their rights in their own land. The entire international community is compelled to admit that there can be no peace in the Middle East until that is achieved, and if no peace is achieved in the Middle East, we remain on the brink of international catastrophe.

Ours is an awesome task. Delay in solving the problem not only makes a just solution doubly difficult - it further compounds the injustice that has been done to the Palestinian people. The daily reports from the West Bank are not encouraging. They only highlight the need for urgent action. Not a day passes without news of land confiscations, of the illegal establishment of new Israeli settlements, and of the violent handling, often resulting in death, of those who no more than protest the injustices done to them. The increasing frequency with which Israeli settlers take the law into their own hands gives further cause for concern.

It would appear that to the Government of Israel, international public opinion, international law and United Nations resolutions have no relevance if they are not in tune with Israel's own aims and ambitions. It would appear, too, that Israel has chosen to pursue its dangerous policies heedless of the threat they pose to international peace and security.

We cannot therefore lose sight of the importance or the magnitude of the question to which we seek solutions. We have to persist in our efforts and cannot rest until a just and durable solution is found. Our generation of mankind is burdened with the guilt of the holocaust. Let not our children be burdened with the guilt of injustice inflicted upon the Palestinian people. The Palestinian people expect our support in their struggle. They ask for no more than justice. We cannot, indeed, we must not, let them down.

Full text of the statement of Mrs. Lucille Mair is reproduced below:

Mr. Chairman,

This meeting of European Parliamentarians demonstrates Western Europe's long and deep concern for peace, justice and security in the Middle East. It is also testimony of Western European support for the United Nations' efforts in that same cause: and I cannot express too strongly the appreciation of the United Nations for this important initiative of the Parliamentary Association for Euro Arab Cooperation, under the dynamic leadership of its Co-Chairman Mr. Klaas de Vries, President of this Conference and its dedicated Secretary-General, Mr. Robert Swann.

This meeting of distinguished legislators of such a range of political persuasions, representing so many countries and people of this region, has a special and vital significance in our collective search for world peace and justice. For Parliamentary traditions are based on the efficacy of deliberation and consultation as a sound means of resolving conflict. Few issues on the agenda of our troubled world as that of Palestine so demand the application of these very qualities and these approaches which sustain the Parliamentary tradition.

I am, therefore, specially pleased that this is the issue which has inspired the organization of this meeting of European Parliamentarians viz. the question of Palestine, and in particular the forthcoming International Conference on Palestine which will take place later this year, in response to the mandate of the United Nations General Assembly. That scheduled Conference is itself evidence of the continuing efforts of the United Nations to implement the goals of its Charter, to preserve world peace and security and to advance the fundamental principle of self-determination for all peoples. Specifically it is evidence too of the awesome responsibility which the United Nations has for the question of Palestine which has been on its agenda, an unfinished item, since its very inception.

Conscious of that responsibility, and conscious of the growing threat to regional and to global peace which the question of Palestine presents, the General Assembly, at its 36th session in December 1981, took the decision concerning the International Conference, which has activated our current efforts and activities.

That decision was based on the judgement of the member states of the United Nations that international recognition of the facts underlying this complex problem could lead to a genuine and just solution. But it was also seen as a unique chance to teach the listening global public about those who are at the core of the issue, the Palestinian people, and to systematically counter prevailing stereotypes that inhibit progress on this issue. The Conference hopes, among other things, to humanize the world's images of Palestinians in their quest for their inalienable rights which have been elaborated and endorsed in so many resolutions of the United Nations.

The Conference plans to continue the process emanating from the Partition Resolution 181 which envisaged an Arab and a Jewish state in Palestine, and to seek just means of completing that equation.

So the twin objectives of the Conference are essentially to increase global awareness of the facts relating to the question and to mobilize governmental and non-governmental support for effective ways in which the Palestinians can exercise their inalienable rights including their right to their independent state, consisting with the relevant UN resolutions.

The invasion in Lebanon in the summer of last year injected an even stronger sense of urgency into the purpose of the Conference. A July extraordinary Meeting of Foreign Ministers of the Non-Aligned Countries in Nicosia strongly recommended to the UN that the Conference dates originally proposed for 1984 be advanced to 1983. An Emergency Special Session of the General Assembly opened on 16 August and took formal action confirming the dates of the Conference (August 1983) and the site at Unesco Headquarters (Paris).

The General Assembly at its 37th session reaffirmed the Conference and endorsed its objectives and structure on December 10 1982 (resolution 37/86C) with a majority of 123 to 2, with 17 abstentions, most of which were from Western Europe. It urged the cooperation of States "to promote heightened awareness of the importance of the Conference and to intensify preparations at all levels to ensure its success."

The key items on the provisional agenda of the Conference will be an historical and contemporary view of the situation of the Palestinian people and their inalienable rights, the status of the Holy City of Jerusalem, the international framework of the question of Palestine and the role of the United Nations, and obstacles to the achievement of Palestinian rights and recommendations for future actions.

An increasing number of preparatory activities are proposed or scheduled by non-governmental organizations to stimulate public interest in Palestine and the Palestinians. A meeting such as this is invaluable on that calendar of events. The Conference Secretariat will itself convene five inter-governmental regional meetings beginning in just a few days in Arusha, Tanzania. The delegates to this African meeting will focus their attention on the political and juridical aspects of the question of Palestine.

The Latin American regional meeting in Managua, Nicaragua, will concentrate on international law and its relation to Palestine and will meet from 11-15 April.

At Sharjah, in the United Arab Emirates from 25-29 April, representatives from West Asian states, intergovernmental and specialized agencies as well as the non-governmental organizations active in the region will assess the social, economic and cultural conditions of the Palestinian people, as well as the Question of Jerusalem.

The Asian meeting at Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia will consider Palestine in the framework of world politics during the first week of May.

The final regional preparatory meeting will be at United Nations European headquarters at Geneva for Europe and North America during the last week of May and it will centre on the role of the United Nations and the future of Palestine.

The United Nations has duly recognized the Palestinian Liberation Organization as the representative of the Palestinian people and the PLO will participate in the scheduled regional meetings.

A highlight of the Conference preparation will be a Round Table of Eminent Persons to convene in Vienna on the first of June. The intensive, one day meeting, hosted by the Austrian Government and co-chaired by Chancellor Kreisky, will bring together 12 celebrated persons from politics, government, humanities, law, religion, media and the arts to deliberate on the moral imperatives which underly the question of Palestine and to examine the substance of relevant peace proposals. It is hoped that this exchange of lively minds will produce some minimal principles or positions which can be of value for subsequent negotiating purposes.

To ensure the relevance and credibility of the collective process spearheaded by the United Nations one should not pass lightly over critical issues, but rather clarify the wide range of complexities that constitute the question of Palestine. And the United Nations by no means underestimates the enormity of the obstacles which inhibit a resolution of the problem. This ambitious goal cannot be achieved by a single person or organization or meeting, certainly not by the UN structure alone; it requires the co-ordinated interaction of a multitude of individuals and groups that perceive moves toward the common goal from differing perspectives.

Preparatory activities, such as this meeting, can serve to challenge wide spread misinformation and misperceptions of the Palestinian issue and can help positively to create the appropriate international climate of opinion which makes a genuine negotiating process feasible. Your deliberations over the next two days can have such an effect, both on governments and public opinion and have global implications. For without question, an enlightened and determined European stand on this issue matters greatly and can have a decisive impact.

And the UN, with its historic responsibility for the issue, remains prepared to be part of any process, initiated from any quarter, which can assist a just and lasting settlement.

It seems imperative that out of the rubble of West Beirut and the shattered lives of Lebanese and Palestinians should rise renewed international resolve to deal with the most formidable and dangerous issue facing our world. These are the guiding principles for the International Conference on the Question of Palestine based on the United Nations commitment to the goals of its Charter, and its cheerless responsibility to explore every possible path to peace.

It is the time for the global community, saddened and frustrated by years of conflict, to pool its energies and diligently work for constructive alternatives. It is within that context that I leave here tomorrow to head for Africa.

Statements and declarations of support for the basic rights of the Palestinian people have been issued from virtually every corner of the earth, by individuals, interest groups, single nations, regional and international organizations. The United Nations, through the medium of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, presents a singular opportunity to gather these forces, to ask new questions, to pose new alternatives, to seek new options with our minds focused on the goals of peace and security, equity and justice in the Middle East which can assure a bright future for the Palestinian people.

6. The Heads of State and Government of the Members of the European Community, meeting as the European Council, adopted at Brussels, on 22 March 1983 conclusions on the situation in the Middle East

The following conclusions were adopted by the European Council on the situation in the Middle East: (A/38/124 - S/15657)

"The European Council discussed the situation in the Middle East, including Lebanon and the war between Iran and Iraq.

"The Ten are deeply disturbed by the continued lack of progress towards peace between Israel and her Arab neighbours. They are convinced that all parties must seize the present opportunity to achieve the two most urgent objectives: the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanon and a resumption of negotiations aimed at a comprehensive peace settlement.

"The Ten reaffirm their support for the sovereign and independent State of Lebanon and for its Government, which should urgently be enabled to re-establish without restrictions its authority over the whole of its territory. This requires the prompt withdrawal of Israeli, Syrian and PLO forces. The Ten support the efforts of the United States to achieve this objective. They call on all concerned to conclude negotiations without further delay. They continue to support the peace-keeping role of the United Nations and multinational forces in Lebanon.

"The principles which underlie the Ten's approach to wider peace negotiations, as set out in more than one previous statement, remain valid. A lasting peace can only be built on the right to a secure existence for all States in the region, including Israel, and justice for all the peoples, including the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination with all that this implies. These rights must be mutually recognized by the parties themselves. Negotiations will have to embrace all the parties concerned, including the Palestinian people, and the PLO will have to be associated with them. The threat or use of force must be renounced by all.

"President Reagan's initiative of 1 September 1982 indicated a way to peace, and the Arab summit meeting at Fez demonstrated a readiness for it. The task now is to move beyond statements of principle and find a means to reconcile and implement the various peace proposals. The conclusions of the recent meeting of the Palestine National Council can and should contribute to the peace process. The Ten therefore welcome the discussions between Jordan and the PLO. The Palestinian people and the PLO should seize the present opportunity by declaring themselves in favour of peace negotiations. This would be a major step forward, to which the Ten would expect all concerned to respond constructively.

"The Ten look to the Arab States to play their part by supporting those who seek a solution to the demands of the Palestinian people by political means.

"The efforts of the United States will continue to be indispensable to create the conditions in which negotiations can begin.

"Above all, the time has come for Israel to show that it stands ready for genuine negotiations on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), in the first place by refraining from enlarging existing settlements or creating new ones. These settlements are contrary to international law and a major and growing obstacle to peace efforts.

"The Middle East is a region with which the Ten have long been closely associated and in whose future they have a deep interest. They intend to maintain their contacts with all the parties and to use their influence to encourage movement towards compromise and negotiated solutions. They believe that this is in the best interest of the countries and the peoples of the region, of the Ten themselves and of their mutual relations.

"The Ten expressed once again their growing concern at the continued conflict between Iraq and Iran, which constitutes an ever more serious threat to the security and stability of the entire region.

"The Ten deeply regret that none of the peace initiatives organized hitherto has succeeded in bringing the fighting to an end. They call for a cease-fire, the cessation of all military operations and the withdrawal of forces to internationally recognized frontiers and for a just and honourable settlement negotiated in accordance with the resolutions of the Security Council and acceptable to both parties."