



DIVISION FOR  
PALESTINIAN RIGHTS

SECOND UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL NGO MEETING

ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE

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I. DECLARATION OF THE NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS  
AT THE SECOND UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL  
NGO MEETING ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE

1. We, the non-governmental organizations participating in the Second United Nations International NGO Meeting on the Question of Palestine, wish to thank the United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People for convening this meeting. We are indeed honoured by the presence of the Members and observers of the distinguished United Nations body.

2. We also wish to thank the Chief of the Division for Palestinian Rights, the NGO liaison officers, the staff of the Division, the Department of Conference Services, including the services of the interpreters, for their valuable assistance in the preparation and execution of this meeting. We believe this meeting strengthens the constructive interaction between the United Nations and the international NGO community concerned with the absence of a just and durable solution to the question of Palestine and we look forward to increasing levels of understanding, appreciation and co-operation.

3. We also wish to voice our appreciation to the distinguished experts and resource persons who spoke here and offered valuable historical, political, as well as practical insights into the question of Palestine, as well as a perspective on the important role to be played by NGOs. The practical suggestions emanating from the workshops assisted us in formulating future plans for effective collaboration in linking our efforts to a broader, global network. The workshop reports are available separately.

4. In particular, we want to draw attention to the important presentations made here. We consider the panel "Ways and means to implement United Nations resolution 38/58 C. The International Peace Conference on the Middle East is the means for a just, durable and comprehensive solution to the question of Palestine and the Middle East conflict", to be of great significance and urge the United Nations to reproduce those statements and widely circulate them. We also urge the United Nations to convene the same panel in other locations (USA/Europe) so that its perspective can be communicated to wider audiences.

5. We resolutely reaffirm the international consensus that the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) is the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. We affirm the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination without external interference, to return, and to the establishment of an independent Palestinian State on its own national territory under the leadership of the PLO, in conformity with all relevant United Nations resolutions.

6. We further strongly support the convening of the International Peace Conference in the Middle East under the auspices of the United Nations as specified in United Nations resolution 38/58 C. We note that the PLO and other Arab parties and the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics have supported the resolution and that the Governments of Israel and the United States of America have opposed the convening of such a conference.

We consider that the stand taken by these two Governments on the issue militates against the search for peace in the Middle East. We therefore urge that all Governments and all groups that can, should exert all possible pressure on these two Governments to reconsider their position and join the rest of the world, Governments and peoples in the movement for peace.

7. In this manner, we uniformly support the declaration on this issue adopted by the International NGO Meeting on the Question of Palestine held in August 1984 in Geneva .

8. The convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East, as endorsed by General Assembly resolution 38/58 C offers a realistic and practical way towards a solution to the problem of Palestine and the establishment of a Palestinian State. We further reaffirm our belief that only a full and comprehensive solution involving, in particular, the United States of America and the USSR, as permanent members of the Security Council and co-chairmen of the Geneva Peace Conference, can create the basis for a just and lasting peace.

9. We concur that influencing world public opinion is a key factor in the just and durable resolution of the question of Palestine. As NGOs, we have access to local populations, the grass roots in our societies, and are determined to work to increase their understanding of the question of Palestine and the just cause of the Arab people of Palestine, and to effectively mobilize their potential political, social and spiritual power. Beyond these principles, we firmly believe that NGOs are a unique asset in securing the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, for we can present the issue also from a vital, human perspective.

10. We confirm our support for the global signature campaign to increase popular and organizational support for the International Peace Conference on the Middle East and will redouble and co-ordinate our efforts with the International Co-ordinating Committee for NGOs throughout the world, culminating in the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People on 29 November 1987. Our emphasis will be to attract the support of popular organizations with large memberships, parliamentarians, peace forces in Israel, North America and Europe, and others.

11. We NGOs present here for this international meeting see ourselves as a nucleus of a broader, world-wide effort. We undertake to reach out, identify and involve many other NGOs in the just resolution of the question of Palestine.

12. We express our grave concern over the protracted Arab-Israeli conflict. We recognize that the basic cause of that conflict is the denial by Israel and its supporters of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. We deplore the vigorous assaults upon Palestinian human rights by Israel and urge all NGOs to activate their networks to protest this repression in every effective way. In particular, we condemn the record of successive

administrations of the United States of America that have encouraged and supported Israel's expansionist policies.

13. We urge all NGOs to inform their Governments of the deteriorating economic, social, cultural and health situation of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories and abroad. We reject the campaign for a so-called "improvement of the quality of life" under Israeli control as a ruse devised to pre-empt independent Palestinian development in the occupied territories.

14. Recognizing that more attention needs to be paid to the specific situation of Palestinian Arabs within Israel, we intend to continue to address this subject at future international NGO meetings and urge all NGOs to create heightened awareness of this subject. We call upon the Government of Israel to establish and guarantee full equal rights to the Palestinian Arabs inside Israel, who are an integral part of the Palestinian people.

15. We express our strongest opposition to the Israeli Government policy of "Iron Fist" rule in the occupied territories: the closure of Al-Najah University and other institutions of higher education and the closure of the Arab Hospital in the Austrian Hospice in Jerusalem, which have deprived the people of their vital services; the arbitrary administrative detention and expulsion of leaders of student organizations, trade unions, voluntary organizations and youth movements. These actions and attitudes are flagrant violations of human rights and basic human decency. In particular, we demand the abolition of the expulsion orders against the following persons:

Amin Darwish Maqbul of Nablus

Walid Ahmad Nazzal of Qabatiyya

Bahjat Mustafa Jayyusi of Jayyus,

as well as the abolition of the orders of administrative detention against Zalu Jaradat and Ghazi Shashtari, who are both Law in the Service of Man field workers, all of which contravene international law. All NGOs must take immediate action to draw attention to these glaring abuses of power and violations of human rights. All of our networks should be mobilized to protest to the detaining authorities, and to the United States Government and the United Nations and to demand an end to the Israeli occupation.

16. We are deeply concerned over the persistent policy of Israel to confiscate Arab land in the occupied Palestinian territory and to establish Jewish colonial settlements thereon. This constitutes a flagrant violation of the provisions of the fourth Geneva Convention. We call upon the Security Council to apply means and measures to ensure respect and implementation of its relevant resolutions, particularly resolution 465 (1980).

17. We consider that the proposed law by the Israeli Knesset prohibiting contacts between Israelis and members of the PLO constitutes a further obstacle in the search for peace. In the light of this proposed law, it is of

the utmost importance that NGOs take the initiative to convene meetings between Israeli citizens and Palestinians representing the PLO with the aim to implement the relevant United Nations resolutions, in particular, General Assembly resolution 38/58 C.

18. We voice grave concern over the fate of the Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon, and recall the historical responsibility of the United Nations for the fate of the Palestinian people. We call upon the United Nations to shoulder this responsibility.

19. We note the fundamental importance of the forthcoming summit meeting between the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and call upon them to have the question of Palestine and peace in the Middle East included in the agenda and to consider, during the summit, the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East.

20. We are aware that 1986 will be globally designated as the Year of Peace, and that there will be no peace without peace in the Middle East. We must take all action to make it a year of peace with justice for the Palestinian people by selflessly collaborating with one another in order to influence public opinion and governmental policy. We strongly condemn the military and political collusion and nuclear collaboration between the Government of Israel and the Government of South Africa.

21. We have reviewed and considered the initial activities of the Interim Co-ordinating Committee for NGOs (ICC) established at the International NGO Meeting on the Question of Palestine convened at Geneva in August 1984. We hereby establish a successor organization, the NGO International Co-ordinating Committee on the Question of Palestine in order to expand and strengthen the NGO global network. ICC will work diligently to develop even closer links with the United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and the Division for Palestinian Rights. The names of the member organizations on the 1985/1986 ICC are given in footnote 1/.

22. We sincerely thank the United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People for inviting a representative of the ICC to speak as a panelist at each of the regional NGO symposia convened since May 1985. We believe that these symposia increase NGO contact and create circumstances for the establishment of regional NGO co-ordinating committees in Asia, North America and Africa.

23. We urge the United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and the Division for Palestinian Rights to continue such regional and other NGO symposia in the coming year in order to involve underrepresented regions and to reinforce the networking already under way in other areas. Upcoming regional NGO symposia should include Latin America, East Asia and the Pacific, and Europe. Follow-up symposia in other regions are needed to maintain continuity and expansion of the global NGO network on Palestine. We further urge the United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and the Division for Palestinian Rights to facilitate the convening of meetings of the ICC in

the coming year so that ICC can co-ordinate its efforts on behalf of the NGO community it represents.

24. Based on our experience over this past year, NGOs participating in the present meeting propose that the new ICC consider the establishment of an administrative secretariat and also consider ways and means of funding the activities of ICC and its proposed secretariat.

25. We are determined to cultivate an expanding global NGO constituency linked to a world-wide NGO network that will emerge as a significant force in the campaign for the just resolution of the question of Palestine. The establishment of the NGO International Co-ordinating Committee symbolizes this commitment and the growth of the global movement. We firmly believe that we can most effectively express our solidarity with the Palestinian people and work for peace in this way. We call upon the United Nations, through the United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, to offer every assistance, including financial support, to achieve these ends.

26. We call upon the United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People to convey this report of the International NGO Meeting on the Question of Palestine, held in Geneva, from 9-12 September 1985, to the General Assembly at its fortieth session as part of the Committee's report.

#### Notes

1/ All-India Indo-Arab Friendship Association; American Friends Service Committee; Arab Lawyers Union; Association des Juristes Démocrates du Sénégal; Council for the Advancement of Arab/British Understanding; Democratic Front for Peace and Equality; French NGOs Committee; International Jewish Peace Union; Israeli Council for Israeli/Palestinian Peace; Near East Cultural and Educational Foundation of Canada; Palestine Committee for NGOs; Palestine Human Rights Campaign of Australia; Palestine Human Rights Campaign; Parliamentary Association for Euro-Arab Co-operation; Soviet Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee; Union Inter-Africaine des Avocats; Women's International Democratic Federation; World Council of Churches/Middle East Council of Churches; World Peace Council; World Young Women's Christian Association.



II. OPENING STATEMENT BY MR. BORIS IVANOVICH KORNEENKO, HEAD OF THE  
DELEGATION OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE EXERCISE OF THE  
INALIENABLE RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

On behalf of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, I should like to welcome you to the Second International NGO Meeting on the Question of Palestine. May I take this opportunity to convey to you the regrets of the Chairman of the Committee, Ambassador Massamba Sarré, for his inability to be with us today. Pressing business elsewhere prevented his attendance at this meeting. We are now at the stage where this meeting - the annual international meeting - is gaining its intended character. It is an assembly of NGOs whose elected Interim Co-ordinating Committee has developed the agenda and proposed experts to address the topics to which your Committee has given priority.

The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People has been pleased to respond positively to your proposals and is gratified that you are agreed on the prime importance of the question of an International Peace Conference on the Middle East in your deliberations.

Since the International Conference on the Question of Palestine of 1983, at which the concept for the peace conference took shape, the General Assembly adopted the proposal, by an overwhelming majority, in resolution 38/58 C. I note that the theme for your panel discussion on Tuesday morning is "Ways and means to implement United Nations resolution 38/58 C". Your decision to treat the subject in this way is a clear indication that you have perceived the unique role that NGOs can play in assisting the United Nations to realize the goals of its resolutions and activities. The Committee, for its part, is convinced of the vital importance of that role and fully appreciates the value of the co-operation that has developed between the NGO community concerned with the question of Palestine and the United Nations mechanism designed to work toward our common goals.

Since our meeting last August, your Co-ordinating Committee has held two meetings under my Committee's auspices here at Geneva in November 1984 and March 1985. It was the purpose of these meetings to assist NGOs to develop their own work programme with the aid of the United Nations, which was deemed appropriate in the various circumstances. As a result, the Bulletin, which is published each month by the Division for Palestinian Rights, contains an NGO activity and information section that serves as a vehicle for communication among your groups.

To assist you in achieving your goal of a Resource Directory, the Division designed and circulated over 500 copies of a questionnaire to NGOs deemed to have significant interest in the question of Palestine. Copies of responses are available to the Co-ordinating Committee.

The circulation of your Signature Campaign in favour of an International Peace Conference on the Middle East was aided by the fact that the Division made your initiative widely known so that all interested persons and groups could sign your petition and return it to your organizations. As you will recall, the campaign was launched by your spokesperson, Mr. Ernie Ross, at the Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People commemorated at United Nations Headquarters on 29 November. It shall be climaxed this year by your presentation of the results within the context of the 29 November programme.

Last year, it was noted that, with very few exceptions, the contact among NGOs concerned with the question of Palestine was limited to the European and North American sectors. Concurring with your opinion, the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People sponsored two regional NGO symposia - one at New Delhi in May 1985 and the other at Dakar in August 1985.

These symposia have revealed a wealth of commitment to our cause among NGOs working in Asia and Africa. Participants at both meetings are already planning how to reach out further on their continents. They have sent representatives to this meeting as a sign of their desire to link forces with other NGOs in order to have a global impact on this issue. At the request of the United Nations, your Interim Co-ordinating Committee designated one of its members, Mr. Donald Betz, to be a panelist at both meetings in order to develop the necessary linkage for future collaborations.

In addition, the North American Regional Symposium held at United Nations Headquarters in July profited from the model of your ICC and elected a similar group to guide efforts on the North American continent. Similarly the African Regional Symposium established a group to co-ordinate efforts in Africa.

Since we met here a year ago, further dire events have befallen the Palestinian people, both in the occupied territories and scattered throughout the region. Later this morning we will have the benefit of hearing from people who are on the spot the details of the situation that prevails there. The conscience of the international community can have no rest till it sees an end to the suffering of the Palestinian people and assist them in the attainment of their rights.

You who have gathered here for this meeting are a source of hope for these people whose cause you have espoused. Having overcome any differences that might exist among you - political, religious, national - you are united in a spirit that transcends self-interest. This is the very quality that the NGO community brings to the consideration of the question of Palestine. The United Nations is grateful for it.

We trust that the energy that you bring to this endeavour will lead to fruitful discussion and to decisions that will advance the cause of a just solution for the Palestinian people.

III. MESSAGE FROM MR. YASSER ARAFAT, CHAIRMAN OF THE EXECUTIVE  
COMMITTEE OF THE PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION, CONVEYED BY  
MR. ZEHD L. TERZI, PERMANENT OBSERVER OF THE  
PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

On behalf of our Palestinian Arab people and in the name of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), I take pleasure in conveying to you and all the representatives of the non-governmental organizations participating in this meeting our warmest greetings and sincerest wishes for a successful outcome to your meeting.

I wish to take this opportunity to express our deep appreciation for the manner in which the non-governmental organizations are supporting our just Palestinian cause and the struggle of our people for the liberation of their land and the recovery of their inalienable national rights, including their right to return, to exercise self-determination and to establish their independent Palestinian State. This support and backing on the part of the non-governmental organizations for our Palestinian cause and for the struggle of our people reflects an awareness by the peoples of the world not only of the rights of our Palestinian people to their homeland but also of the grave injustice that was suffered by these people as a result of the establishment of the "State of Israel" in the greater part of Palestine with the support, assistance and weapons provided by traditional colonialism and neo-imperialism, particularly American imperialism.

This meeting is being held at a time when our Palestinian Arab people are facing increasingly serious challenges and difficulties both in and outside occupied Palestine. In spite of the resolute desire that our people have always expressed for the achievement of peace in Palestine and the region of the Middle East, which was reflected in the joint agreement for political action between Jordan and the PLO with a view to the implementation of the provisions of the Arab Peace Plan formulated at the Twelfth Arab Summit Conference held at Fez, Morocco, in 1982, the Zionist enemy is becoming even more obstinate and persistent in the pursuit of its aggressive and expansionist policies aimed at the annexation of occupied Palestinian and Arab territories and the expulsion of our people from their homeland. In order to implement these aggressive policies, the Zionist enemy is intensifying its campaigns of terror against our people living under occupation and is also arming and financing gangs of Zionist terrorists so that they can engage in acts of murder and intimidation against our people in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The enemy is also continuing its policy of confiscating land, expropriating water resources and establishing settlements in those areas with the full support of the American Administration which is pursuing similar aggressive policies against our Palestinian people and Arab nation and denying the right of our Palestinian people to self-determination and the establishment of their independent State in their homeland.

We sincerely hope that this meeting will examine not only the increasingly serious situation facing our Palestinian people living under occupation but also their state of deprivation that constitutes a fundamental element in the Israeli policy of refusing to recognize our people's right to existence, self-expression and self-determination on their national soil.

We are confident that your meeting will adopt appropriate resolutions in support of the Palestinian cause and the Palestinian struggle, thereby helping our people to withstand the ever-increasing challenges, to achieve their national objectives and to recover their inalienable national rights that have been recognized by the international community, as represented by the United Nations, including their right to return, to self-determination and to the establishing of their independent Palestinian State.

IV. KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY HIS EXCELLENCY DR. BRUNO KREISKY,  
FORMER CHANCELLOR OF AUSTRIA

I was very doubtful as to whether I should accept your invitation to talk about the question of how to encourage the peace process in the Middle East. For some decades, I tried to do it, without any visible success. Finally, I accepted.

Let me give some reasons for that. In my experience, there are no hopeless situations in the wide field of foreign affairs. There have been many situations that seemed to be totally hopeless. In my own country, for example, democracy disappeared through our own Austrian Fascists, supported by Mussolini, at a time when we were surrounded by countries that had semi-Fascist régimes like the Horthy régime in Hungary and the Yugoslavian military dictatorship. Only two countries were democracies - Czechoslovakia and Switzerland.

In 1938, the Austrian Fascists were overthrown by Hitler and his army. It was a hopeless situation and I spent some time in prison under both dictatorships. Finally, I was able to get out and go to Sweden.

A year later, the Second World War broke out, we know today, because of incompetent leadership in the Western democracies. After a short time, Hitler was the master of Europe. One country after the other was conquered. Only Britain resisted. Hitler asked for and, incredibly, got the verbal support of Stalin. But Britain's Churchill and Bevin refused and Hitler finally made war against Russia; Japan entered the war and the situation seemed hopeless.

Hitler lost and we all witnessed the renaissance of democracies in Europe. Hundreds of millions of people became free.

My conclusion again: there is never a reason to give up. And, in all modesty, allow me to say that I was one who encouraged at that time a lot of people in the isolated Swedish democracy. I told them that Hitler would lose in the end.

Now let me give you another example. In my own country, we had, after the defeat of Hitler's fascism, all four Powers stationed in Austria for 10 years. We had to face 10 years of negotiations. It seemed to be hopeless. During those 10 years, many people told me that Austria would never be a free country, that it would be under the control of the four Powers forever.

I never stopped encouraging the Austrians that the day would come. That day came, and the Austrian State Treaty was concluded.

I have told you about my personal experience, to let you know why I feel entitled to talk about the question of how to encourage the peace process.

I am not coming with a plan, I am concentrating on three facts. One of the most important resolutions of the United Nations is the resolution about the creation of the State of Israel. This was the legal basis for its existence, but the content of this resolution was that two countries should live side by side - a Jewish one and an Arab one. In this respect, the Soviet Union and the United States were the founding fathers.

One of the most important resolutions the United Nations ever adopted is Security Council resolution 242 (1967). It is necessary to stress that both resolutions had the strong support of the Soviet Union and the United States.

Resolution 242 (1967) is still valid and we can never accept that resolutions of the United Nations, adopted in this way, should be ignored year after year by the parties involved.

What can now be done to implement that resolution on a realistic level? The best way would be to create a special United Nations commission to deal with the problem of the Middle East.

There are two highly important plans: one is the Reagan plan, which is dealing with the problem of the Middle East in every concise way. I do not believe that this plan, as such, has a chance of being adopted by the parties concerned, but it is the proposal of the President of one of the largest nations in the world.

Israel can only exist if the United States permanently supports Israel with billions of dollars and more and more highly sophisticated arms. Is it really thinkable that there will be no follow-up to the Reagan plan? Is it really possible, in the long run, for the United States to refuse to discuss its own plan with an international commission?

Even more important; some days later, the Arab Summit Conference adopted the so-called Fez plan, based on the proposals of King Fahd of Saudi Arabia. Can we really afford for an international body such as the special commission I am proposing to refuse to discuss such an important document?

Now we are faced with the readiness of King Hussein and Chairman Arafat to discuss the matter. Why not hold those discussions, talks, within the framework of such an international commission?

Now, some remarks about the participants. President Reagan is in favour of talks between the parties involved, but he is opposed to such a commission because Israel is refusing it. I think the United States will, one day, change its attitude, as it did, for example, in the case of Austrian neutrality. The United States policy has always been remarkable because of its flexibility. If Israel insists on not participating, I can only characterize this attitude as, "Les absents ont toujours tort".

Another argument is that the Soviet Union should not participate in such a conference. Why not? The Soviet Union is, as I mentioned before, one of the founder States of Israel. The Soviet Union is a close ally of the Syrian Arab Republic, which is the most powerful Arab State in the area. The United States is the ally of Israel. Both are delivering arms to their mutual allies. But both must be frightened that something will happen in the Middle East which will directly involve them. They must hate this idea. Of course this would create a very, very dangerous situation.

It is my conviction that the Soviets are involved in the area in the same way as the Americans. That has been, in some way, recognized by the fact that some months ago, diplomats from both super-Powers met at Vienna for an exchange of ideas. These were, of course, very informal talks.

I believe that, when President Reagan and Secretary-General Gorbachev meet in November, this problem should be on the agenda, because both super-Powers must in their own interest try to strive for a stage of non-belligerency in the area.

I am not talking about peace. To obtain peace would be too difficult. But to start a peace process, would seem to me possible. If both super-Powers recognize this necessity, they will really act in favour of a tremendous confidence-building measure, which will also affect the politically abstract negotiations in Geneva.

What we need to do today is to encourage all efforts to resume the process of détente. This should not be limited to Europe; it must be a global one. One of the most important goals in this connection will be a peace process in the Middle East.

It is a habit in international affairs, which in my view is absolutely wrong, that strength should be shown by refusing to negotiate, or by posing a lot of conditions before going to the table. My experience is that a policy of real strength can only be proved in negotiations.

Therefore, I am wandering across the globe - from Japan to Norway, from Geneva to Washington - to talk about these aspects. I try to convince friends in Israel and in the Arab States, but, I must confess, I feel like one whom we call in German "ein Rifer in der Wüste".

In spite of that, I will never give up trying to encourage at least the beginning of a peace process.

V. PAPERS PRESENTED AT THE MEETING

A. Overview and update on the current situation in the occupied territories

ISRAELI POLICY TOWARDS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
PROJECTS IN THE WEST BANK AND GAZA

1. Mohammed K. Shadid, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Political Science, Al-Najah National University, Nablus, West Bank

Introduction

Expectations have been raised over the possibility of convening an international peace conference on the Middle East. This is because of the recent increase in the level of United States and Israeli diplomatic activities in relation to the proposed meeting between the United States Government and a joint Jordanian/Palestinian delegation.

The successful conclusion of such a conference would bring about an end to Israeli occupation and the resolution of the Palestine question. However, a close look at Israel's economic policies and practices - with United States acquiescence - in the occupied territories, would reveal Israel's intention of never relinquishing those areas.

Over the past 18 years, Israel has set about integrating the economies of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip into its own. By strangling industrial growth and impeding agricultural and institutional developments, it is determined to prevent the creation of an economic base for a Palestinian State. The long process of colonization and political absorption continues, along with the intention of making the territories' incorporation into Eretz Yesrael an accomplished fact.

Given the current structural weaknesses and vulnerabilities of the Israeli economy, the resources of the occupied territories are already playing an important role in keeping Israel on its precarious feet.

The occupation has transformed Israel into a State with an imperial economy, relying for its well-being on the captive resources of the occupied territories and their subjugated and pacified population.

Unlike the global empires of the last two centuries, where mother States relied upon economic resources sent from thousands of miles away, the Israeli imperial economy is based upon geographically contiguous areas, making the process of political pacification easier, more efficient and perhaps less obvious. 1/

As the economic crisis of Israel has worsened, particularly over the last 10 years, so its economic dependence on the occupied territories has grown.



Spiralling inflation seems beyond control, rising steadily from a high of 39.7 per cent in 1975 to 131.0 per cent in 1980, 120.3 per cent in 1982, 145.7 per cent in 1983, 400 per cent in 1984 and already exceeding the 1984 mark for the first six months of 1985. Inflation for that period ran at an average of 16 per cent per month. 2/

Israel's balance of trade and payments deficits continue to deteriorate as is shown in table 1 below.

The economic importance of the occupied territories to the imperial economy of Israel can be seen in the volumes of Israeli exports to the West Bank and Gaza areas, particularly when compared with other importers, as shown in table 2 below.

Table 1  
Balance of trade and payments deficit, 1977-1983  
(Millions of US dollars)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Balance of Trade Deficit</u>	<u>Balance of Payments Deficit</u>
1977	1 754.7	2 382
1978	1 914.9	3 119
1979	3 083.1	3 657
1980	2 586.4	3 775
1981	2 518.1	4 355
1982	2 969.8	4 824
1983	3 476.2	5 039

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1984, No. 35 (Jerusalem, Central Bureau of Statistics, 1984), pp. 198 and 213.

The figures for 1984 and the first half of 1985 indicate a continuation of the trend. Consequently, Israel's foreign currency reserves dipped to a low of \$1,952 million in May 1985. 3/

Table 2  
Israeli exports, 1970-1983  
(Millions of US dollars)

<u>Year</u>	<u>United States</u>	<u>West Bank and Gaza</u>	<u>United Kingdom</u>	<u>South Africa</u>
1970	149.1	73.9	81.4	10.7
1975	307.5	367.7	169.3	34.7
1980	953.9	571.6	465.5	79.2
1982	1117.7	639.0	416.5	74.2
1983	1329.2	680.5	412.9	82.8

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1984, No. 35 (Jerusalem, Central Bureau of Statistics, 1984), pp. 213, 225 and 227.

Since the figures in table 2 are taken from an official Israeli publication, they exclude East Jerusalem, with its 120,000 inhabitants from the West Bank.

Furthermore, goods and services obtained by people from the West Bank and Gaza directly from Israeli retailers are not included in the statistics. Figures in table 2 for these areas should therefore be adjusted upward by 25 per cent. Consequently, Israeli exports to the West Bank and Gaza in 1983 would be \$860.8 million instead of \$680.5 million. 4/

Table 2 indicates that the occupied territories are second only to the United States as importers of Israeli goods and the volume is double that of the United Kingdom, the third largest importer of Israeli goods.

It should also be noted that, as a result of Israel's tight control over the economies of the West Bank and Gaza, the volume of exports to these areas constitutes 90.7 per cent of total imports of the West Bank and Gaza. 5/ Consequently Israel's economic policies in the occupied territories reflect its short-term and long-term imperial interests.

#### An overview of Israeli economic policy in the occupied territories

Since 1967, the Israeli occupation authorities have had a programme of economic integration of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and the Golan Heights 6/ which has turned them into Israeli colonies.

The Israeli Ministry of Defence, in its report on the development and economic situation in the occupied territories, characterizes the nature of the economic relationship between Israel and the captured areas quite candidly: "The areas are a supplementary market for Israeli goods and services on the one hand and a source of factors of production, especially unskilled labour, for the Israeli economy on the other." 7/

The motivation that has inspired Israeli policy towards the occupied territories since 1967 is a function of the interests - although occasionally contradictory - of Israeli entrepreneurs and political strategists. These dual interests were forcefully protected via the implementation of a system of tight controls over the various sectors of the Palestinian economy in the West Bank and Gaza.

#### Industrial sector

The rapid growth in per capita income in the West Bank was not accompanied by comparable growth in the industrial sector. Contrary to normal patterns of growth, industrial production has declined. The industrial sector's contribution to the gross domestic product fell from 9 per cent in 1968 to 8.2 per cent in 1975 and 6.5 per cent in 1980. 8/ The West Bank economy may be described as non-industrialized. With a per capita gross national product twice as high as that in Egypt, the West Bank industrial contribution to the gross domestic product is only one fourth of the Egyptian industrial contribution.

The industrial sector of the West Bank and Gaza is characterized by the existence of a number of small and medium-sized workshops, 92.3 per cent of which employ between one and nine workers. <sup>9/</sup> They are based primarily on manual labour and focus on the processing of primary goods such as food, beverages and tobacco, as well as textile goods and clothes (see table 3 below).

Table 3

Distribution of industrial firms by size of their labour forces

<u>Number of labourers</u>	<u>Number of firms</u>	<u>Percentage of total</u>
1-9	2784	92.3
10-19	145	4.8
20-49	74	2.5
50-55	7	0.2
100 and more	7	0.2
Total	<u>3710</u>	<u>100.0</u>

Source: Hisham Awartani, A Survey of Industry in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip (Bir Zeit University), p. 25.

Industrial production in the West Bank consists largely of olives which, with the export of soap to Jordan and other Arab countries, makes up nearly 90 per cent of the total sales. <sup>9/</sup>

At the same time, the manufacture of cement blocks, floor tiles, bricks and stones, relies mainly on the Israeli market. Israeli construction firms buy nearly 50 per cent of the product. <sup>10/</sup> Other products such as clothing (made by subcontractors engaged in sewing), wood products, wicker and other types of furniture, woven textiles, plastic products (mattresses, sandals, etc.) also depend on the level of demand of the Israeli market. <sup>11/</sup>

The small volume of industrial production is obviously caused by the lack of investment in the industrial sector. Israeli policy means that investment risks by the Arab entrepreneurs are prohibitive and the involvement of Israeli capital is absent. The most obvious type of Israeli investment has taken the form of sub-contracting, particularly in the textile industry, which flourished and expanded after occupation. In fact, 70 per cent of all existing firms have been set up since then. <sup>12/</sup> It is, however, "the lowest-paid industry in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip" <sup>13/</sup> and has little or no long-term effect on the industrial sector of the occupied areas.

In the areas of industry, finance and agriculture, Israel's plans for the West Bank and Gaza are colonial. Those plans do not, of course, include encouragement of a strong and independent infrastructure for the region. The flooding of the West Bank and Gaza markets with Israeli manufactured goods militates against that process. Certainly, Israeli discriminatory policy and practice against Palestinian manufacturers, if continued, would have the effect of driving them out of business.

Palestinian manufacturers are charged a 15 per cent production tax, as under Jordanian law. 14/ This is not applicable to Israeli manufacturers either inside the Green Line or in the settlements.

Palestinians are also charged a 15 per cent Israeli value added tax and 38.5 per cent on net assets at the end of the fiscal year. These are also applicable to their Israeli counterparts. However, discrimination occurs once more in the methods of calculating these taxes, where their value is calculated in Jordanian dinars for Palestinian manufacturers and in Israeli shekels for Israeli manufacturers, despite the fact that both buy and sell their products in shekels. In practical terms, this means that in the light of continuous rapid devaluation of the shekel (one Jordanian dinar equalled 1,900 shekels on 1 January 1985 and 4,250 shekels on 1 September), Palestinian manufacturers pay from 35 to 40 per cent more than their Israeli counterparts. Consequently, the total amount of taxes they pay is 50 to 55 per cent higher. This makes production costs higher and they lose their ability to compete, even if given equal access to the market. So the primary concern of Palestinian manufacturers is survival, rather than development.

At the same time, Israel continues to accelerate its plans for Jewish, rather than Arab, industrial development in the West Bank.

#### Jewish industries in the West Bank

By 1983, six Jewish industrial parks had been constructed in the West Bank. 15/

	<u>Dunam</u>
Shaked	40
Barkan	300
Ma'aleh Ephraim	70
Karnei Shomron	150
Ma'ali Adumim	650
Kiryat Arba	50

The operating plants employ some 2,500 workers, 70 per cent of whom are Jewish and the remainder are Arabs assigned primarily to unskilled tasks. 15/

The current policies of the authorities are to build only capital intensive, sophisticated factories to achieve the following objectives: to minimize the need for settlers to commute to the cities, and to limit Arab employment.

There are further Israeli plans for the industrialization of the West Bank (part of the Plan of a Hundred Thousand Settlers, World Zionist Organization (WZO), 1982) that call for the establishment of seven additional industrial parks. 15/ The total area designated for these industrial parks in the West Bank by the year 2010 is 15,000 dunam. For Jewish industrial workers, 83,500 jobs will be created, with 25,000 unskilled or semi-skilled jobs for Arabs. 15/

In the short term, by 1986, an additional 8,750 Jewish and 2,200 Arab industrial jobs will be created. Investment in the new Jewish industrial

parks is estimated at \$250 million over five years (\$60 million to \$100 million for infrastructure and the rest for 10 per cent government equity participation). Existing investment of Jewish industry in the West Bank is valued at \$328 million. 15/

The political implications of government-backed Zionist industrial plans for the West Bank are crystal clear.

### Labour

The growing importance of the occupied territories to Israel's imperial economy is highlighted by the presence of a large pool of unskilled workers. With the shift away from traditional agricultural activities, and the beginning of a period of industrial intensification in Israel after 1967, capital accumulation threatened to be hindered by the high cost of Jewish labour. Jewish workers had succeeded in securing important social and economic rights during the decade that followed 1948. 16/ By limiting economic development in the occupied territories, and thus depriving the Palestinian population of adequate employment opportunities, Israel was assured of a steady reservoir to meet its needs for cheap and unskilled labour. Table 4 below shows the increasing dependence of the Israeli economy on the Palestinian workforce since 1970.

Table 4

Distribution of work in the occupied territories by place of work, 1970-1983

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Number working in Israel</u>	<u>Percentage in Israel</u>
1970	173 300	20 600	12.0
1973	194 700	61 300	31.5
1974	210 400	68 700	32.6
1975	204 900	66 300	32.3
1976	205 800	64 900	31.5
1977	204 400	63 000	30.8
1979	212 100	74 100	34.9
1980	215 700	75 100	34.8
1981	215 900	75 800	35.1
1982	222 700	79 100	35.5
1983	232 500	87 800	37.8

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1984, No. 35 (Jerusalem, Central Bureau of Statistics, 1984), p. 763.

Since Israel regulates the flow of workers from the occupied territories through its labour offices, its official statistics do not include workers denied work permits and other workers who do not seek them. There are from 20,000 to 25,000 Palestinian workers who are hired without work permits - via

Arab labour contractors or through the "slave markets" - by private Israeli bosses seeking to maximize profits by circumventing official channels. 17/ Therefore, the more realistic number of workers in Israel from the territories would be, for 1983, 107,800 (87,000 plus 20,000), or 48.4 per cent.

Palestinian workers are confined to certain sectors of the Israeli economy, primarily construction (50 per cent of the illegally hired workers), agriculture and productive services such as tourism. 18/ On the average, they receive lower wages than their Jewish counterparts in the same job. 19/ When labour costs are considered high, many Israeli entrepreneurs move their businesses to the territories, or engaged in subcontracting, employing women and children for relatively meagre wages.

### Agriculture

Prior to 1967, because of its agricultural production, the West Bank was considered the bread-basket of Jordan. However, the Israeli occupation has had a profound impact on the agriculture of the West Bank. The economic policy of the occupation towards West Bank agriculture has been dictated by two considerations: making agriculture fulfil the function of supplying other factors of production and making it serve Israeli plans for markets.

In the months after the occupation, the Israeli authorities decided on an "open bridges" policy whereby the farmers of the West Bank could truck their agricultural surpluses (and the manufacturers their products) across the bridges of the Jordan River into the occupied East Bank. Today, about one third of the West Bank's agricultural produce is marketed in the East Bank. The bridges are "open" in one direction only and freedom of imports from the East Bank is not permitted. In the long run, the "open bridges" policy will keep an economic conduit available from the West Bank to the adjacent Arab areas, an important political consideration if Israeli dreams of access to the vast markets of the surrounding countries are to be realized.

Immediately after the war, the "open bridges" policy solved Israel's problem of disposal of the agricultural surpluses of the West Bank. On the one hand, if the produce had been left unsold, the economy of the West Bank would have collapsed completely: the resistance of the people might have intensified and provision of the necessary services would have been a drain on the Israeli economy. On the other hand, if fruits and vegetables grown on the West Bank had reached Israeli markets in the months after the war, they would have undersold competing Israeli products by 20 to 25 per cent. Initially, Israel inhibited the sale of West Bank produce in Israeli markets by regulations requiring permits, health checks on processed foods and certification that the imports would not cause any Israeli surpluses. 20/ At the same time, no restriction is placed on the sale of Israeli products in the West Bank. Soon after, the Israeli Minister of Agriculture issued guidelines for the West Bank's agriculture which called for a reduction of the West Bank's total dependence on trade with the East Bank and the introduction of crops which would be complementary to the Israeli economy, either suitable for export to Europe or for processing in Israel. The exports to the East Bank prevented the West Bank's produce from glutting the Israeli market or remaining unsold, and brought in hard currency which improved Israel's financial situation.

In the light of the growing importance of foreign currency earnings to Israel's ailing economy, one would expect that Israel's policy towards the agriculture of the occupied territories would promote further development and expansion. However, what happened is to the contrary: imposed restrictions in this sector caused stagnation. The increase in agricultural production was caused by the introduction of more modern technology, not by expansion. The actual area of land under cultivation in the West Bank has been reduced as indicated in table 5 below.

Table 5

Area of land under cultivation in the West Bank, 1966-1981  
(Thousands of dunam)

<u>Type of land</u>	<u>1966</u>	<u>1968</u>	<u>1973</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1981</u>
Irrigated land	100	57	82	81	83	89	92	98
Rain-fed land	<u>1 980</u>	<u>1 988</u>	<u>1 878</u>	<u>1 939</u>	<u>1 878</u>	<u>1 931</u>	<u>1 859</u>	<u>1 909</u>
Total	<u>2 080</u>	<u>2 045</u>	<u>1 960</u>	<u>2 020</u>	<u>1 961</u>	<u>2 020</u>	<u>1 951</u>	<u>2 007</u>

Source: Meron Benvenisti, Jerusalem: Study of a Polarized Community (Jerusalem, The West Bank Data Base Project, 1983), p. 13.

The reduction of 73,000 dunams in agricultural land was accompanied by a far greater reduction in employment in agriculture, which has dropped from 69,000 workers before 1967 to 22,600 workers in 1983. 21/

Land

The issue of land control or ownership is the subject of daily confrontation in the occupied territories, between Palestinians on the one side and settlers and the military government on the other. Meron Benvenisti, the former Deputy Mayor of Jerusalem, indicates that 52 per cent of the West Bank land, including the best fertile lands, is controlled through settlements and the military government. 22/ Israel considers the Palestinians in the occupied territories as merely residents in those areas, not people living in their own homeland. It therefore uses various techniques of land expropriation in the process of total dispossessing Palestinians and alienating them from their land.

Land confiscation, expulsion of Palestinians and daily harassments, not to mention outright terrorism by settlers who are armed and protected by the Israeli Government, have been the essential mechanisms adopted by the Zionists in their colonization plans for the West Bank and Gaza. Clear support of the Israeli Government's policy of land alienation and depopulation came from current Knesset (Israeli Parliament) member and former Israeli Chief of Staff General Rafael Eitan. As the result of accelerated plans by the Israeli Government to colonize the West Bank, Palestinians, in the words of General Eitan, would "run about like drugged cockroaches inside a bottle". 23/

## Water

Immediately after Israel's conquest of the West Bank and Gaza, water resources in the occupied areas were placed under the control of the state-affiliated water company, Mekerot. Since the occupation began, the authorities have permitted the drilling of only seven new wells to provide drinking water. Also since the occupation, 12 Arab irrigation wells have run dry, while many others, especially in the Jordan Valley, are plagued by a declining water table and increased salinity. In 18 years of occupation, only two permits have been given to Palestinians to drill wells for agricultural use. 24/ In one of these, the applicant was licensed to drill in a specified area. When the well was dug, it was discovered that only salty water, unsuitable for irrigation, could be found there.

Over this period, Israeli settlements have drilled at least 17 new wells; these wells, barely 5 per cent of the total wells on the West Bank, drew 14.1 million cubic meters of water, 42 per cent as much (or 30 per cent of the total) as the 33 million cubic meters produced by all 314 Palestinian wells. 25/

In effect, Israel is helping itself (or more precisely its colonies) to the generous use of Arab ground water in the eastern drainage area of the Jordan Valley, while imposing manifold restrictions on Palestinian water usage, especially from the western aquifers, on the grounds that it threatens salination of supplies to Israel proper. Irrigation wells have been metred, and stiff fines are imposed on Palestinians who exceed posted limits. Settlements, by contrast, are not restricted and water is abundant for irrigation and swimming pools. The vast majority of West Bank villages, and even some towns, suffer habitually from water shortages in the dry summer months.

In the irrigated regions of the Jordan Valley, the occupation authorities have done their utmost to harass and intimidate Palestinian farmers. Early in the occupation, the army destroyed some 140 water pumps in the Zor Strip along the Jordan River, and closed off some 30,000 dunam of agricultural land. In 1979, the authorities bulldozed the irrigation canal of the village of Jiftlek. Israel's water policies have been the main impediment to any expansion or intensification of agricultural production in the West Bank. In the Jordan Valley, Israel's water plan calls for an eventual total of 36 Israeli wells by the late 1980s, which, on completion, will extract half of the available ground water in the eastern drainage area for 28 settlements and their several thousand inhabitants, while the very survival of some 14,000 Arab inhabitants is threatened by ever-dwindling water supplies. 26/

### What is Israel's policy towards development projects in the occupied territories?

During the past 10 years (1975-1985), the countries in the Middle East that are affected by the oil boom in the Arab Gulf - Jordan, Kuwait, and others - experienced rapid growth and development. However, growth and development were severely limited in the West Bank and Gaza by Israeli policy towards development in the occupied territories. Development was impeded by severe restrictions imposed upon the economy.



The best indicator of the short and long-term Israeli plans for the occupied territories is its policy behaviour and decisions taken regarding development projects. This policy area remained off the centre of public debate until the last few years when conflict surfaced between the military authorities and a number of United States private voluntary organizations (PVOs) over approval and implementation of some development projects.

There are eight PVOs active in development and social welfare programmes in the West Bank and Gaza. These include: American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), American Near East Refugee Aid (ANERA), Community Development Service/Save the Children (CDS), CARE, Catholic Relief Service (CRS), Holy Land Christian Missions (HCM) and American-Mideast Educational and Training Services (AMIDEAST). The first two, AFSC and MCC, do not accept any government aid for their programmes. The rest, however, receive United States Government funds. Programmes are usually proposed by the agencies or by local Palestinians, or jointly. All development projects are subject to approval by the Israeli military Government.

#### United States role and development projects in the occupied territories

United States Government economic aid to the Palestinian community in the West Bank and Gaza has lately become a relatively important political issue. This renewed interest of relatively modest, low profile United States activity was brought about by what is described by Secretary of State George Schultz's new initiative of "improvement of the quality of life". <sup>27/</sup> The term "improvement of the quality of life" conveys the message that the United States has basically accepted the fait accompli of permanent occupation and is now joining Israel in a policy of pacification. Given the Israeli policy of permitting personal prosperity but forcibly restraining commercial development, United States economic aid, aimed at helping the Palestinians, may paradoxically facilitate Israeli settlement efforts. United States funds channeled into public works in the territories could thereby release Israeli budgets for Jewish settlements.

Considering the small amount of aid to the Palestinians in relation to United States Government aid to Israel, one would seriously question the intentions of the United States. Between fiscal year 1975 when the programme was authorized by Congress and 1984, \$51.6 million was allocated to the Palestinians. During the same period, the United States provided Israel with a total of \$24.3 billion in grants and low-interest loans. <sup>28/</sup> In other words, for ever \$1 of aid to the Palestinians, Israel receives \$476.

#### PVOs development projects and Israeli policy

All United States aid to the Palestinians is channeled through six of the PVOs referred to earlier; thus, these agencies are used as instruments of United States Government policy. To be fair, this should not reflect negatively on individual staff members of these agencies, many of whom are Palestinians and Americans who genuinely believe they are making a contribution to Palestinian development. The United States Government exerts no pressure on Israel for approval of these projects. The agencies are left with the unenviable task of using their own skills and methods of pressure and

persuasion for project approvals. None the less, Israeli military authorities manipulate the agencies in many instances and press hard in their effort to convert them to instruments of their policy.

An analysis of development projects submitted by the agencies to Israeli military authorities for approval provides further insight into Israeli policy in the area and how United States funds are being used. Three PVOs, ANERA, CDS and CRS, deal with development projects. The remainder - AMIDEAST, HCM and AFSC are engaged in educational activities.

Submitted projects can be classified into three categories:

- (a) Development and income-generating branches;
- (b) Social, educational and charitable;
- (c) Public works.

Agriculture and industry belong to the first category; education, social, community services, health and charity to the second category; and drinking water, sewage, access roads and electricity to the third category.

Classification of the submitted projects by category shows the following pattern: 29/

Table 6

<u>Category</u>	<u>Percentage of submitted project</u>	<u>Percentage of submitted budget</u>
Economic development	33.8	45.8
Social and educational	36.3	27.2
Public works	29.9	27.0
Total	<u>100.0</u>	<u>100.0</u>

A comparison of projects and budgets submitted and approved by categories shows the Israeli policy input and the resulting shift of emphasis from economic development to public works. 30/

Table 7

<u>Category</u>	<u>PVO intention submitted</u>		<u>Israeli reaction actual implementation</u>	
	<u>Project (%)</u>	<u>Budget (%)</u>	<u>Project (%)</u>	<u>Budget (%)</u>
Economic development	33.8	45.8	22.7	29.4
Social and educational	36.3	27.2	36.1	26.6
Public works	29.9	27.0	41.2	44.0
Total	<u>100.0</u>	<u>100.0</u>	<u>100.0</u>	<u>100.0</u>

Detailed analysis of 358 projects, involving a total budget of \$66 million, 31/, generated by United States Government funding, administered six PVOs and submitted to the Israeli authorities for approval and implementation show that:

(a) One third of the submitted projects and 45.8 per cent of the proposed budgets were directed to economic development. Slightly more than one third of the projects and 27.2 per cent of the proposed budgets were directed to social, educational and charitable projects. Almost 30 per cent of the projects and 27 per cent of the budgets were directed to consumption-oriented public works;

(b) Israeli intervention caused a major shift in the allocation of projects and budgets. The Israeli military authorities tend to disapprove development projects and encourage public works. Consequently, the share of consumption-related public works (drinking water, domestic electricity and internal roads) in the projects actually implemented reached 44 per cent (compared with 27 per cent of the original programme). The share of economic development-related budgets actually implemented is reduced from almost half of the original programme to less than one third;

(c) The programme as it is implemented presents a different picture. Israeli intervention, through its approval and disapproval policy, alters the emphasis and uses United States economic aid in the occupied territories to implement Israel's own economic policies of allowing only individual prosperity and curbing communal economic development. These economic policies are important components in controlling a hostile population. Curbing development of a viable and independent Palestinian economic sector forces the Palestinians into dependence on Israel. Continued individual prosperity usually militates against effective communal organization and pursuit of communal goals. In short, the actual contribution of United States aid in the West Bank and Gaza helps to strengthen the pacification programme pursued by Israel and relieves it of part of its financial responsibility for the occupied territories.

Despite the relatively meager size of the economic development programmes sponsored by PVOs, Israeli officials and much of the public are nervous about the PVOs involvement and public pressure used by some officials of the agencies. General Ben Eliezer, the Israeli official in charge of project approval, when invited to comment on particular projects, said that: "I prefer not to answer specifically ... I would like to give you the whole strategy. No voluntary organization has any autonomy to do whatever it wants in this part of the world. This is a place where there is law and order, and this is a place where there is an administration." 32/ Another Israeli official in the West Bank Israeli military Government was more candid in his reasons for rejecting economic development proposals: he was convinced the establishment of West Bank factories would lead to an independent economic infrastructure. He added, "Why should we assist towns like Halhul or Dahrieyeh where disturbances are commonplace and our forces are under attack?" 33/

In interviews with many of the West Bank and Gaza businessmen, we learned that chances for approval of development projects submitted independently stood an even smaller chance of being approved than those submitted by PVOs. With rare exceptions, projects of land reclamation were rejected. Some of the major projects that were rejected include: a cement factory near Hebron, the Fara'a canal near Nablus, expansion and modernization of a flour mill in Nablus and a paint factory in Nablus. Giving the reasons for rejecting the paint factory, an Israeli official said: "Why should we permit the building of a factory in Nablus while Israeli paint factories are operating below full capacity?" 34/

In assessing why a certain project is approved in one location or for a certain group and a similar one elsewhere is rejected, we have ascertained that the following factors are used as criteria by the occupation authorities for approval or rejection:

(a) Persons applying should be acceptable to the authorities. The system is used to punish resisters and reward friendly groups and collaborators;

(b) Projects that are usually rejected are of the following nature:

- (i) Projects of land reclamation;
- (ii) Projects of institution building and development;
- (iii) Projects that compete with Israeli producers;
- (iv) Projects that could lead to economic independence;
- (v) Projects that might hinder or affect any area of Israeli policy, "security" and otherwise.

Israel uses various means and devices to facilitate the execution of its economic policy in the occupied territories and most importantly issuing military orders as a means of institutionalization of that policy.

#### Military orders related to economic development

Since 1967, Israeli military authorities in the occupied territories have issued about 1,200 military orders, 17 of them dealing with Israeli economic policy in the West Bank and Gaza. One example of these orders is order No. 104, which prevents the transfer of goods without a permit. This order reduces the sale of merchandise from the occupied territories, even to East Jerusalem. Other orders, such as Nos. 1015 and 1039, restrict the growing of oranges, plums, tomatoes, and eggplants because of conflict with Israeli farmers. These orders are clear expressions of Israel's colonial policy in the occupied territories.

### Conclusion

"There will be no development [in the occupied territories] initiated by the Israeli Government, and no permits will be given for expanding agriculture or industry [there], which may compete with the State of Israel."

Yitzhak Rabin  
Minister of Defence of Israel  
The Jerusalem Post  
15 February 1985

No other statement by a high Israeli Government official has ever described Israel's policy towards economic development in the occupied territories more accurately than Rabin's.

1967 marked the beginning of the end of Israel as a unique venture in colonialism. Within a few years, economic relations with the Arab territories seized in the June war recast Israel in the classical configuration of a colonial Power. Moving rapidly away from its own tradition which was distinct from every other colonial project generated in Europe or North America, Israel now shares with a number of other advanced countries the characteristic of imperialism. Israel, like other colonial Powers, profited by opening up new markets for its manufactured goods, extracting raw materials from the dependent areas and by severely exploiting the labour power of the indigenous people.

Israel's economic policy in the occupied territories has an additional feature of "ghettoization" and "bantustanization" of Palestinian population centres: expansion of town and city limits is prohibited, thus no horizontal growth is allowed. Congested population centres are instructed that they are permitted to grow only vertical - as high as they can! Horizontal growth is granted only to Israeli settlements encircling Palestinian population centres.

Consequently, this facilitates control of the Palestinian population, as we are witnessing this week, with the terror gangs of armed settlers roaming the streets of Hebron, Ramallah and Nablus, supported and protected by the Israeli army. In the past few weeks, Israeli authorities have escalated their repressive and brutal collective punishment measures against the Palestinian population in the West Bank and Gaza in response to Palestinian attacks of Israeli targets. Al-Najah University was ordered closed for two months and the towns of Jenin, Tulkarm, Gaza, Ramallah, Hebron and Nablus were placed under curfew. Furthermore, 95 persons were placed under administrative detention, which provides for a renewable six-month prison sentence without trial, and expulsion orders were issued for four people, including two Al-Najah University students.

Israeli economic policy in the occupied territories of no growth and no development and continued colonization proceeds unhindered; it receives the direct or indirect support of the United States and Europe. The Reagan Administration bears a major share of the responsibility for Israel's policy; it is acquiescent to Israel's creeping annexation and a participant in Israel's

programme of pacification. The United States Congress expressed the purpose of its aid allocation to the Palestinians this way: "[It is] the desire of Congress to support projects and expand institutions in the occupied territories of the West Bank and Gaza to help build the socio-economic underpinnings necessary to preserve peace." 35/

Since the United States Government's definition of peace is the absence of war, subsequently, "to preserve the peace" under the prevailing conditions is pacification. Escalation of resistance in the occupied territories has the potential of destabilization of the region. Therefore, Israeli and United States policies towards the occupied territories explain the opposition of both Governments to an international peace conference on the Middle East. So long as the interests of the two Governments are not seriously threatened, and so long as public and international pressure will not come to bear, their policies in this area will remain unchanged.

#### Notes

1/ Rami G. Khuri, "Israel's Imperial Economics", Journal of Palestine Studies, vol. IX, No. 2 (Winter 1980), p. 71.

2/ Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1984, No. 35 (Jerusalem, Central Bureau of Statistics, 1984), p.263; and The Jerusalem Post, 26 July 1985, p. 1.

3/ The Jerusalem Post, 2 August 1984, p.1.

4/ Meron Benvenisti, Jerusalem: Study of a Polarised Community, (Jerusalem, The West Bank Data Base Project, 1983), p. 71.

5/ Calculated from data in Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1984 ..., p. 751.

6/ The scope of this paper will be limited to discussion on the West Bank and Gaza. The Golan Heights merits special consideration that would not be possible at this time.

7/ Development and Economic Situation in the Administered Areas, 1967-1969; Sheila Ryan, A Summary (Unit for Co-ordination of Activity in the Administered Areas, Israel Ministry of Defence, October 1970); and MERIP Reports, No. 24 (Washington, D.C., 1974), p. 9.

8/ Meron Benvenisti, The West Bank Data Project (Washington, D.C., American Enterprise Institute, 1984), p. 15.

9/ M.K. Budeiri, "Changes in the Economic Structure of the West Bank and Gaza Strip Under Israeli Occupation", Labour Capital and Society, 15:1 (April 1982), p. 55.

10/ Hisham Awartani, A Survey of Industry in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, (Bir Zeit: Bir Zeit University, 1979), p. 29.

11/ Budeiri, loc.cit., p. 56.

12/ Awartani, op.cit., p. 27.

13/ Sara Graham-Brown, "The West Bank and Gaza: The Structural Impact of Israeli Colonization", MERIP Reports, No. 74, January 1979, p. 12.

14/ Israel uses the following laws or regulations in the West Bank: the Jordanian law (which is required by International Law), British Emergency Regulations of 1945 and Israeli law. It uses one or more at a time as it suits its interests best. However, whenever these are not "adequate", the occupation authorities issue a military order.

15/ Benvenisti, The West Bank Data Project..., p. 17.

16/ Joost R. Hiltermann, "Mass Mobilization Under Occupation: The Emerging Trade Union Movement in the West Bank and Gaza" (Unpublished paper, 1985), p. 3.

17/ Ibid., p. 4.

18/ Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1984..., No. 35, p. 763.

19/ Hiltermann, loc.cit., p. 4.

20/ The Jerusalem Post, 22 October 1967.

21/ Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1984..., No. 35, p. 762.

22/ Benvenisti, The West Bank Data Project ..., pp. 21-22.

23/ The Jerusalem Post, 24 April 1983.

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2. Shafiq Al-Hout,  
Member of the Palestine National Council

Any attempt to review the current situation in the occupied territories in Palestine and the crimes of Israel committed there in violation of all political, human and internal charters, laws and declarations, in 20 minutes, would be a practical impossibility. In fact, it would be impossible for any individual to cover thoroughly the policies and practices of Israel in those territories. Professional researchers and experts of specialized commissions can hardly do such a job properly.

In my paper, I have tried my best, with the limited material available, mainly newspapers, to summarize indicative events that have taken place in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in the last five months.

This resumé will overlook many very important and will stress only the exemplary ones that testify to the fact that Israel's strategic policy, declared by successive Governments and supported by the majority of the Opposition, considers the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967 as part of Israel. Accordingly, Israel does not consider international laws and conventions related to occupation relevant to those territories.



It is true that the Government of Israel did not declare officially the annexation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, but it has been paving the road for such a step by its consistent policies and practices, such as the deportation of people outside the borders, the transfer of others in hundreds and thousands from one place to another within the borders, the confiscation of land and property, the expropriation of water resources, the demolition of houses, the establishment of settlements, administrative detentions and by depriving people who left the land during the war of 1967 from the right to return and to be reunited with their families.

It is this policy that has been defined so often by so many international committees and commissions, as one aiming to produce the radical, demographic and structural changes needed to make it impossible for the Palestinians to regain their properties and their national rights. The Judaization of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and probably the Golan Heights of Syria, is the ultimate aim of Israel.

One can trace documents, reports and United Nations resolutions testifying to this fact back to the early 1970s. Now, in 1985, any review of the oppressive policies and measures carried out by Israel against our people in the occupied territories can only add more material and evidence of the continuation of the Israeli plot.

The most important major event of 1985 was the partial withdrawal of Israel from Lebanon as a result of the heroic Lebanese resistance. Apparently the war against the Palestinians has not stopped.

On 10 April, the refugee camp of Ein el-Hilweh was bombarded by intensified air raids. Ta'nacil in the Bica' valley was bombarded on 17 April. The refugee camps of Al Baddauri and Nahr el-Bared, in the utmost mount of Lebanon, were bombarded on 10 July. Again, Palestinian camps were bombarded in the Beca' valley on 29 July, 8 August and 4 September. The number of casualties, dead and wounded, amounts to more than 200 people.

It is very important to remember at this point the pretext Israel used to justify its invasion of Lebanon in 1982, i.e. "the peace of Upper Galilee". What is happening now in Lebanon indicates either that the Israeli invasion failed to achieve the declared pretext or that another reason was behind that invasion, namely the extermination of the Palestinian masses and the occupation of part of Lebanon.

The recent public uprising in the occupied territories started directly after Israel's invasion of Lebanon. The situation exploded on 26 November 1982 when people demonstrated in the streets of most towns and villages condemning the Sabra and Shatila massacre. It was the uprising of "stone-throwers" against the Merkava. At this stage, the involvement of armed civilian Jews in fighting the oppressed was widely noted. Hisham Lutfi Abu Salah was the first casualty of a new war waged by the civilian armed Jews. Thus, a circle of actions and reactions began, and the attempt by some extremist Jews who belong to the Cash Movement of Kahana to storm and occupy the Holy Mosque of Aksa was the peak of provocation. Although some of the attackers were arrested at the time, it is obvious that the armed civilian Jewish movement is growing and it is becoming a semi-official force. For example, whenever a confrontation

takes place as a result of extremist aggressions, the Israeli authorities align themselves with the aggressors, and whenever Israel feels the need to take face-saving measures and to prosecute the extremists, the courts give them the most lenient punishment possible. Arabs detained for such activities receive the maximum punishment, in addition to having their houses demolished and other collective punishment.

On 10 May, a 15 year-old Palestinian, Mohamad Idriss Badawi of Alkhalil, was sentenced to 15 days imprisonment because he had thrown a stone at a military car 10 years earlier when he was only 5 years old.

One can enumerate hundreds of tragic stories about the double standards of Israeli justice and its courts. A few such examples should be enough. On 21 May, for example, extremist Jews demonstrated outside the Knesset, demanding the release of those who were accused of attempting to blow up the Aksa Mosque and of throwing and planting bombs in an attempt to kill three Arab mayors. In fairness, one should state here that some progressive and democratic Israelis demonstrated against these terrorists and declared their rejection of any pardon to be offered to them. When the court handed down its verdict on 22 July, it was quite a surprise for everybody: only 6 out of 22 were convicted.

The Jerusalem Post reported that "Embraces, tears of joy and exuberant shouts of 'We won, we won', as the judges left the courtroom, were the first signs from the defendants and their families that not only in the prosecution's eyes were the sentences very lenient".

On 18 August, General Isac Mordakhai, who was accused of killing two wounded Palestinian fighters after they had surrendered, was found by the court to be not guilty, in spite of the photograph published in an Israeli newspaper, which was material evidence. Even more ironical was the wording of the verdict, which stated that what the General had committed was in defence of the lives of civilians, soldiers, policemen and other security people. Is there any way of comparing this justice with that applied to the Arab suspects?

Later, at the end of August, Khalil Abu Ziaal and his wife and children were deported for three years of compulsory exile; the charge was "involvement of undefined terrorist activities". Such a charge could be made against any Palestinian if he insisted on being identified as a Palestinian, or against a group of children if they flew paper kites that had the four colours of the Palestinian flag. On 4 April, Israeli soldiers stormed into Al-Ibrahimiya College and arrested 130 students because they had raised their flag in their school yard!

On the same date, 4 April, the Israeli Government endorsed three major resolutions to desist the uprising in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, involving: (a) administrative detention without trial; (b) deportation of persons threatening security; and (c) increasing the number of gaols in the occupied territories.

The Council of Settlers in Judea, Samaria and Gaza was not content with these measures and demanded that a Likud member urge the Government to adopt 18 points, including one that would "allow soldiers to fire at fleeing stone-throwers and strip citizenship from Israeli Arabs guilty of nationalistic Arab incitement" (The Jerusalem Post, 30 July 1985).

There is nothing surprising in the Government's position, however, since all the measures it adopted had been enforced since occupation. One point that might be of interest relates to the increase in the number of gaols. Using a simple mathematical calculation, adding and subtracting those who was gaoled and those who were released, one can safely say that the number of imprisoned persons amounts to more than 3,000, excluding 1,120 who were released recently from Atlit Prison and about 5,000 who were exchanged by Israeli prisoners in November 1984 and May 1985. One can only hope that Israel will have some respect for human considerations and build the new cells a little larger than the one cubic metre cells of the old prisons. Ironically, at the same time the Government announced its intention to build new gaols for the Palestinians, the Israeli authorities closed down the last humanitarian hospital left in the Arab zone of Jerusalem, the Hospice hospital belonging to the Austrian Church, whose history goes back one hundred years.

As to schools and universities, activities during 1985 include the closing, on 8 March, of Bir Zeit University for two months, not long when compared with 1984 and 1983 when it was closed for four months and three months respectively. Al-Najah University was closed on 4 August for two months, a punishment equal to last year.

Another interesting measure of the Israeli democracy was the decision made this year to forbid male Muslims under the age of 35 years from going on a pilgrimage. The reason given is that men below that age are "suspects". Suspects of what? Don't ask.

The Israeli policies and practices are not limited to determining the present and future of Palestine and the Palestinians. Israel is also trying to exterminate the past, the history and civilization and all aspects of culture of the Palestinian people.

In May, Israel bulldozed in Jerusalem very important inherited buildings of the Ottoman era that were of great historical, religious and architectural value. In August, Israel bulldozed another historical location full of ruins from the Byzantine era.

On 7 July, two hand grenades were thrown at workers who were repairing the Hasan Bek Mosque at Jaffa, which had been deserted since 1948. It was the first mosque I had attended for praying.

What the Israelis did to the Palestinian Research Centre in Beirut in 1982 should not be forgotten for a moment.

Before concluding, one very important point is left that relates to the process of colonization and settlement in the occupied territories. This year, colonization has gone beyond the boundaries of the known settlement to the hearts of Arab cities. It is noteworthy that a lot of the members in the Knesset and the Government coalition support this expansion.

On 16 August, five extremists from the Knesset occupied an Arab house in the casbah of Al-Khalil, to replace eight settlers who confiscated the house before and were compelled to evacuate by the police force. Ministers Arinz,

Shamir and Sharon were in favour of this act, to the embarrassment of their colleagues in the Government. Four days later, the eight had to leave, as a result of the tension prevalent in the area. On 3 September, two Arabs stabbed the two Israeli soldiers left in the house in an act of revenge for their properties and their city. Again a series of actions and reactions of violence prevailed all around.

I have no intention of discussing here the history of Al-Khalil and the great prophet who gave the city his name, Abraham, the Father of Ismail and Isac. It is a historical fact that this city has been inhabited continuously by its present people and their ancestors for the past 1,500 years. Let us imagine, for a moment, how the French would feel if an occupying foreign army decided to blow up Montmartre or the Cathedral of Notre Dame because of historical claims that went back 3,000 years, or how the English would feel if somebody had similar claims and decided to blow up Westminster Abbey!

What happened recently in Al-Khalil goes beyond time and space. It is a dangerous phenomenon that could be called "Kahanism" whose "No" is not addressed to Palestine and the Palestinians only, but to history, civilization and all human values that govern international life. Moreover, it is very alarming to note that Kahanism is not limited to Kahan and his followers. The collaboration of the Likud and other extremists in and outside the Government is widely noticed. The violence and the terror of the Kahanist settlers have been noted and condemned by so many commissions and human rights organizations. Donald Wagner and Henry Showers of the Union of Civil Rights in America have stated in a report entitled "Violence of Israeli settlers in the occupied territories" (1980-1984) that "Israeli occupation is oppressive and monstrous. The Palestinians are terrorized physically, legally and psychologically". And it was added that "the legal system in Israel is at the service of occupation ... and the Palestinian resistance is justified".

There are so many precedents that prove that all of the policies of the extremists, which are condemned, hypocritically, by the Government, end up becoming the official policy of Israel. Meron Benvenisti, in his comprehensive study "The West Bank Data Base Project", referred to this when he touched on the legality of the construction of the settlements. Details about the settlements should not be avoided or touched upon lightly. They are essential and of vital importance. Those who are interested should refer to the paper.

The review of the current situation in the occupied territories reveal and confirms that Israel is still persisting in its aggressive, expansionist, discriminative policies with the ultimate purpose of the Judaization of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip as a prerequisite to its intention of annexing those territories officially.

The second point revealed by this review is the alarming rise of "Kahanism", a form of discriminatory ideology far more fanatic than any other form of fanaticism. The growth of such a phenomenon, no doubt, will undermine the very little chance of a peaceful settlement for the Middle East conflict.

The third point is that the Palestinians are determined to carry on the struggle whatever the price they have to pay until they attain their national rights.

B. Ways and means to implement United Nations resolution 38/58 C:  
The International Peace Conference on the Middle East is the  
means for a just, durable and comprehensive solution to the  
question of Palestine and the Middle East conflict

1. Eugeniy Primakov, Director of the Institute of Oriental  
Studies, Institute of the USSR Academy of Sciences

We have come here together today on the basis of the General Assembly resolution on Palestine of 13 December 1983. Some 124 votes were cast for this resolution, with only 4 against (United States, Israel, Canada and Australia) and 15 abstentions. Thus the resolution reflects the stand of the bulk of State Members of the United Nations. In adopting this resolution, the General Assembly directly and clearly favoured the convocation of an international peace conference on the Middle East. But two years have already passed, and the conference has not been convened. And what is more, there are no clear indications that it may be convened in the near future. Meanwhile, the development of the situation in the Middle East continues to be a grave threat not only to the countries of the region, but to world peace.

Before coming to the subject of the preparation and holding of the Middle East peace conference, allow me to dwell on some general issues that seem to be of a major significance.

First, I would like to draw your attention to the fact that the Palestinian problem is the core and corner-stone of the Middle East settlement. Without a solution, the establishment of a just and stable peace in the Middle East is impossible. This is recognized today by all except the Israeli ruling circles.

But what does the solution of the Palestinian problem mean? There is one answer to this question: providing the Palestinian people with the opportunity and conditions to implement fully their inalienable right to self-determination and the establishment of their own State.

The Palestinian question was an issue in the late 1940s. One may recollect that at that time, the General Assembly voting for the creation of two States in the mandated territory of Palestine, Arab and Jewish. In the resolution it was given in this order. But now some forces are trying to apply different criteria. Theoretically, such attempts are absolutely unfounded, as the Palestinians are now a people, perhaps even to a greater extent than in the 1940s. But it is even more important now that these attempts have become very dangerous from the practical point of view. They do not solve the central problem of the Arab-Israeli settlement and at the same time lay a delayed-action mine of terrific force in international relations in the Middle East. The large experience accumulated by mankind shows that when

national problems are at stake, no palliatives are able to resolve a conflict, to stabilize an international situation for long or to uproot the causes of the sporadic complications which can and will lead to a most dangerous explosion.

Second, there is the problem of the choice of the way in which to settle the Arab-Israeli conflict. Theoretically, we are faced with the dilemma of either employing the method of an overall settlement by convening a peace conference, taking into account the interests of all countries directly and indirectly involved in the conflict, or the method of separate agreements between Israel and other Arab parties to the conflict signed by turn. A retrospective glance at events makes it possible to judge the effectiveness of this or that method. In 1979, the separate Egyptian-Israeli treaty was signed. Some statesmen in the United States and other Western countries tried to present it as a "unique and most important instrument" of détente in the Middle East, of stabilization of the situation, of establishing peace between Israel and its Arab neighbours. The six years separating us from the signing of that treaty justify certain conclusions: the treaty not only did not stabilize the situation, but actually gave a new impetus to those Israeli forces that were striving to annex the Arab lands occupied in 1967 - the West Bank of the Jordan River, the Gaza Strip and the Golan Heights. It gave full scope to the Israeli extremists to attack Lebanon in 1982. Israeli intervention has been the main cause of the blood-shedding crisis in Lebanon of unprecedented duration and tremendous number of human casualties.

When the Camp David agreements were being prepared, the United States Administration was making the world believe that it would provide, among other things, for a beginning of an intensive process of resolving the Palestinian problem. The agreement envisaged Israeli-Egyptian contacts on the question of the Palestinians. The Israeli Government made no secret of the fact that it meant autonomy for the population of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and not for the territory.

All unbiased experts in the Middle East read this Israeli stand as a preparation for the annexation of the occupied Arab lands. Naturally, such negotiations on the "Palestinian question", interpreted in the Israeli way and in the absence of representatives of Palestinian people, produced no results. They were simply stopped and this, in my view, once more proved the incontestable fact that separate talks cannot have a follow-up in the form of a general solution. Although highly boosted by their adherents, they cannot bring about, step by step, a general settlement.

This goal maybe achieved only if the settlement problems are treated as a "package deal", if all interested parties sit at the negotiating table. Such a course has been open all the time. It has been supported by the Soviet Union and a number of other countries. It may be said that it came to the surface without once making feasible the beginning of the process of an overall settlement.

But there exists, as I see it, a certain regularity. As soon as the peace conference on the Middle East becomes really possible, as soon as its concrete contours emerge, proposals of separate agreements immediately emerge. Thus, in 1977, for instance, the visit of the former Egyptian President to Jerusalem took place soon after the Soviet-American Declaration on the Middle East had been issued. The Declaration contained a concrete proposal for a peace conference on the overall settlement of the Middle East problem. I think that now, too, those people who plan new separate talks, this time between Jordan, the Palestinians and Israel, would like to prevent the holding of a peace conference on the Middle East. And it is probable that the Arab forces who actively participated in the preparation of the Jordanian-Palestinian agreement, but did not want a separate settlement, do not realize that they may be involved, perhaps even against their will, in processes aimed at preventing a just solution to the Middle East conflict, the Palestinian problem in the first place.

The preparation and holding of a peace conference on the Middle East is certainly not an easy task, especially when both Israel and the United States, contrary to prevailing international opinion, do not want this conference to take place and actively obstruct all efforts to convene it. But does this mean that the way to an overall settlement is forever blocked and that our efforts are all in vain?

I do not share such a pessimistic view.

First of all, the process of an overall settlement does not contradict real, objective interests of independence and the development of all peoples and States of the region. That is why this process can be arranged in such a way as to satisfy all interested parties.

One should mention the following basic principles for the overall settlement of the Middle East problem:

- (a) Inadmissibility of capture of foreign lands by aggression;
- (b) Assurance of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination and the establishment of their own independent State;
- (c) Assurance of the rights of all States of the region to safe, independent and secure existence.

These are just principles. Naturally, they are also in accordance with the real interests of all parties to the conflict and do not tie the hands of the signatories of the agreement beforehand.

I would like, in this connection, to give an example. The implementation by the Palestinian people of their right to self-determination and their own

national State is of paramount importance. But as soon as this State is established, would anybody be able to oppose its decision to enter into confederation with some other State or States? Of course not. As a matter of fact, such a prospect could be provided for in the agreement.

A sufficiently flexible structure of the conference working bodies should also be envisaged. For instance, it seems that setting up conference commissions dealing with general problems in no way precludes the forming, when necessary, of commissions and establishing contacts on a bilateral basis.

Further, it would be possible, perhaps, to agree on a "time-table" for the implementation of all measures agreed upon at the conference. Thus it would be possible to speak not of a solution to problems once and for all, but, in case of a necessity, of a succession of solutions. But the steps of such a staircase should not be separate boards, they should be steps of a single staircase.

I am convinced that, at present, this is the only possible way to an overall settlement of the Middle East problem, but it is blocked by the Israeli Government. However, there are certainly forces in Israel itself, although as yet not numerous, who are aware of the dangerous consequences of Israeli nihilism regarding the overall settlement. Years will pass, and nobody knows what the balance of forces will be in the Middle East. In addition, the policy of occupation creates ever greater dangers to all democratic manifestations in the Israeli society itself. One cannot but recollect Marx saying that a people oppressing other peoples could not be free.

One may hope that in the United States, too, those politicians will not be pushed to the background who realize that the elimination of the constant threat of destabilization of regional and global situations caused by the developments in the Middle East is in the national interests of the United States and other nations.

The way to an international conference and overall settlement of the Middle East problem is certainly not an easy one, it is not covered with rose petals. But it is the only way which, it seems, mankind should follow, if it really wants justice for all peoples, security and peace as an inalienable right of all nations living on our planet.



2. Mattiyahu Peled, Member of Knesset for the  
Progressive List for Peace, Chairman of the Israeli Council  
for Israeli-Palestinian Peace and Professor of  
Arabic Literature at Tel Aviv University

Regardless of the final formulation of the title of this morning's discussion, I would like to emphasize the in the telegram I received from the Under-Secretary-General for Political and General Assembly Affairs, I was invited to participate as an expert member of the panel entitled "Ways and means to implement United Nations resolution 38/58 C" and to present a paper on that subject; and this is what I intend to do in the time at my disposal.

The text of that resolution leaves no doubt that, in the opinion of the General Assembly, the solution of the Palestinian problem requires that the rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination be fully recognized, that the PLO be recognized as the sole representative of the Palestinian people, that this organization should participate on an equal footing with other parties in the peace process and that Israel should put an end to the occupation of territories it has been occupying since 1967 and eliminate all traces of the occupation. All this, it is clearly stated in the resolution, should be accomplished while the right of all States in the region to exist in peace and security is fully recognized.

That resolution does not set before the international community goals which are illusory, although they seem to be far-reaching; what it set out to do is to lay down a programme which the experience of the conflict has shown to be the only one possible if peace is to be established in the region. Or, rather, the only that can bring an end to the conflict. This was realized by the General Assembly one cloudy morning on 13 December 1983; it was a lesson learned over the years and formulated in a variety of circumstances since Security Council resolution 338 (1973) was adopted. The gist of that resolution is that the parties directly involved in the conflict should meet around the negotiating table, joined by the two super-Powers, and work out a solution based on the principles enunciated by Security Council resolution 242 (1967). As we all know, the format provided by resolution 338 (1973) was tested in a couple of sessions and was then suspended by the United States, once it was felt that a settlement based on a narrower basis, excluding the Soviet Union, would better serve their interests. For a moment it looked as if the United States had second thoughts when the United States-Soviet Union statement of October 1977 was issued. That statement went one step beyond resolution 338 (1973) in that it recognized the centrality of the Palestinian problem, which in effect went unrecognized in both of the Security Council resolutions. But the joint statement was doomed and soon abandoned, in preference, by the United States, for the Camp David process which resulted in a bilateral peace between Israel and Egypt, a peace which in effect was soon put in cold storage and became a turning point leading to greater tragedies for the peoples of the region. There is no doubt that the Camp David accords led to the ruthless and adventurous Israeli air raid on the nuclear installation in Iraq and to the two invasions of Lebanon, in 1978 and in 1982. These tragic consequences of the Camp David accords came despite the

two positive elements written into them. The first one is the principle that Israel should withdraw all the way to the pre-1967 borders in the framework of a peace treaty, as indeed is required by the General Assembly resolution we are discussing today, and the second is the recognition that the Palestinian problem should be solved on the basis of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. Yet, this dramatic move failed because the United States tried to use the peace process as a means of furthering its interests in the region at the expense of those of the Soviet Union. Furthermore, it failed because Israel tried to use the peace process as a means of furthering its aggression against the Palestinian people.

These are sad lessons but they should not be allowed to be forgotten. They should be borne in mind now especially, since we are witnessing a new attempt by the United States to generate a new phase in the process meant to further their interests under the pretext of reviving the peace process. But, in the meantime, the idea of what might be termed a holistic approach has not died. In September 1982, President Brezhnev proposed a plan for peace in the Middle East that was based on the concept that was eventually incorporated in the General Assembly resolution we are considering today. This plan, having been adopted in effect by the Arab Summit of Fez and by the Palestine National Council in 1983, naturally became the basis for the General Assembly resolution. The merits of this plan or programme is that it provides a framework for arriving at a solution that would be acceptable to all the parties to the conflict and at the same time enable the big Powers both to look after their own vital interests and to provide a guarantee that the settlement reached would be implemented and observed. Compared to anything proposed by the United States there is no doubt that the proposal to search for peace within the framework of an international peace conference certainly holds out greater promise of success.

A few words should be said about the obstacles faced by the General Assembly's programme. I do not think it should be doubted that the people of the Middle East are eager for peace. But peace is often presented as a great danger or as tantamount to the renunciation of elementary rights. By thus presenting peace to the people, the anti-peace forces manage to mobilize on their side a great deal of support which they would certainly lose if the fears they generate could be allayed. This is a point which very often tends to be disregarded. In other words, there is a psychological dimension which must be borne in mind when political proposals are made to solve the problems besetting peoples at war. A great deal is made by United States and Israeli propaganda on any ambiguity that can be found in proposals they do not like. For example, when the sixteenth Palestine National Council, having adopted the Brezhnev plan, failed to mention the name of Israel, this was interpreted by hostile propaganda as proof of the insincerity underlying the resolution. These days too, the United States is attempting to persuade Jordan and the PLO to renounce their adherence to the idea of an international peace conference and some indications point to the possibility that the United States may propose direct contacts with the PLO, despite Israeli opposition, in return for abandoning the demand for such a conference, the denial of the State Department issued yesterday notwithstanding. There should be no doubt that a rejection of such United States suggestions by King Hussein and Yasser Arafat

will be interpreted by Israel and the United States as proof of their unwillingness to make peace. In order to meet such a false interpretation of their motives they would be wise to emphasize the expected consequences of an international peace conference. It would make good sense to point out that within the framework of such a conference certain measures that seem now very unlikely might be made possible, such as direct talks between the Israeli and the Palestinian delegations, or the acceptance of certain limitations of the exercise of sovereignty which cannot be discussed in any other format. What I am suggesting is the taking of active measures to counter the argument that an international peace conference would only enable the anti-American and anti-Israel forces to put sticks into the wheels of the wagon of peace.

Yesterday the phenomenon of Jewish nazism was mentioned. Indeed, we are faced today, in Israel, with what I consider the most terrible and most ironic revenge taken by Adolph Hitler against the Jewish people in that his very ideology, the ideology of Nazi racism, has been wholly embraced by a large number of Jews in Israel and outside. There are very deep roots to this development, and the policy of annexation and unrelenting aggression against the Palestinian people by Israel has certainly provided the fertilizer with which such a shameful poisonous growth has thrived. Let me draw your attention to the fact that such developments are coming hand in hand with others, no less dangerous. I would like to draw your attention specifically to a report issued by the Institute for Disarmament Studies in Washington a few weeks ago, in which it is stated that Israel has at its disposal from 15 to 28 nuclear devices that can be launched by ballistic missiles or by aircraft. An immediate result of this report was a statement issued in Damascus by the Foreign Minister of the Syrian Arab Republic, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and the Islamic Republic of Iran saying that the three Governments had decided to acquire nuclear capabilities to be directed against Israel. Thus, an open and acknowledged nuclear race has begun in the Middle East. In Israel, few paid attention to this terrifying development, since most people and all the mass media were busy following the developments in Hebron, where a few crazy chauvinists had occupied an old house in the casbah and the Government has shown shameful timidity in dealing with them. But the point to bear in mind is that these crazy elements may come to power and lay their hands on the nuclear weapons and thus plunge the entire region into a nuclear holocaust.

Stopping these developments is the responsibility of those in Israel who are committed to peace and peaceful co-existence. But we need a more vigorous drive for peace in and outside Israel to help us arrest the flood of insanity that is rising within our society. I do not believe that this can be achieved at this stage without the two super-Powers coming to an agreement on how to tackle the Middle East situation. We are all waiting anxiously for the forthcoming meeting between President Reagan and Mr. Gorbachev, hoping that one of the outcomes will be an agreement on the question of an international peace conference on the Middle East. Perhaps we have reached the stage where the local Powers are no longer capable of solving their conflict, and the entire power to deal with the situation has passed into the hands of the super-Powers. If they will fail to come to an agreement then it seems that the Middle East will be heading towards greater calamities than those it has experience up to now.

3. Tawfiq Zayyad, Mayor of Nazareth

The latest United States assault, which has been stepped up over recent months, is very far removed from being a peace initiative. Its real aim is to impose a liquidation of the Palestinian issue and of the rights of the Palestinian Arab people to national sovereignty.

It is being conducted on the basis of the official, declared United States position (the Reagan plan), which is based on rejection of the principle of withdrawal to the 1967 borders, rejection of the right of the Palestinian Arab people to self-determination and an independent State and rejection of recognition of the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian Arab people.

At the least, it is conducted with a view to harnessing the PLO to the United States position and depleting it of all Palestinian national content, thereby widening the split in the organization and aggravating its internal difficulties.

American timing is based on the difficulties facing the Palestinian people and the PLO as a result of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982.

The United States (and Israeli) pre-condition for those Palestinians participating in the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation is that they should be "acceptable", in other words that they should, in practice, be appointed by the United States and be acceptable to the Government of Israel. This implies a violation of the principle that the PLO is the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and opens a breach for the potential elimination of the legitimate leadership of the Palestinian Arab people recognized at the Palestinian, Arab and international levels.

Accordingly, what is going on is that the foundations are being laid for the implementation of the second phase of the Camp David design (the Reagan plan), this time by making use of the Jordanian régime and admitting it as a formal participant along with other Arab leaders who are sympathetic to the United States and to its strategic designs in the region and are endeavouring to increase pressure on the PLO.

The Camp David agreements did not bring peace and did not resolve the Palestinian issue, which is the essence of the crisis, but were an invitation to a new war (that in Lebanon); a Camp David II would also be an invitation to future wars.

Reference must be made, with particular gravity, to the fact that the United States and Israel are using the so-called "peace initiative" or "peace process" in order to cover up a number of matters of extreme seriousness:

(a) The continued Israeli occupation of parts of southern Lebanon, directly by Israeli forces and indirectly through the intermediary of the

mercenary Antoine Lahad forces, and of the sabotage activity of Israeli lackeys inside Lebanon;

(b) The preparations for a new war against the Syrian Arab Republic in order to open the way for the complete subjugation of the Middle East;

(c) The fact that Israel is involved in the schemes of the United States that go beyond the Palestinian issue and beyond the Middle East region, as can be seen from the strategic co-operation agreement, Israeli readiness to take part in Star Wars, nuclear-weapon production programmes, etc., in the belief that the United States will gain ascendancy internationally and in the Middle East and that the Soviet Union and the national liberation movements in general will be weakened by the success of Israeli schemes and expansionist ambitions.

There is no essential qualitative difference between the two major parties making up the Israeli Government, the Ma'arach and the Likud. The differences are tactical and matters of outward form. Complete agreement exists on the three Israeli noes: no withdrawal to the 1967 borders; no right to self-determination and an independent State for the Palestinian Arab people; no recognition of the PLO. This makes Israel the only rejectionist State in the region.

The continued settlement activity, the stepping up of the "Iron Fist" policy and occupation-related oppression in the occupied territories are destructive not only for the Palestinian Arab people but for the Israeli people and their national interests.

The solution, a just, comprehensive and lasting peace, is possible only on the basis of withdrawal from all the areas occupied in 1967, the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and an independent State and recognition of the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

This solution is based on the resolutions and covenants of the United Nations, which prohibit the acquisition of the territory of others by force of arms.

• There is a need for a balance of power, both internationally and within the region, and for an objective outlook that does not permit the imposition of an unjust "settlement", as the experience of continued wars over 37 years (particularly that of the Lebanon war of 1982) has proved.

International experience (that of the Vietnamese, Cuban and Algerian questions and of dozens of other national liberation causes) demonstrates that it is not possible in our time to solve national issues by military might, but only on the basis of the principle of the right to self-determination.

The question of the international conference

The entire discussion of the international conference (under the auspices of the United Nations and with the participation of the Soviet Union, the United States, Israel, the PLO and the other States concerned) is a discussion of whether there is to be a just solution or an unjust solution. All those who reject the international conference reject a just solution and seek to impose the liquidation of the rights of the Palestinian people to national sovereignty and the exclusion of the Soviet Union and the PLO. All those who desire a just, comprehensive and lasting solution see the international conference as the framework for its achievement.

The international responsibility is a direct one. The conflict involved in the Palestinian issue cannot be removed from the general context of international relations. Conflagration and outbreaks of hostilities cannot always be contained within the Middle East. The Middle East issue (with a war every three to four years) may lead to an international eruption or one extending beyond the Middle East.

Accordingly, in present circumstances, the international conference is an appropriate framework, or rather the only framework, for reaching a just solution which is also accompanied by assured guarantees for the future.

The latest statements made by Reagan, Peres and King Hussein on their conception of the international conference demonstrate that they seek an "international conference" that will be an umbrella, a rubber stamp and an international endorsement of a liquidationist settlement of the right of the Palestinians to national sovereignty, of the realization by Israel of territorial acquisitions and of a settlement reached by them in advance.

The statements in question were, nevertheless, made as a *pro forma* retreat in the face of the international campaign of pressure conducted by the United Nations and its Member States, by world public opinion and by all the forces that truly desire a just, comprehensive and lasting settlement. At the same time, caution should be used against any illusions created by this merely formal retreat.

The idea of the international conference is taking firm root among such extensive international circles that the United States and Israel cannot ignore them and are resorting to stratagems against them.

This shows the need to intensify the international pressure exerted by the United Nations, its Member States, the peace-loving States and the forces of rationality on the rulers of the United States and Israel as a strategic framework for bringing about a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East.

4. Amnon Zichroni, Attorney and Member,  
Israeli Council for Israeli-Palestinian Peace

I request your indulgence a bit in that some of my remarks today will be of a personal nature. Since my youth, when I first became politically aware, I viewed myself as being a member of what is known in Israel as the "Peace Camp". My first steps in the public realm were quite individualistic. I refused to be drafted into the Israeli Army and even went on a hunger strike, all this at the tender age of 18. These were the actions of a naive, rebellious youth who believed that his personal example could affect a change and influence others to arrive at a peaceful resolution of the conflict which afflicts our region, somewhat similar to the view of the philosopher Immanuel Kant, who called for eternal world peace.

It was almost 200 years ago that Kant wrote an essay in which he claimed that the establishment of democratic Governments would ensure peace because democracies required their citizens to decide on war or peace. The citizens, for their part, would not be likely to encourage the facilitation of such a situation as war and would not be in favour of the tragedy of war owing to every man's abhorrence of war, which necessarily includes the need to fight, the need to pay for the conduct of war both in human and financial terms by the citizens, the need to restore and rebuild as a consequence of the damage which war inevitably leaves in its wake and, lastly, to endure the awful bitterness following the cessation of hostilities, which is euphemistically termed peace.

However, the establishment of democratic Governments did not ensure peace, nor did my personal hunger strike affect the problems which afflict my region of the world.

With the passage of both time and years, my eyes opened a bit wider and I came to some further awarenesses. At first, possibly, it was still an awareness which continued to walk, hand in hand, with my naivete, for it believed that all that was required was for all sides to the conflict to speak to one another, that the most natural thing in the world was for the enemies to sit together and talk out their differences without the interference of outsiders who care more for their own interests than for the interests of the parties to the conflict. I said before that it is possible to say that this awareness was a bit naive in that it ignored the real difficulties involved: deep seated psychological patterns of thought and deeply held beliefs; the contradictory interests of the parties; and the petty political considerations of some of the local politicians. The list could go on and on.

And then, as is the nature of things, I developed another awareness, one which was more realistic and took into account the factors I previously mentioned. Suddenly, I understood that one doesn't live in a vacuum nor does one exist without a past. In order to advance the peace process other

international participants are necessary so as to guarantee the arrangements made and to pressure recalcitrant parties - in short, to aid in the peace process. Thus, it is clear that what is needed is an international peace conference with all the necessary parties participating, as well as the two super-Powers.

Israel refuses to participate in such a peace process because, at this time, it lacks the collective will to return the occupied territories, which is a pre-condition to any peace. The United States refuses to participate because it does not believe that its interests in the region are best served by the convening of such an international peace conference.

I mentioned previously the view of Kant and his faith in democracy. In Kant's time, democracy was still an infant in diapers which existed in only a handful of States. His faith in democratic principles was justified, not because democratic Governments are always able to prevent wars, but because public opinion and the national consensus are tremendously important factors in a democracy's ability to conduct a war. Democracies that don't assess the importance of a national consensus before entering a war, as for instance, the United States in Viet Nam or Israel in Lebanon, make these wars unwinnable. Public opinion stands in opposition to governmental policy and cause a change in that policy.

Despite all the harsh criticism I have against the Israeli Government and many of my fellow citizens, I cannot deny the fact that Israel is a State wherein the vast majority still believe in the principles of democracy. Public opinion still plays an important role in Israel and the war in Lebanon proves this.

Sometimes peace is elusive. The moment you think you've got it in your hand, it slips away. That's what happened a few years ago when the large demonstrations against the war in Lebanon were held in Israel with many hundreds of thousands of Israelis participating. It was widely believed that the Israeli peace camp was on the threshold of a momentous victory and that a profound change in Israeli public opinion would ensue. Alas, that change never developed, and the situation in Israel today is worse than ever.

The nuclear threat is ever increasing, even in our region of the world. The age of nuclear weapons has come to the Middle East. It was recently reported that the Syrian Arab Republic and the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya planned to purchase nuclear weapons in an effort to counter the Israeli nuclear capability. This would place the entire region in a danger of unparalleled proportions. There are so many crazies and extremists in this region who would press the nuclear button without much hesitation, and the threat of retribution does not exist as it does between the super-Powers.

The phenomenon of Rabbi Kahane and Kahanism exists. Contrary to what most people think, Kahanism is not a temporary case of collective insanity or



a mere flash in the pan. It is a natural outgrowth of the Likud Party's ideology. The Likud gave birth to the Tehiya Party and Rabbi Levinger of the Gush Emunim Movement which, in turn, prompted the emergence of Kahanism. Kahanism has a pedigree and should be seen as being a direct descendant of the Likud Party's attitudes and actions while in power. The Likud Party still pays lip service to the principles of democracy, but the attitudes it has concerning Palestinians and its view vis-à-vis the Palestinian/Israeli problem gives rise to Kahanism, which calls for the expulsion of all Arabs from Israel and the occupied territories.

The general political atmosphere in Israel today is frightening. It is one of a growing polarization between those who genuinely desire peace and those who wish to make Israel an armed outpost completely isolated from the rest of the Middle East. Kahane's blatant, open racism is echoed by a growing number of "moderate" and "conservative" politicians who are anxious not to lose votes. The rise of extremism is rampant.

Against this background it is possible to analyse recent events and place them in their proper context. At the end of July and the beginning of August, three murders took place in the northern Israeli town of Afula. The victims were all Jews and the alleged perpetrators were individual Palestinian residents of the occupied territories. No group or organization took any responsibility for these acts. The Jewish response to these murders was chilling. People took to the streets and chanted "death to Arabs" and individual Arabs who work in Afula refused to go to their jobs, being justifiably afraid of being physically harmed.

In response to these murders, the Israeli Government decided to reinstitute its policy of deportation. This was viewed as a way of frightening the inhabitants of the occupied territories and as a measure of revenge for the murders. The first person ordered to be deported was Halil Abu Ziad. Mr. Abu Ziad is a life-long resident of the town of Azaria, a small village located near Jerusalem in part of the occupied West Bank. It was claimed by the Israeli military commander that Mr. Abu Ziad was a leader of Fatah and was fomenting disturbances. I represented Mr. Abu Ziad before both the military committee and the Israeli Supreme Court, in an effort to keep him from being deported. The military committee, whose opinion is only advisory, recommended that the military commander reconsider his decision to deport Mr. Abu Ziad. For the first time in history, the military commander ignored the committee's recommendation and went on to order his deportation. Before the Supreme Court made its final decision, an arrangement was made wherein my client left Israel voluntarily, the deportation order being dropped. Unfortunately, deportations are continuing.

The crux of my legal argument was that under international law, the occupying authority (Israel) is forbidden to deport any members of the civilian population of the territory which it occupies. For those who shall be attending the lawyer's workshop later in the day, I shall go into my legal argument in greater detail.

The fact that the latest round of tension was started by the murders of Jews supposedly by individual Arabs is quite significant. It is significant in that the alleged murderers were youths from the occupied territories. They were not members of any particular group nor did they espouse any particular ideology. What prompted them to murder, if they in fact did it, was the utter hopelessness and desperation with which they viewed their situation. Israel has occupied these territories for 18 years now. Thus, a whole generation of both Jews and Palestinians have grown up not knowing anything else. What has been natural to them is the fact of occupation. As awful as the occupation is for the Palestinian residents, it also does tremendous damage to the Israeli youth, no matter where they live. These young people have grown up with the Israeli as occupier, and have come to view the pre-1967 boundaries as simply lines on an ancient map. This attitude, coupled with the current rise of extremism which legitimates racist feelings to these youngsters, must be addressed.

The majority of Israelis have grown up in the aftermath of the 1967 war and have come to believe firmly that the only way for Israel to defend itself properly is through the continued occupation of all those territories conquered in that war. At every meeting such as this one, I must seize the opportunity and request that the Palestinians help the Israeli peace camp convince the Israeli public that it is possible to live in security in an Israel reduced in size to the pre-1967 borders. The Palestinian leadership must unambiguously declare that it is willing to recognize Israel's right to exist and the desire to coexist in a meaningful peace in return for Israel's return of all territories occupied in the 1967 war and Israel's acceptance of the Palestinians' right to self-determination, ultimately leading to the creation of a Palestinian State. The declaration should also include a statement explicitly renouncing violence for a certain period of time in which it is expected that Israel shall accept the terms outlined above. If a statement such as that were made, and made in as dramatic a fashion as possible, the effect it would have on Israeli, as well as world public opinion, would be tremendous. This declaration should be accompanied by more direct contacts between PLO leaders and Israelis and should also be accompanied by a somewhat diminished general public battering of anything Israeli. The PLO must acknowledge that some Israelis are genuinely interested in peace and interested in the creation of a Palestinian State, and we must be encouraged publicly.

As I mentioned before, I am no longer 18, naive, or completely capable or willing to go on another hunger strike, although it would probably do me some good. Now, to my sorrow, I realize that peace cannot be achieved by acts such as those. However, I do know the value of such a declaration, as I outlined above, and its ability dramatically to sway Israeli public opinion, and I know that a move of Israeli public opinion in favour of peace would significantly advance Israeli/Palestinian dialogue and the convening of a conference as called for in General Assembly resolution 38/58 C.

In that I have previously alluded to the super-Powers, I'd like also to state that another hurdle which is always raised concerning the Soviet Union's participating in such a peace conference is that the Soviet Union severed diplomatic relations with Israel following the 1967 war and they have never been restored. The restoration of diplomatic relations between Israel and the Soviet Union, something which Israel desires, would go a long way in developing Israel's desire for the Soviet Union's participation in such a peace conference.

Another way to influence Israeli public opinion is through the work of non-governmental organizations. It is extremely important, in fact, crucial, for the average Israeli to see that there is an ongoing dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians, and this can be seen by looking at the work done by the Interim Co-ordinating Committee (ICC) of the non-governmental organizations. It is vital that ICC be allowed to mature and ripen into an independent entity.

A discussion without any concrete results is akin to a barren wasteland. I propose that we adopt a resolution which calls for every single non-governmental organization to convene direct meetings between Israelis and Palestinians. Dialogues such as these would be vital to both Israelis and Palestinians, and would also develop specific contacts for every non-governmental organization throughout the world. I would also like us to think about the possibility of establishing an umbrella organization of all non-governmental organizations, not only by regions.

It has been said that the Semitic people are wise, and that anti-semitism is merely an outpouring of jealousy. Alas, the Jews have ceased for some time being wise. It is now left to the Palestinians to save the Semite's good name. I hope that the Palestinians will adopt a statesmanlike position which would aid us in the Israeli peace camp in trying to restore the good name of the Jewish people.

I began my remarks today mentioning naive hopes. I shall end my remarks in a similar vein. A few months ago, at an ICC meeting at Geneva, I promised to draw up a draft of a possible peace agreement. I have done so, but due to the lack of time, I will not read it now. I shall, however, include it in the record of my speech (see appendix to the present statement), and I hope that you will all take a look at it. Let us all pray that a peace agreement of this type, or something quite similar, shall be signed in the near future between Israel, the PLO, as the representative of the Palestinian people, the Arab States in the region and the two super-Powers as guarantors.

Appendix

PEACE AGREEMENT

Made and signed this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_

By and between:

The Palestine Liberation Organization

(hereafter "The PLO")

of the first part

and

the State of Israel

(hereafter "Israel")

of the second part

and

the Arab States

of the third part

and

the United States of America

as guarantor

and

the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

as guarantor

Whereas the parties hereto represent various peoples living in the region of the world known as the Middle East; and

Whereas the parties hereto desire that all the people living in this region of the world be allowed to do so in peace, harmony, security and dignity; and

Whereas the parties hereto desire to reach a formal understanding concerning the various rights and privileges which exist between them; and

Whereas the parties hereto desire that the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics guarantee the performance hereof and the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics desire the same; and

Whereas the parties hereto desire to record their understanding and set forth in writing the accords reached:

Now, therefore, the parties hereto hereby agree as follows:

1. The PLO, as sole representative

1.1. The parties hereto hereby recognize the party of the first part to this agreement, namely the PLO, as the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

2. The Palestinians' right to establish a State

2.1. The parties hereto hereby recognize the right of the Palestinians to establish a fully independent State.

3. Recognition of Israel

3.1. The parties hereto hereby recognize the right of Israel to exist as a fully independent State.

4. Boundaries

4.1. The parties hereto hereby declare that the boundaries of the State to be formed by the PLO (hereafter "Palestine") are to be as follows: all those areas currently occupied by Israel as a result of those hostilities which transpired in 1967 between Israel and neighbouring countries, with the exception of the Golan Heights.

4.2. The Golan Heights shall be returned to the Syrian Arab Republic subject to a peace agreement being reached between Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic.

4.3. The provisions of subparagraph 4.1. above are subject to the provisions of paragraph 5 below.

5. Jerusalem

- 5.1. Jerusalem shall be a united city, but shall be divided into two boroughs, one Israeli and one Palestinian.
- 5.2. One city council shall be established with equal representation by the two boroughs. Said council shall govern Jerusalem.
- 5.3. All persons of all religious faiths shall have free and unimpeded access to the religious areas of special significance to them.
- 5.4. A joint Palestinian-Israeli police force shall be established for the protection of the holy places.

6. The Jewish settlements

- 6.1. The parties hereto hereby declare that all those Jewish settlements established during the past eighteen years on the territory which shall, in the future, constitute Palestine were established in violation of international law.
- 6.2. The provisions of paragraph 6.1. above notwithstanding, it is hereby agreed that the settlements may remain if the State of Palestine so allows. If so, the Jewish settlers would be accorded full citizenship rights of the State of Palestine. If not, the settlements would be dismantled and the residents returned to Israel.

7. Compensation

- 7.1. A tribunal will be established, comprised of joint Palestinian and Israeli judges to determine the amount of financial compensation to be awarded individuals who were unjustly ousted from their homes during the creation of the State of Israel in 1948, and at any time thereafter.
- 7.2. Funding for the awards made by the above mentioned tribunal shall be made by a special fund to be established by the United Nations.

8. Cessation of violence

- 8.1. The parties hereto hereby renounce the use of armed violence of any sort for whatever purpose.

9. Ratification

- 9.1. The parties hereto hereby declare that they shall make their best efforts to ensure that this agreement is ratified by the appropriate internal bodies.

10. International guarantees

- 10.1. The United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics hereby declare that they shall use their considerable influence to guarantee that the provisions of this agreement are adhered to.

10.2. It is hereby requested that the United Nations General Assembly endorse this agreement and pass a special resolution declaring its support for the provisions herein.

11. Transitional period

11.1. This agreement shall not ultimately be binding upon the parties hereto until it shall be ratified by the new State of Palestine. Until that time, the occupying Israeli army shall be entitled to remain in certain defined defence areas. Upon ratification by the new Palestinian State, the Israeli army shall return forthwith to Israel.

12.1. Immediately upon ratification by the new State of Palestine as per paragraphs 10 and 11 above, full diplomatic relations shall be established between all the parties hereto.

13. Cessation of state of war

13.1. The parties hereto declare that upon their signature hereon, the state of war which exists between them shall forthwith cease.

Thus done and signed on the date aforementioned.

\_\_\_\_\_  
The PLO

\_\_\_\_\_  
Israel

\_\_\_\_\_  
The Arab States

AS Guarantors:

\_\_\_\_\_  
The United States of America

\_\_\_\_\_  
The Union of Soviet Socialist  
Republics

5. Shafiq Al-Hout,  
Member of the Palestine National Council

The idea of convening an International Peace Conference on the Question of Palestine, which was adopted and declared at the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, held at Geneva, on 7 September 1983, and which was endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 38/58 C of 13 December 1983, was in fact the culmination of the noble, responsible, sincere and painstaking efforts of the international community.

It is the net result of a continuous struggle led by peace and justice-loving peoples, States and different political and human movements and organizations. It is also because of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, whose works and efforts have been highly evaluated and appreciated.

The whole world at large, with the exception of Israel and the United States of America, welcomed this idea and received it as the only remaining peaceful means of rescue from the present impasse.

The use of "the right of veto" by the United States in the Security Council against all the balanced and just draft resolutions relevant to the question of Palestine has paralysed all international efforts made within the United Nations framework in search of a just, comprehensive settlement of this question. This, in reality, was the major reason for the emergence of the call for an international peace conference, with the hope that new horizons and dimensions would be added to the international efforts to find new platforms from which to implement what the Security Council has so far failed to conclude. Now, whether this international conference will be a substitute or an extension of the Security Council, is still unknown.

Many other reasons could be enumerated to testify to the pressing need for the convening of this conference, such as the continued aggravation of the situation in the Middle East, the catastrophic and tragic aspects of the Palestinians' lives, the continuation of Israel's occupation of all of Palestine, South Lebanon and the Golan Heights of the Syrian Arab Republic, etc. What is most alarming, however, is the absence of any other concrete option to such efforts than to wait and watch the explosive situation until everything blows up. This time, war will be different, bloodier, much more destructive, and will cover areas and countries beyond the traditional battlefields known in the previous wars. It cannot be denied that such a war would threaten world peace and security. Military reports about the quantities and qualities of all kinds of arms flowing into the region are really horrifying. It might be useful to remind all those whose arrogance has blinded them from seeing the pressing and vital need for such a peace conference of the bitter and highly expensive experience in Lebanon. When they declared their aggressive war against Lebanon and the Palestinians living there, the Israeli leader promised their constituencies that they would end the war in a matter of hours, a maximum of days. That was in June 1982; it is now August 1985, and the war is still prevailing. The Lebanese and Palestinians, like all other peoples of the world, will never surrender to the aggressor. The heroic



struggle of these peoples in the south of Lebanon and the occupied territories in Palestine will continue endlessly until freedom and sovereignty are attained.

Peace and justice are the two sides of one coin; no justice, no peace.

A thorough and careful examination of the objectives and political substance of an international conference would be required for the achievement of those objectives and to ensure the credibility and applicability of such a conference to produce a just and durable solution.

Both the Geneva Declaration on Palestine and General Assembly resolution 38/58 C eloquently stated the objectives of an international conference: to achieve a comprehensive, just and durable solution for the Arab-Israeli conflict. Both the Declaration and the resolution defined the political elements required for such a solution.

In paragraph 3 of General Assembly resolution 38/58 C, which enumerates those basic elements, one can easily see that all the elements have been inspired by, and based upon, the Charter of the United Nations and international law, to which all States are committed. Moreover, one can easily notice the balanced wording of those elements, which indicates how careful and sensitive the drafting was in addressing the needs and demands of all the parties involved in the conflict. It was a political masterpiece, a unique mixture of human principles and global political realities.

It is necessary to refer, in this regard, to two provisions of paragraph 3, namely subparagraphs (a) and (f), which constitute the two major wings of the balance.

Subparagraph (a) states:

"The attainment by the Palestinian people of its legitimate inalienable rights, including the right to return, the right to self-determination and the right to establish its own independent State in Palestine;"

By adding to this subparagraph what has been stated in subparagraph (c), which calls for the withdrawal of Israel from the territories occupied since 1967 - in accordance with the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force - then one can say that the resolution has addressed itself to the basic and major demands of the Arabs and the Palestinians.

Subparagraph (f) constitutes the other wing of the balance when it states:

"The right of all States in the region to existence within secure and internationally recognized boundaries, with justice and security for all the people, the sine qua non of which is the recognition and attainment of the legitimate, inalienable rights of the Palestinian people as stated in subparagraph (a);".

The drafting and, later, the endorsement of this political substance with such balanced wordings was not an easy job either in Geneva or in New York. It took the participants hundreds of hours of deliberations, arguments and consultations to arrive at a general consensus. One can hardly name a State or a political bloc that did not have its fingerprints on the phrasing of those elements. The United States and Israel, in spite of their physical absence were both represented during the deliberations by many Western European countries acting as mediators.

Now, what more does Israel want and need than the right to exist in peace and security with internationally recognized boundaries? Is not that what all States of this world enjoy and are keen to preserve?

Indeed it is ironical that it is the Israelis and not the Palestinians who are rejecting such a formula as a durable solution, since it is the Palestinians who offered great concessions to this compromise. It is beyond all expectation for the PLO to give up the historical and national right to all of Palestine, of which the Palestinian people legally own about 94 per cent of the total land.

At this point of this historical era, the Palestinian leadership has been able to see through the political and strategic realities of this world and to develop accordingly the courage to sacrifice some of its people's ideals and principles for the sake of peace and a pragmatic settlement.

It would be unwise of the United States and Israel not to seize this opportunity and to meet such a move positively.

The present Arab-Palestinian position can not be relied on to remain forever. The present Israeli-American attitude, based on the arrogance of power, will only shorten the life of the pragmatic PLO position. The alternative position is that of the extremists. Time is running out, and the situation will eventually deteriorate and explode, leading to chaos and probably war.

It is high time for Israel to realize that power can never be the monopoly of one State or party. A great many Arabs are recognizing more and more the need to regulate the balance of power in the area. Tremendous efforts have been made recently in that direction. It might be wise for the Israeli leadership to realize what the Arabs have already realized: that none of the parties involved in the Middle East conflict can impose its policies all the way in the presence of the two super-Powers and their global strategies.

Finishing the examination of the political substance of the conference leads to the examination of another aspect related to the list of participants in the conference. Here again, we shall find what will testify for the sincerity and seriousness of this conference for the achievement of its objective.

By paragraph 4 of resolution 38/58 C, the General Assembly invited "all parties to the Arab-Israeli conflict, including the Palestine Liberation Organization, as well as the United States of America, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and other concerned States, to participate in the International Peace Conference on the Middle East on an equal footing and with equal rights".

The Geneva Declaration on Palestine of 1983 contained identical provisions and stressed that the conference should be held under the auspices of the United Nations, which indicates a desire to consider the international conference as an extension of and not as a substitute for the Security Council and the United Nations as a safe and reliable framework for peace-making.

The above-mentioned paragraph reflects the deep conviction of world public opinion that no serious attempt to solve the problems in the Middle East, and especially with regard to the question of Palestine, could be fruitful or productive in the absence of either one of the two super-Powers. Their participation is indispensable. Obviously, the international community has drawn the necessary conclusions from the failure of the United States to achieve peace in the area through its current style of operation, far from international participation and without the co-operation of the Soviet Union, i.e., the Camp David style.

Of equal importance was the invitation to the PLO to participate in the international conference. After all, how can anyone imagine a conference convened to find a just solution for a people in the absence of their representatives?

The United States/Israeli objection to the participation of the PLO reveals ignorance and failure: ignorance of facts and failure to deal with realities. The fact that the PLO and only the PLO represents the Palestinian people is not unquestionable. For six years Israel and the United States tried in vain to find a substitute for the PLO in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. All measures of terror and temptation failed to find one individual Palestinian to doubt the PLO role of sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

The United States/Israeli objection to the participation of the PLO in the conference is nothing but a pretext for their real reason, which is their failure to recognize the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. Such a position reveals, as well, the failure of the two allied States to face any proposed initiative for a comprehensive solution that deals with all aspects of the question of Palestine.

Whatever one's opinion may be regarding the recent Jordanian-Palestinian move in search of a political settlement, the final results uncovered even more the United States/Israeli intentions and conceptions with regard to a peaceful settlement. This move exposed clearly that the United States and Israel are not interested in peace or justice. What really worries them is the future of the Palestinians now living in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, two territories that the Zionist leadership considers to be inseparable parts of Israel. The American officials' lip service about the legality or illegality of the Israeli position in this regard can fool nobody. Neither Israel nor the United States feels responsible or concerned about the 3 million Palestinian refugees who are living in compulsory exile as a result of the creation of the Jewish State. The failure of this joint move confirms that efforts cannot be productive away from international platforms and without the presence of all the parties involved in the conflict and under the auspices of the United Nations, and without the sincere co-operation of the two super-Powers and other concerned States who have traditional relations with the Middle East and whose security is tightly connected with that of the area.

Nothing can bring a balanced, just and durable peace but an international conference with such participation and such political substance.

At this point rises the major question about the chances of success and failure of such a conference and, consequently, about the preparatory work to be done prior to its convening. In other words, how do we convert the dream into reality and transform the theory into action in the field?

Seeking ways and means of implementing General Assembly resolution 38/58 C means seeking ways and means of persuading both the United States and Israel to change their present position and to reconsider participating in the conference. They are the only two States that have stood against it as an idea in all its aspects.

The participation of the United States, being a super-Power, and Israel, being a party involved in the conflict, is indispensable for the convening of the conference.

It should be remembered, however, that there is little chance of convincing those two Governments to withdraw their reservations and objections to the convening of the conference. Nevertheless, all ways and means should be explored and tried, including international, political and media pressure. All efforts to achieve this will have an important impact on the future of international relations, even if they fail to serve the immediate purpose, i.e. the convening of the conference.

Those States that have accepted the concept of the conference and its guidelines should not be intimidated by the passive position of the United States and Israel. Mere acceptance of the concept does not release those States from participating in the struggle to actually convene the conference. A strong unified position among those States is of great value.

Before going into further details about what could be done to press the United States and Israel to reconsider their positions, it is necessary to review briefly the reasons and pretexts behind their stand.

At the outset, it must be recalled that Israel is the only State in this world which was created and established as a result of a resolution of the United Nations General Assembly. That resolution is the sole credential for Israel's legitimate existence. Before 29 November 1947, there was no State called Israel on the political map of the world.

From that date until November 1974, Israel and the United States considered the United Nations as the only appropriate reference for discussions and negotiations concerning all relevant problems. During that era, successive permanent representatives of Israel to the United Nations kept harping that Israel sought peace with the Arabs and was ready for negotiations within the United Nations framework.

In 1974, when the PLO jumped into the international arena as a representative of the Palestinian people, Israel began to turn its back to the body that had created it and to fight severely against all attempts for a settlement in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions on the

question of Palestine, including the very same resolution that was responsible for its existence.

The vital presence of the PLO as an observant member of the United Nations, and the change in the political composition of the international organization as a result of the growth in its membership by newly liberated countries, minimized Israel's chances of avoiding its commitment to abide by the Charter of the United Nations, the principles of international law and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. For Israel to abide by these rules would mean giving up its aggressive and expansionist policies and all other practices that have been rejected and condemned in accordance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

With the support of the United States, Israel has managed to paralyze all United Nations efforts to resolve the problem of Palestine. In the Security Council, the United States has carried the responsibility of vetoing any resolution not accepted by Israel. Moreover, the United States is capable of rescuing Israel from any sanctions proposed against it as a result of its continuous violations of and challenges to all international law and conventions.

Thus, it is concluded that the United States expects to carry out its own biased policies irrespective of any forum, whether within the United Nations or outside it. On the other hand, it seems that neither the United States nor Israel feels a pressing need to put an end to the conflict in the Middle East. A majority of the Israeli leadership still contemplates the dream of "Greater Israel". The Americans feel the same way, since their interests in the Middle East are still safe and growing and their aid to Israel, tremendous as it may appear, is considered to be a reasonable investment. This explains too, why the United States operates alone as a mediator for peace agreements in the area with no regard for the efforts of the United Nations. Both the United States and Israel have combined interests to convert the whole Middle East into a zone of influence against the Soviet Union and the socialist countries.

The Camp David agreements were only a start in that direction. Despite its failure to conclude peace through the agreements, the United States seems determined to follow it up, irrespective of the dangerous complications that might result.

How can any objective, neutral observer consider seriously the so-called American efforts of mediations for peace in the Middle East when the United States President denies the Palestinian people their divine right to self-determination? He who denies any people such a right cannot claim to be striving for peace or justice.

While not wishing to underestimate the intransigent position of Israel, it is the United States that constitutes the major obstacle against the International Peace Conference and international efforts to find a durable, just solution to the Middle East conflict. Had it not been for the unlimited and endless military, economic, financial and political aid of the United States, Israel would have been obliged to seek other means to solve its conflicts with the Palestinians and the Arabs in general.

One can go on endlessly enumerating the instances of huge American aid to Israel but what is worse is the political significance of the aid in the light of Israel's policies. It is without doubt that the more Israel leans towards aggression, expansion and terror, the more aid it receives from the United States. The United States-Israeli accord called the "Memorandum of Mutual Understanding in the Field of Strategic Co-operation" was concluded by the two allied States on 30 November 1981, just after the intensified Israeli air raids on both Beirut and Palestinian refugee camps. Furthermore, in 1983, an annex was added to this accord, apparently as a reward to Israel's invasion of Lebanon. The official estimated figures of United States aid to Israel in 1984 is \$3.5 billion, which means that each Israeli citizen has collected an equivalent of approximately \$1,000.

Any consideration of the chances of success or failure for the convening of the International Peace Conference depends on how the organizers of the conference cope with the biased position of this super-Power.

Ways and means of coping with this challenging predicament are varied. The ways and means of serving this vital issue and its noble global aim should cover all fronts of struggle, and must be shared by all peace-loving peoples on both the governmental and non-governmental levels. The issue must be presented as a political one that touches upon the future of world peace, and not as a matter of "convening or not convening" a conference about peace. It must be widely illustrated that peace sought in this conference is to the interest of all people and States of the Middle East and not to a particular people or State, and consequently to the interest of the whole world.

On the government level, individuals and groups can do a great deal. An organized campaign by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, which represents over two thirds of the world's Governments, can apprise world public opinion of the urgent need for such a conference aimed at resolving the Middle East conflict, and can expose the part played by the United States and Israel to obstruct such efforts.

Similar activities are expected to be carried out by the Congress of Islamic Countries, the Organization of African Unity (OAU), and other regional groups.

A solid, well-defined political position on behalf of the above-mentioned countries cannot be totally ignored by the United States.

The Arab States and their League also have a very important and influential role to play on the governmental level. The major prerequisite for the success of such efforts is a unified Arab position. It is true that all Arab States have welcomed the idea of the conference, but unfortunately they have not agreed on a unified plan to organize and harmonize their efforts. A unified Arab position based on a sophisticated master plan that covers all fronts of struggle with an organized division of labour, could produce invaluable results.

A lot is expected also of the PLO. First, the PLO is asked to intensify its efforts to resolve its internal problems and to restore its vitality and image. Secondly, it is required to double its efforts to reconcile its brotherly relations with the Syrian Arab Republic, a very important and

essential party in the Middle East conflict and a principal factor in the resolution of peace and war in the region. In this regard, friends of the Syrian Arab Republic and the PLO should promote such a reconciliation. Thirdly, the PLO is expected to wage an international campaign for the convening of the conference, with the aid of its allies, States, national liberation movements and all non-governmental organizations who have access to local populations, the grass roots of many societies. Fourthly, the PLO and the Palestinians, particularly those living in the occupied territories, should escalate their mass struggle in that direction by resorting to all possible means to inform Israeli public opinion of the advantages of finding and implementing a just, durable solution for the question of Palestine and the Middle East conflict. Despite the rising wave of fanaticism in Israel, peace and democratic movements cannot and should not be ignored.

Again, on the governmental level, and within the realm of the particular and unique relations between the two super-Powers, one cannot dismiss the decisive role with the Soviet Union can play to exert pressure. The President of the United States and the Secretary-General of the Soviet Communist Party are bound to meet sometime in the coming November. There is no doubt that the Middle East crisis will be on their agenda. One can only hope that the two leaders, among other things, can work out a formula that could lead to the success of all sincere international efforts aimed at peace, including the International Peace Conference on the Middle East. Showering the two leaders with thousands of letters and telegrams calling for the convening of the conference could be a sound idea for those among you seeking action.

As to the non-governmental organizations and movements and the role they can play, there is not much I can suggest here. All that can be said in this regard would be a reiteration of the recommendations and resolutions previously endorsed at the various regional meetings held by non-governmental organizations in the different continents. The point that needs to be assessed is how far the concerned non-governmental organizations have gone in carrying out those projects to which they have committed themselves.

Before concluding, it must be remembered that the relevant United Nations committees and organizations can also be requested to escalated their highly valued activities to help pave the way for the implementation of General Assembly resolution 38/58 C. This is not, by any means, meant to underestimate what those bodies have so far achieved. On the contrary, a request for more action would be a testimony to the value of their deeds.

Finally, all of those among us who have witnessed and outlived the last two world wars in this century can testify strongly that the two wars could possibly have been avoided if the international conscience had known how to stand firmly against the accumulated reasons that led up to them. There is nothing that can bring the balance needed to produce a just and durable solution other than international action.

Let us hope and work for the success of the International Peace Conference, the implementation of which would be an international victory against the threat of a third world war.

VI. REPORT OF THE INTERIM CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE  
FOR NGOS ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE

At the close of the International NGO Meeting on the Question of Palestine that took place at Geneva one year ago, in August 1984, 15 organizations were appointed to serve on the NGO Interim Co-ordinating Committee (ICC). The Committee's tasks were to ensure that the resolutions adopted by the International Meeting were implemented and to work out ways of collaboration with the United Nations' Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and the Division for Palestinian Rights. Although the 15 organizations were characterized by great differences in organizational goals, nationality, culture, ideology and religion, they shared a common commitment to solidarity with the Palestinian people and to the cause of peace for all the peoples of the Middle East.

ICC tackled three major tasks laid down in the 1984 Conference resolutions:

- (a) The enlargement of the network of NGOs through local and regional contacts and correspondence, and the undertaking of the initial stages of research for the publication of a Directory of NGOs Concerned with the Question of Palestine;
- (b) The launching on 29 November 1984 of a year-long Signature Campaign for the convening of an International Peace Conference on the Middle East under United Nations auspices;
- (c) The planning of an international NGO meeting to be held in 1985.

The Committee met twice during the past year. The first time, in November 1984, ICC addressed all three of its major tasks, but concentrated particularly on the launching of the Signature Campaign, producing the text of the petition and the statement to be used in launching the Campaign at the United Nations offices in New York, Geneva and Vienna on the Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, 29 November. At its second meeting, in March 1985, the Committee laid the basic framework for an international NGO meeting which would allow time for participants to meet and discuss matters of common concern, hear authoritative accounts of the situation in the Middle East, assess the progress made in the Signature Campaign for Peace, and set up an International Co-ordinating Committee with a mandate and a style of work suitable to a group established to support the collaboration of NGOs all over the world in the accomplishment of their commonly agreed tasks.

The United Nations Division and Committee have co-operated in a number of ways: they have made it possible for ICC to meet; they have translated and distributed the text of the Campaign petition and the statement launching the Campaign in six languages; they have collaborated with ICC in the formulation and circulation of a questionnaire for eliciting the information necessary for the eventual publication of an NGO Directory. The United Nations has featured



members of ICC at the Solidarity Day celebrations held in the three United Nations information centres and made possible the attendance of a number of resource persons at the 1985 international NGO meeting. They have also provided valuable conference services at Committee meetings and at this International Meeting.

The Division and the Committee invited ICC to send a representative to regional symposia in Africa, Asia and North America where the representative addressed the symposia and assisted in the establishment of regional co-ordinating mechanisms in all three areas. ICC sees this regional co-ordinating as an important link in the building of the global network.

ICC has learned a great deal in this interim period. While it is grateful to the Division and the Committee for the many valuable services rendered, it has also learned that there are major limitations related to co-operation with the United Nations in the work it is commissioned to carry out in the NGO community.

ICC has learned that there is a need for a permanent secretariat, an office and a staff person who would have the time to give to facilitate the common life of the group of NGOs concerned with the question of Palestine, making contacts in the NGO world, enlarging the network, disseminating information, representing the NGO community at the request of ICC and carrying out the Committee's plans.

This secretariat would assist NGOs in the exchange of reports, studies and documentation among the members of the NGO network and other interested parties. In this sharing of information, news of the diverse actions taken by the NGO community in solidarity with the Palestinian people and their cause would stimulate and sustain NGOs and enhance their effectiveness.

There is a need to find financial resources from outside the United Nations structure if an effective administrative secretariat is to be established. The International Co-ordinating Committee should meet often enough to provide guidance and support for the fulltime administrative staff persons employed.

What this interim period has taught us is that the several hundred NGOs concerned with the question of Palestine and with peace in the Middle East need to have enough resources, both human and financial, to create the mechanisms required to accomplish the purposes that unite them. With such resources, there is a possibility of building a real partnership between the NGOs concerned with the question of Palestine and the United Nations Committee and Division with that same concern.

While the United Nations has over this past year facilitated the life, growth and effectiveness of ICC, the time has come for the strengthening of this instrument of the NGO community. Therefore ICC strongly urges all NGOs to press the United Nations to offer new ways and means of strengthening the global effort on behalf of the Palestinian people by supporting the NGO network, especially by assisting in the establishment and maintenance of the proposed ICC secretariat.

## VIII. REPORTS OF REGIONAL GROUPS

### A. Report of the African Group

The Group of African NGOs held a regional meeting on the question of Palestine from 5 to 7 August 1985 in Dakar, organized under the auspices of the United Nations in pursuance of paragraph 3 (b) of General Assembly resolution 38/58 B.

We stress the wealth and the depth of the exchanges of information, views and experience which all converged upon support for the Palestinian cause.

We reaffirm, in concert with the international community, that the PLO alone is the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

We support and affirm the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination without outside interference, to return and to the creation of an independent Palestinian State on its national territory.

The African NGOs condemn the denial by Israel and its allies of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and of the PLO as the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

Consequently, in view of the serious and disturbing Israeli-Arab crisis situation which is continuing, the African NGOs consider that the fundamental cause of the conflict and the main obstacle to a negotiated peace is Israel's obstinate refusal of the inalienable rights of the martyred people of Palestine.

We, the African NGOs, support and endorse with conviction the convening of an International Peace Conference on the Middle East as the only realistic and practical avenue towards a global, just and lasting solution for all parties in the conflict.

We reaffirm the close solidarity in their struggle between the African and Arab peoples against the military and political collusion and the nuclear collaboration between the Zionist State of Israel and the racist State of South Africa.

The African NGOs call upon African Governments to implement all resolutions of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) on the Palestinian question. We note with satisfaction that the majority of African States have broken off diplomatic relations with the Zionist State.

We are convinced that the mobilization of world opinion is an important means of forcing Israel to accept the implementation of the relevant resolutions of the United Nations, in particular General Assembly resolution 38/58 E.

The African region has increasingly great political importance. Therefore, in the face of the attempts made by the State of Israel and the world Zionist movement supported by the United States, the African NGOs undertake to mobilize their peoples and African public opinion in order to create an active protest movement against the actions of the Zionist State, and also and above all for the convening of an International Peace Conference on the Middle East.

The African NGOs will make particular use of 1986, which the United Nations has proclaimed the International Year of Peace, to launch many initiatives for Africa to join in the world consensus for a negotiated settlement in the Middle East with all the parties, in particular the PLO.

The African NGOs are nevertheless aware of their material, financial and communication difficulties.

They therefore call for greater co-operation between the African NGOs and the entire world, through ICC, on a multilateral or bilateral basis.

We request the support of the United Nations, through its regional representatives, in the publication and circulation of our documents.

We have set up a Co-ordinating Committee for Africa consisting of the representatives of organizations that took part in the Dakar meeting in order to expand and strengthen the solidarity of African NGOs on behalf of the Palestinian cause.

We call for the creation of national committees like the Senegalese, Moroccan and Malagasy Committee for the support for the struggle of the Palestinian people, to allow co-ordination among African NGOs.

The African NGOs will provide, through their specificity in terms of culture and civilization, by the organization of festivals, cultural events, meetings and seminars and so forth, the contribution of the African peoples to the just Palestinian cause.

We call upon the United Nations and ICC to organize in other parts of Africa, in conjunction with the African Co-ordinating Committee, at least two seminars or meetings during 1986.

The African NGOs support the transformation of ICC into an International Co-ordinating Committee.

We ask for just and equitable representation in that International Committee. We shall put forward concrete proposals when the structure of the International Committee is discussed.

B. Report of the Asian Group

The Asian Regional Workshop of the Second United Nations International NGO Meeting met with Krishna Pal Singh, General Secretary of All India Indo-Arab Friendship Association and Dr. Rawda Bishara from the Movement of Democratic Women of Israel. The participants were from Australia, China, Egypt, India, Israel and Sri Lanka, as well as the PLO. They presented their report on the fundamental approach to strengthen the movement and mobilize public opinion for the just cause of the Palestinians. It was the unanimous view of the participants that the Palestinian people were victims of successive acts of aggression, annexation, denial and deprivation of all human rights in their homeland in the occupied territories by Zionist Israel with the full backing of United States imperialism.

The recommendations of the Asian Workshop are:

- (a) An appeal should be issued from this meeting that an international conference has to be convened without delay to bring to fulfilment the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and to the establishment of a separate sovereign State; and a just peace conference with the participation of the PLO, the sole representative of the Palestinian people, Israel, the Soviet Union and the United States;
- (b) Human rights: all Palestinian people have the right to live in dignity, in assured equality and without discrimination, to be respected and not violated as they have been by all Israeli Governments;
- (c) The Palestinian people, like every other people, are entitled to all social, economic, political and cultural rights to preserve their own culture and to shape their own destiny for the full development of peace and democracy;
- (d) These rights must be restored. We demand that aggression be stopped and that Israel be compelled to vacate all Arab territories. The aggressor must not be allowed to retain the fruits of its aggression;
- (e) For the rights of the Palestinians to be restored and fully respected, the meeting must urge the President of the United States, Mr. Reagan, and the Soviet leader, Mr. Gorbachev, to give due importance to the Palestinian question as one of the most vital questions on which depends the future of world peace;
- (f) The meeting should call upon the heroic Palestinian fighters to establish a strong and powerful unity of all Palestinians so that the conspiracies of their enemies do not destroy their will to fight for freedom, peace and new development;
- (g) The meeting should demand that all Arab countries not allow Arab unity to be destroyed by heedless, avoidable wars and conflicts so that their combined, single-minded attention may be devoted to defending the sovereignty of all Arab States and that the just struggle of the Palestinians may triumph. As representatives of Asian NGOs, we hope to create opportunities for future collaboration amongst ourselves within the Asian region.

C. Report of the European Group

The Chairman acknowledged the participation of the diverse groups from Europe at the meeting. Because of this, we concluded, the discussion would probably be approached from various viewpoints and interests. The meeting decided to concentrate on action that could be taken to achieve the furtherance of Palestinian human rights, most especially to stop the erosion of the economic independence of Palestinians in the occupied territories and Israel. The Chairman called upon delegates to define their goals and objectives, using their experience of past attempts at action to further the cause of a peaceful solution to the Palestinian question.

The feeling of the meeting was that, since 1984, the situation for the Palestinians had deteriorated greatly. Several members felt that urgent action was needed both to bring the principals in the conflict to the peace table and to stop the rapid erosion of the Palestinian economic and social structure which was being caused by the quasi-apartheid methods of the Israeli authorities.

Many delegates called for a line of independence from the United States, which, it was agreed, was the mainstay of Israeli policy in the region. Europe should both work on trying to influence American policy and on developing its own policy.

Several delegates called for some measure of sanctions to be imposed against Israel in order to compel Israel to cease its apartheid policy towards the Palestinians. This would also be linked to exposing the close relations that Israel and South Africa share and the similarities between the two régimes. Public opinion has been awakened to the South African situation and NGOs should use this to advantage. It was understood that a boycott would not be a global affair but a suggestion to public opinion that the support of Israel, given its apartheid policy, was not respectable. There were suggestions that whatever action was taken, an information campaign to shift European public opinion was necessary. Then delegates could work on influencing other movements, such as the peace movement, on the global dangers of an escalated conflict in the region and raising an awareness of the links between South African apartheid and Israeli Government policy.

Others felt we should concentrate on furthering dialogue between the parties concerned and that the Signature Campaign should be stepped up.

Some delegates felt that the humanitarian issue should not be ignored and that NGOs should continue to work on this.

Possible fields for action in Europe include:

(a) Pushing Western European Governments towards more independence from United States foreign policy and attempting to influence United States Middle East policy;

(b) Continuing the Signature Campaign for a United Nations peace conference through information efforts to raise the awareness of public opinion for the plight of the Palestinians;

(c) Linking Israeli Government policies and oppressive practices and the struggle against apartheid and considering voluntary boycotts against Israeli products;

(d) Twinning of institutions in Europe with similar bodies in the occupied territories.

E. Report of the North American Group

Although there was an attempt to adopt a formal consensus, several common ideas emerged from the North American regional workshop. The chairperson opened the meeting by asking participants how the North American Interim Co-ordinating Committee could effectively serve the North American NGOs. The chairperson announced that the following NGOs had been elected to serve on the co-ordinating committee at the North American symposium: Canadian Arab Federation; Palestine Human Rights Campaign; Najda: Women Concerned about the Middle East; American Friends Service Committee; Methodist Church, Board of Global Ministries; America-Israel Council for Israeli-Palestinian Peace; and Near East Cultural and Educational Foundation of Canada.

Several specific suggestions emerged from the North American regional meeting:

(a) An effort should be made by the North American Interim Co-ordinating Committee to contact a wider group of NGOs working in the Arab and non-Arab communities in North America;

(b) Every effort should be made to educate the North American public about an international peace process, an international peace conference and the role of the United Nations in a peace process. Given the difficulty in collecting individual signatures on the Petition Campaign initiated by NGOs in 1984, it was suggested that organizational resolutions calling for an international peace conference be sought. It was also noted that the campaign should itself be a vehicle to educate public opinion;

(c) It was suggested that an NGO network newsletter be developed;

(d) It was suggested that the North American Interim Co-ordinating Committee seek means to intensify co-operation and collaboration between North American NGOs;

(e) It was urged that the North American NGOs continue to campaign for Palestinian rights given the grave situation facing Palestinians living under occupation, particularly the current problems facing Law in the Service of Man, a West Bank NGO.

The presence of Israeli NGOs in attendance at the North American regional meeting was noted as an indication of the crucial role played by the United States Government and hence by North American NGOs in campaigning for an alternative United States policy in deciding the future of peace or war in the Middle East.

## IX. WORKSHOP REPORTS

### A. Report of the education workshop

The education workshop reviewed various efforts to address the question of Palestine at all levels of curricular and extra-curricular education.

The workshop noted the success in the development of university-based and national cultural and academic societies and foundations concerned with the question of Palestine; the development of a post-graduate programme in Palestine studies; the sponsorship by universities throughout the world of Palestine universities, research institutes and individual research projects; the development of scholarship programmes for Palestinian students; exchange programmes among academics and universities throughout the world and Palestinian academics and universities; the development of educational material on Palestine that would be appropriate for elementary and secondary levels and for teacher-training programmes; and the development of Palestinian exhibitions, slide-shows and documentary films and other material. The Workshop appreciated the prepared text of invited Resource Person Carol El-Shaieb, who was unable to be present (see annex).

The Workshop recommends that the prospective International Co-ordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine makes the question of education one of its first priorities and convene a separate meeting of NGOs concerned to develop detailed strategies in the area of education, subject to NGO expertise. The Workshop further recommends that the proposed ICC recognize the burden of students and staff of West Bank and Gaza Strip universities and their rights of expression and to demonstrate. The workshop calls for a world-wide campaign of publicity on development at West Bank and Gaza Strip universities and it encourages solidarity with those struggling in that area through academic exchanges, student scholarships and for UNRWA to increase financial support for education on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

The workshop notes the report of the representative of the Union of Arab Students in Israeli Universities on the situation relevant to these Arab Palestinian students. It calls upon ICC to sponsor the invitation of a delegation of Union of Arab Students in Israeli Universities, in consultation with NGOs, and to co-ordinate the tour of this delegation with a view to mobilizing the support of official university and student organizations in defence of these Arab Palestinian students in Israel.

Annex

Statement submitted to the Conference by  
Carol El-Shaieb, Arab World Consultants

How to encourage discussion of Palestine in schools

Community members who want to encourage the acquisition of knowledge and discussion of the issues involved in the situation of Palestine in the school system may face much resistance, for the following reasons:

- (a) The issue is always considered controversial. Teachers worry that any discussion will bring complaints from all sides;
- (b) There is no accepted body of curriculum materials to be used and teachers and social studies committees may not know how to evaluate those available;
- (c) Teachers lack knowledge of the issues involved and confidence in their ability to lead such a discussion. They may be overly familiar with sensationalized popular version of the history;
- (d) Materials may not exist in local school and public libraries (in one high school library in California, the only material dealing with Palestine was a videotape of an ABC television special on terror);
- (e) Local community members are likely to object to anything they see as one-sided.

Yet, the discussion of this issue is vital if the climate for a peaceful settlement, and the desire to work for it, are to be created. For Americans, in particular, the issue needs to be discussed at least by the end of secondary school, as American involvement in the area has already led to the use of American servicemen in the area, with disastrous results for all concerned. Youths contemplating entrance into military service deserve to know the issues that they may be asked to die for, as do their families. All students need to be able to make informed choices in the years ahead.

How should the issue be approached?

Political discussion in elementary schools is inappropriate. Children below the secondary level are too young to check the sources of information - and to evaluate them - on their own. Discussion of conflict and its causes is often incomprehensible to children. They may be amazed that adults cannot agree, and may be unnecessarily stressed by this information.

Children will also ask "why" until they conclude for themselves who the "bad guy" is - a simplification that may take years to clear up. And a perception of injustice (even where it has existed) on a child's level, builds



a negative stereotype of the person or group perceived to have caused it. If our goal is a peaceful future which all sides of the current conflict have some interest in maintaining, we cannot encourage condemnation of any one party.

What is appropriate on this level is presentation of cultural information.

The media of many Western countries provide formidable negative stereotypes of Arabs and Palestinians (often seen as interchangeable) as irrational, terrorist, corrupt, sleazy, etc. Israelis suffer from stereotyping as well. These pervasive images emanating from television are a strong influence at these tender ages. Our goal here is to encourage a positive perception of the peoples of the area, especially the Palestinians, as people like any other.

The best way to do this, at this level, is with presentation of folk tales, stories of daily life in Arab countries, music and games that can be learned and shared and good slide presentations of life in an Arab village or city today. If there is an Arab or Palestinian child in the school, he/she can be invited to share recipes and information about holiday celebrations with the rest of the class.

All of this contact with children's tales, custom and games causes Arab children to be perceived as children first. It makes them not strange, not exotic and certainly not crazed, fanatic or irrational. The child who has played with an Arab child, seen his face in a slide presentation and shared his food will have a strong positive image with which to counter the negative images he may encounter later on.

Occasionally, negative, biased or unbalanced political presentations do appear in elementary classrooms. I am thinking specifically of the popular school newsletters - weekly news magazines - which may come with condensed versions of world events dealing in an unbalanced or simplistic way with events in the Middle East. [During my children's elementary years, I encountered two instances of extremely unfair reports - one on the war in Lebanon, and one on terrorism. Neither should ever have been presented at that level (fourth to sixth grades)]. These presentations should be countered with accurate information, and possibly "equal time" for a more positive approach.

In no case, when countering propaganda or manipulative materials in the classroom - should the same techniques be used, facts should be given that correct the slanted information and should be followed with some positive information more appropriate to the class age.

At the secondary level, a discussion of all the problems related to Palestine are appropriate. The discussion of these issues could take place in modern history classes, "current events" discussions, classes on conflict areas and Middle East area studies.

Since there is as yet no agreement, a good approach is to use speakers or original documents to represent each side, provided these are available. Evaluation of these materials and evaluation of sources should have been discussed previously - students should never be asked to take a speaker's word

without further investigation. A check of the library should be made to ascertain whether enough materials are available to permit a fair presentation of all sides.

An examination of stereotypes held prior to the start of serious study of the area may also be helpful.

#### How to start?

Perhaps the easiest way to initiate serious study of the Palestine issue in schools is to present workshops for teachers. These workshops can provide a good introduction to the peoples and culture, to counter prevalent stereotypes, and can provide historical information difficult to acquire in other ways. In addition, sources for materials and speakers for use in the classroom can be provided. A forum for discussion allows teachers to begin asking about the areas that most confuse them.

#### Practical recommendations for a successful teacher workshop

Try to get credit for the programme through the school district or local college. More people will attend.

Decide on an audience: elementary, secondary or mixed. A good way to provide for a mixed audience is to break into smaller groups during part of the day.

Invite exciting speakers with good information. If teachers go to sleep, they learn nothing.

When using films, slides and cassettes, follow with a discussion. Have knowledgeable people available to lead the discussion.

In political presentations, present more than one point of view. No one has "the answer" yet, but an understanding of all sides of the issue, and of how people arrive at their positions, is very useful. Consulates and embassies may be good sources of speakers, as may the local university. Don't overlook students and local residents from the countries involved.

Vary the activities. No one wants to sit listening to lectures for six hours.

Feed your participants! Coffee, tea and snacks can usually be managed. Lunch is better. Bag or box lunches provide more opportunity for interaction and informal discussion by teachers and speakers. Much can be learned here, as people are more willing to ask questions that they may fear others would consider "stupid" or indicative of their vast ignorance when they are in a conversation.

Encourage discussion! There are no stupid questions except those unasked.

Try to have at least one panel of people from the countries involved. They need not be experts. Students are good. (Try to avoid anyone whose

experiences have been so bitter that they are lacking in hope or filled with hatred.)

Include some speakers not dealing directly with political issues - but with traditions, religion, etc. Stereotypes and prejudices may be dispelled by accurate information about Islam, Judaism, Arab Christian, etc.

Use local resources such as students or local residents from these countries. Although they may feel unqualified, their experiences are valuable.

Try to get funding to reduce the cost of offering the programme. However, do charge at least a token fee. This will usually prevent you from having 100 people sign up and only 10 appear.

Remember, your goals are twofold: to prepare teachers to present this topic in the classroom, and also to increase the teachers' general knowledge about the area and its culture. This will help them enormously in understanding children from the area who may be in their classrooms, and will also aid them in recognizing stereotypes and misconceptions that may arise at some other time.

#### B. Report of the human rights workshop

The workshop was comprised of over 20 representative NGOs, with every continent included. The primary focus of the workshop was to discuss the human rights of the Palestinians, including their right to self-determination and an independent State on their own land, in addition to discussing the crisis of Palestinian rights under Israeli military occupation (West Bank, Gaza, Israel and Lebanon). The workshop referred to the documents: "Report of the Special Committee to investigate Israeli Policies within the Occupied Territories" (1985) and "Memorandum of the Sons of the Land Movement" (Galilee, September 1985) as important up-to-date material concerning the present situation.

Further, it is noted that the goal of Israel's military occupancy is the destruction of the Palestinian people's political and cultural existence, and their expulsion from Palestine.

The workshop decided that the practical focus of a campaign on Palestinian rights should concentrate on the United States as the "bankroller" of Israel's oppressive policies upon Israel itself, and a positive emphasis of the Palestinians' human rights. The vehicle through which to interpret the historic and present crisis is the symbolism and political language of apartheid, with its parallels in South Africa and Palestine.

The workshop recommends to the NGO International Co-ordinating Committee that it develop a campaign on these two situations of apartheid, and that the 1986 United Nations "Year of Peace" focus on ending apartheid in Palestine and South Africa as a means of achieving world peace and justice. Further, it is recommended that a massive campaign be developed with information, research, petition drives and various action components (marches, media campaigns, etc.) to give concrete expression to the linked-apartheid problem. It is noted that in much of the work it is the massive public demonstration of issues that matters, not written words.

The present Israeli policies in the occupied territories, Israel and Lebanon manifest a brutal apartheid system. Since 1 August 1985, the "Iron Fist" campaign of the present Israeli Government has wrought a variety of illegal and unacceptable practices, such as administrative detention (over 90 persons since 1 August, including staff from the sister NGO - Law in the Service of Man - and students from Al-Najah University), expulsions, torture, the blowing up of homes and the closing of universities, hospitals and other Palestinian institutions. Despite the widespread belief that Israeli forces have withdrawn from Lebanon, it is important to emphasize that Israel continues to occupy parts of the Lebanese territory, both directly and through its puppet "South Lebanese Army", and pursues its repressive policies against the Lebanese and Palestinian populations of those areas.

Furthermore, and in accordance with their doctrine of "flexibility", the Israeli leaders have intensified, in the course of the summer, their military aggressions and so-called "reprisal" raids on various areas of Lebanon, killing and wounding great numbers of civilians.

Special attention should be paid in this respect to the question of Palestinian prisoners captured in Lebanon and detained in Israel. The over-publicized release of prisoners held in Atlit Prison (Israel) only concerns the Lebanese detainees formerly held in the infamous Ansar Camp, while dozens of Palestinians arrested since the formal withdrawal of Israeli troops from South Lebanon are missing, as are tens of prisoners arrested earlier in Lebanon.

More generally, the insecurity that Palestinians have to face in the various areas of Lebanon challenges the international community to raise, in the most urgent manner, the question of their protection.

We call upon all NGOs to protest against these actions and to call upon the international organizations and their Governments to intervene immediately to safeguard Palestinian rights.

C. Report of the media workshop

Representatives from Israel, the United States, Poland, the United Kingdom, Turkey and the Arab world met to discuss ways in which the Palestinian question could be more effectively raised within the media. Chana Calderon, from Israel, informed the workshop of the media situation within Israel. She described how the Israeli media had increasingly supported and reported on the situation faced by Palestinians, but, because of the rightward drift of Israeli public opinion, this had created a situation where the Israeli public had begun to attack the media, encouraged by the Likud and other right-wing parties. The media was now identified with the "enemy", and there had been several incidents where reporters and photographers had been beaten, which indicated the seriousness of the alienation between the media and the public. The media in the United States and in other parts of the West are in a different situation, one where distortions and racist characterizations dominate, requiring even stronger efforts to penetrate the control of monopolies on a potentially sympathetic public.

The participants in the workshop suggested that the Conference:

(a) Call upon ICC to consider ways that the Conference and the NGOs can come to the defence of the Palestinian press on the West Bank and Gaza, which suffers from severe censorship;

(b) Call upon ICC to consider ways that the Conference and the NGOs can encourage and facilitate an exchange between journalists from the West and the Arab world;

(c) Encourage NGOs from the different countries to form committees:

(i) to meet with the press with the aim of informing the media of the Conference and its work in general; (ii) to organize letter-writing campaigns both to counter inaccurate reporting and to support positive efforts to represent the Palestinian struggle accurately; and (iii) to send materials on a regular basis to special interest groups, e.g. trade unions;

(d) Call upon ICC to assist in forming guidelines for newly formed NGOs on relations with the press. This is directed particularly towards newly formed NGOs in the West that may be inexperienced at dealing with distortions and slanders directed at them by the press for taking up the issue of Palestinian rights.

The workshop noted that ICC might face difficulties in taking up these suggestions which were made with the understanding that they offer a direction for an international movement for Palestinian rights that should be within the limitations of our new structure.

D. Report of the religious organizations workshop

The religious NGOs concerned with the Middle East conflict should stress the necessity for education in view of the current misunderstanding about religious traditions. They have to break down religious stereotypes, especially those related to Islam, as one way of helping to break down enemy images.

The actions of religious NGOs should be inspired by both spirituality and realism. Different speakers gave different answers to the question of whether a common spiritual basis between the conflicting parties in the Middle East should be founded on general religious principles such as love and brotherhood or on political-ethic principles such as peace and justice.

All participants agreed on the need to exchange information on each other's work. Co-ordination of work is more difficult in view of the different aims and work fields of NGOs.

The religious NGOs must not forget the importance of social and economic support for the Palestinian people, apart from their political work.

The religious organizations in the West have a special responsibility because of the widespread existence of religious fundamentalism which gets a reactionary political load in dealing with the Middle East. For example, religious fundamentalism gets a clear political expression in the activities of the Christian embassy in Jerusalem, which is enlarging its network of embassies in various countries and even plans to invest in projects in "Judea and Samaria". Various NGOs possessed information about Christian fundamentalist activities and the need to exchange information was strongly felt.

According to the participants, an authoritative theological response towards fundamentalist doctrines, for example from the side of the Vatican and the World Council of Churches, would be very helpful.

The problem of the one-sided information provided by Israeli guides to pilgrims and Christian tourists was mentioned. Contacts with Palestinians are usually avoided; visitors to Israel and the occupied territories are unaware that Christian Arabs exist. The terrorist stereotype is paramount. Bethlehem University educates pilgrim guides, but even those few guides - who have much less opportunity to inform visitors than the tourist guides, almost all of whom are Israeli - are harassed by the Israeli authorities.

A last suggestion was made on the value of joint Palestinian-Israeli delegations to the West, as these might receive fairly good news coverage in view of the United States trip of Mohammed Milhem and Mordechai Bar-on, organized by the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC).

E. Report of the solidarity workshop

It has been difficult to run the Signature Campaign in the Western European countries as there is little awareness in these countries of the Palestinian problem. This Campaign should therefore be prolonged for a further two years, and expanded to include members of parliament in the different countries, as well as national organizations. The Signature Campaign should also be carried out with a separate campaign to encourage financial and other material support towards development.

All NGOs should contact the foreign ministers of their Governments or the Governments themselves in order to obtain information as to what action could be taken to arrange for a United Nations conference on Palestine. The answers received by them should be assembled and sent to ICC. Also, ICC should inform NGOs about United Nations conferences that are to take place, and invite NGOs to participate in them.

The workshop supported the idea of an economic, political and cultural boycott of Israel, even if public opinion was not yet ready for it, in order to raise the question in the minds of their citizens. ICC should disseminate more information to NGOs about events in Palestine, and NGOs should use 29 November, which is the Day of Solidarity for Palestine, not only to bring up the question of a United Nations conference but also the conditions in which the Palestinian people are at present living, as well as to raise material support for them.

Ask for the abolition of the expulsion orders against the following persons:

Amin Darwish Naqbul of Nablus  
Walid Ahmad Nazzal of Qabatiyya  
Bahjat Mustafa Jayyusi of Yayyus

as well as the abolition of the orders of administrative detention, which received a culminant point on 3 and 4 September by the placement of Zalu Jaradat and Ghazi Shashtari, who are both Law in the Service of Man field workers, each for a period of six months.

F. Report of the workshop on women

The participants regretted the absence of Palestinian women from the workshop, depriving it of an essential input in the work of the group. This was particularly regrettable, knowing that the PLO women had worked effectively at the World Conference on the Review and Appraisal of the Achievements of the Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, held recently at Nairobi. It would have been helpful to have had their proposals for priority actions in following up the Nairobi conference.

The group decided to send messages to the two Palestinian women - Sameeha Khalil and Siham Barghouty - who had been prevented by the Israeli Government from attending the Geneva meeting, and it was proposed that a letter of protest should be addressed by the full meeting to the Israeli Government.

Attention was drawn to the relatively small number of women participating in the meeting. That did not reflect the actual involvement of women in the work for the realization of the rights of the Palestinian people and for peace in the Middle East. In future, special efforts should be made to ensure that an equal number of women attend the international conferences.

The group heard from an Israeli participant about the very grave conditions in Israel. There was a severe economic crisis, growing violence, growing racism and racist manifestations not only against the Arab population but also against progressive Jews or Jews from certain countries and those active in the peace movement. There was a lack of realization of the link between what was happening in the region and the danger of nuclear war. She considered it urgent to build an international solidarity movement and for it to link up with the world peace movement. Unity was crucial and time was short. The situation in Israel and in the region was deteriorating sharply.

The mobilization for an international conference on peace in the Middle East should be intensified. The Signature Campaign, begun on 29 November 1984, should continue. Collecting signatures to the petition gave the possibility of discussing the question of Palestine and the need for an international conference and generally of informing and educating people. There was a need to provide educational material on why an international solution to the Middle East conflict was essential. A participant suggested that the text of the petition should be adopted to make it relevant to particular countries and to the region in which signatures were collected.



Other practical suggestions were:

(a) To organize delegations of Palestinian women to tour Western and North American countries to speak to groups about their situation and about the solidarity actions they needed;

(b) To encourage the sending of delegations to see for themselves the situation in Israel and in the occupied Arab territories;

(c) To develop programmes, such as slide shows with texts that could be used by the media and by groups in their meetings, to inform about the situation of the Palestinian people and about their struggle;

(d) To have a Palestinian woman and an Israeli woman speak about their lives and their sufferings due to their Israeli Government's policies. Such accounts could be taped, written up or filmed, to be carried to all corners of the world;

(e) To study the decisions of the Nairobi Conference affecting Palestinian women, and to develop programmes to implement them.

X. STATEMENT SUBMITTED BY MRS. SAMEEHA S. KHALIL,  
PRESIDENT OF THE SOCIETY OF IN'ASH AL-USRAH\*

The Palestinian problem is the crux  
of the conflict in the Middle East

As a Palestinian woman living under Israeli occupation, I wish to express to the United Nations the deep appreciation of my people for holding this conference on the inalienable rights of the Palestinians and for its concerted efforts throughout the years to stand up for the oppressed peoples of the world, foremost among them my people, the Palestinians. I am certain that our co-operation in this conference will help humanity as a whole and the Palestinians in particular so that future generations will carry the torch of peace and spare mankind the horrors of war.

Palestinian women are struggling to maintain the bare minimum of their rights, the right to survive. Having lost her land through occupation and confiscation, her home through demolition and resettlement, her husband and children through imprisonment and exile, the Palestinian woman can hardly be expected to cope with issues other than her political liberation. The woes that afflict the Palestinian woman are the direct result of military occupation of her homeland and of all the ugly and inhumane practices it has developed. The plight of the Palestinian woman differs from the plight of the majority of women in the world who are blessed with an elected Government from among the people, an identity which they cherish, and a stable homeland in which to live and prosper and all that remains for them to demand is to improve their personal conditions and seek equality with man.

The Palestinian woman played a vital role in the field of social services and national struggle prior to 1948 and continues to do so until today. She has shared in bearing her responsibility in the home and society to ease the heavy burden placed on our people. Our homeland, Palestine, was and remains the heart of the Arab world due to its strategic geographic position. This special feature of Palestine has made it the ambition of the large nations which have plotted to keep Palestine colonized and unstable in order to continue their occupation of neighbouring Arab lands for the purpose of exploiting their natural resources, using their water passage ways, and opening markets for their products.

The Palestinian woman rose and struggled against this unjust policy with all her might. She has protested, demonstrated and founded organizations for the purpose of easing the various and numerous tragedies that have afflicted her and her people. As an example, the Palestinian woman participated in the 1936 general strike that lasted for six months in protest of the continuous and unchecked immigration of Jews into her homeland. She prepared lists of the needy and distributed rations to them through the various committees that she helped organize and participated in. The zenith of the activities of the Palestinian woman, however, was reached following the June 1967 war. During this period, the Palestinian woman followed the events with great care in order to plan and prepare for them with all possible means. This can be

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\*As explained in the letter reproduced below, Mrs. Khalil was unable to attend the international meeting.

illustrated by her actions following the Israeli demolition of the villages of Imwas, Beit Nuba, and Yalu in the Latrun region shortly after they occupied the West Bank. After observing nearly 10,000 shelterless and hungry displaced villagers, she immediately initiated a campaign to collect all of the food and furniture that was available and distributed it among the victims. Ever since, the Palestinian woman, feeling the grave responsibility of having no one to care for her people in distress in the absence of a national Government, began concerted efforts to alleviate the sufferings of her people in all parts of the occupied territories through the already existing women's organizations and by establishing new organizations and committees despite the great obstacles which were placed before her by the military authorities. Her stamina, perseverance and unbending resolve have enabled her to cope with several problems facing her people.

Following are a few examples of activities undertaken by women:

- (a) Embracing the children of martyrs and prisoners by finding for them a permanent refuge and home in which they can live in freedom and stability;
- (b) Opening day care centres in the refugee camps and the villages for a better beginning and a chance for mothers to help financially in order to carry part of the load imposed by inflation and heavy taxes;
- (c) Opening schools;
- (d) Founding educational institutions which developed into universities;
- (e) Opening vocational centres for training girls in different fields, employing Palestinian women who are skilled in handicrafts such as Palestinian embroidery and encouraging them to be productive members of their community, and encouraging production in these societies so that the profit can be used to help those who are unable to help themselves. This is done by most women's organizations;
- (f) Opening and operating hospitals in the cities where needed or participating within mixed organizations in such projects in existing hospitals;
- (g) Opening centres for the handicapped, including mentally and physically handicapped, and deaf and mute persons, to be productive members of their society and for the senior citizens of her community;
- (h) Improving the status of the Palestinian woman by increasing her awareness and educational level to become a participant in all professional, skilled and artistic fields, such as commerce, education, law, medicine, engineering, art and music. Thanks to these efforts, there is a substantial number of professional women in the occupied territories who are asserting themselves in their fields;
- (i) Participating with other sectors of the society in resisting the military occupation of her land which leads in some cases to imprisonment, house arrests, town arrests, exiles or separation from her children.

The Palestinian woman, while working towards asserting her national and human rights in all the above-mentioned fields, has to cope with a very difficult situation under occupation. The following examples throw a light on the general situation she has to deal with.

#### Land confiscation and the building of settlements

We live like strangers in our homeland, without an identity to determine our nationality or a stable piece of land to call our own. Within a moment, the owner of a piece of land inherited from his ancestors over thousands of years is given a military order of confiscation. Soon thereafter, the bulldozers come to uproot the fruit and olive trees that the peasants have waited an entire year to harvest and to live off their crops. This is followed by huge lorries carrying prefabricated houses that are assembled as part of settlements resembling fortresses. These settlements are always built on strategically high grounds, despite the fact that the vast lands they conquered in 1948 to form their State are more than sufficient to build triple the number of settlements they have built on our remaining land occupied in 1967.

#### Settlement within the heart of our cities

The Israeli military authorities forced the inhabitants of certain neighbourhoods in Jerusalem and Hebron to abandon their homes, using all of the oppressive measures available to them. The vacant homes were then demolished and new ones built to accommodate the new settlers. This inhuman action was taken on the pretext that these homes had been owned by them prior to 1948. It is interesting to note there that these same measures were not afforded the Palestinians who wished to reclaim their homes in Jaffa, Haifa, Lydd, Ramallah and hundreds of other cities, villages and towns throughout the portion of Palestine that was occupied in 1948. It seems that the Israelis consider themselves to have rights to which we are not entitled.

#### Forcible eviction

Entire populations of cities such as Lydd and Ramallah, and villages such as Imwas and Yalu, were forced out of their homes during the 1948 and 1967 wars. This was accomplished through planned terror raids such as the one that was perpetrated against Deir-Yassin by the Irgun gang headed by Menachem Begin, the former Prime Minister of Israel.

#### Exile and dismissal of officials

The Israeli military authorities adopted a policy of banishing the native inhabitants of Palestine early in its occupation of the West Bank despite the fact that the charter of the Geneva Conventions prohibit such acts. It exiled such notable Palestinians as the mayors of Hebron, Al Bireh and Halhul. The list of the Banished also included heads of universities and organizations, and their families.

Harassment of educational institutions

All educational institutions in the occupied territories whether they be private governmental or affiliated with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees on the Near East are subject to constant harassment by the military authorities. The following represent only a fraction of the violations that are perpetrated against our educational institutions:

(a) Attempting to control higher education by issuing Military Order No. 854, thus giving the military authorities the legal pretext to dictate curricula, faculty hiring and dismissal and student selection;

(b) Banning hundreds of books, journals, and articles from use in the schools and universities, although these same printed materials are allowed and circulated in Israeli schools and universities;

(c) Military harassment of the university campuses to suppress extra curricular activities and self-expression;

(d) Military closure of schools and major universities for lengthy periods, extending up to four months each;

(e) Confronting unarmed students with live ammunition that has resulted in the deaths and woundings of tens of students.

Health violations

Numerous surveys and studies have shown that medical and health care services given to the Israelis far exceed those available to Palestinians and that the health services offered to Palestinians by the military authorities do not meet any acceptable standards. The following are a few examples of the deteriorating state of the health situation.

(a) There is a vast gap between the Israeli and Palestinian hospitals run by the occupation authorities in terms of number of physicians and nurses per bed, equipment, and accommodations;

(b) The take over of Palestinian hospitals for occupation purposes. In Jerusalem, the newly completed Arab hospital was turned into police headquarters. In Nablus, the government hospital was turned into the prison of Juneid; and in Ramallah, the military hospital was turned into military government headquarters;

(c) The continued decrease in free medical and health services throughout the occupied territories;

(d) The closure of the Hospice Hospital in Jerusalem which is the only government hospital in the city that provides services to the Arab community;

(e) The ban on building hospitals with money belonging to those organizations in Jerusalem or elsewhere.

### House and town arrests

The Israeli military authorities impose house and town arrest measures on hundreds of Palestinians such as students and union leaders, professionals and heads of charitable organizations such as myself. Due to the town arrest that was imposed on me and the refusal of the military authorities to allow my children to visit me, it has been several years since I have seen my children.

### Hampering agricultural and economic development and the control of all water resources

Throughout the duration of the occupation period, the Israelis have committed numerous violations that have been detrimental to the agriculture and economy of the occupied territories. The following are only a few examples of such violations:

(a) The Israelis have taken full control of all water resources and have not allowed the drilling of new artesian wells on Arab land whereas they have allowed settlers to drill tens of these wells on confiscated Arab land. Consequently, Palestinian farmers do not have enough water to irrigate their crops;

(b) Thousands of fruit trees and crops have been systematically destroyed by the military authorities as in the case of Beit Ikka;

(c) The prohibition and ban on the construction of light industry such as a cement factory in Hebron, although there is a shortage of this material in the West Bank;

(d) The harsh measures imposed on the Palestinians in their daily lives, including economic measures, make it very difficult for them to remain in their homeland, let alone try to develop and to maintain a sound economic structure in their society.

### Mass arrests and torture

The policy of mass arrests that the military occupation authorities follow has caused severely overcrowded conditions in Israeli prisons. This problem is further aggravated by the inhuman conditions that exist in these prisons and the prisoners' deprivation of their basic rights. Prisoners are subjected to physical and mental torture during interrogation, which has resulted in the death or crippling of tens of Palestinian prisoners. Children under the age of 14 years are placed in the same cells with Israeli criminals, and when released, a former prisoner is subjected to continued harassment while students in public schools are refused permission to go back to their schools.

### Violating the sanctity of the Muslim and Christian holy places

Muslim and Christian holy places have been violated and desecrated by the Israelis. They have:

(a) Burned the Al-Aksa Mosque in Jerusalem, Islam's second holiest shrine;

- (b) Stolen precious jewels and religious artifacts from the Holy Sepulchre Church in Jerusalem;
- (c) Dug beneath the Al-Aqsa Mosque, thus threatening its structure;
- (d) The building of the Dome of the Rock has been threatened constantly with destruction by several groups, and plans are already being made to build a Jewish Temple in its place;
- (e) Transforming part of the Hebron Mosque into a synagogue.

#### Collective punishment and discrimination

It is an accepted premise in the civilized world that punishment is given to the individual who perpetrates an act. In the occupied territories, punishment is extended to the individual's family, neighbourhood and often his town or city. These are just a few examples:

- (a) Demolition of the homes of suspected Palestinian resistance men;
- (b) Forcing the inhabitants of neighbourhoods or towns for lengthy periods following a stoning incident;
- (c) Forcing the inhabitants of a neighbourhood or camp into the open air during the most violent weather conditions, such as the case of the Am'ari, Balata and Dheishes camps;
- (d) Closure of the bridge routes to the population of entire districts, thus causing students and merchants great financial and academic losses;
- (e) Discriminatory treatment of offenders. Whereas a Palestinian youth was sentenced to two years of imprisonment for throwing a stone, an Israeli soldier who killed a young girl in cold blood received a sentence of only three months imprisonment.

#### The practices of the settlers and other rightists groups against Palestinians

As if it were not enough that Palestinian land is being confiscated for settlement purposes, the settlers and several other religious fanatics have no compunction about entering Palestinian towns, villages and camps to terrorize and shoot unarmed people. As a result, young men, women and children were killed and the two outstanding mayors of Nablus and Ramallah were maimed by bombs planted in their cars, while the third mayor of Al Bireh escaped by sheer good luck. The effects of such actions are very grave, especially as an unprotected population is left at the mercy of armed fanatics who apparently have the full support and protection of their Government.

These are only a few examples of the injustices and sufferings of the Palestinian people as documented by facts and figures. It is a contradiction to the image of us that the Israel and Western press have attempted to portray.

We are simply a people who have been evicted from our homeland by force in 1948 and 1967. Despite this most unparalleled injustice in the history of mankind, we continue to be subjected to all forms of oppression and suffering at the hands of the Israeli occupiers of our homeland. Although we have not been treated fairly by this world throughout the long years of our diaspora and despite our being denied the most basic of human rights, we are resolute on attaining our noble and just rights sooner or later. I need not prove to you the just cause of Palestine, for the world has done so repeatedly in the form of United Nations resolutions, and decisions, international conferences, and international court rulings. It is a human tragedy, as well as international travesty, that these decisions have not been implemented.

I do hope that this conference held at this very critical time in the history of our people will usher a new era for the Palestinians, an era of implementing the scores of resolutions confirming Palestinian rights that have been collecting dust in the annals of your highly esteemed organization. For unless these resolutions are implemented I do not dare to dream of the grave consequences that might ensue.

The region is being hindered from developing and attaining security because of Israeli aggression and the violations of human rights, which are encouraging all kinds of sectarianism in our region, sprouting in self-defence, and eventually threatening the whole world with division and discord.

On the other hand, once justice is implemented in our region and the simplest demands for freedom and self-determination of our people are met, it will be possible for us to share in the global efforts towards peace of which we ourselves have been deprived for so long.

It will be useful to reiterate in this context to present the minimal Palestinian demands that would guarantee peace in the region and spare the whole world the threat of war and destruction.

- (a) The immediate withdrawal of Israeli forces from the occupied territories;
- (b) Reaffirming the just and inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination and the establishment of an independent national homeland on their national soil;
- (c) Reaffirming that PLO is the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people wherever they may live;
- (d) We do not accept Security Council resolution 242 (1967) because it does not recognize us as a people with national aspirations and political rights.

Finally, I wish to convey to the participants in this conference my firm belief that a peaceful solution to the Palestinian problem will only be possible, once Palestinian rights are implemented. The world will then be spared the threat of war and destruction and will be in a position to utilize all global resources for peaceful purposes and for combating hunger and poverty everywhere, making the world a happier place for humanity.



Letter dated 17 August 1985 from Mrs. Sameeha S. Khalil,  
addressed to the Chairman of the Conference

My name is Sameeha Khalil. I am a Palestinian woman and I am the head of a women's organization in the occupied West Bank of the Jordan River.

An invitation has been extended to me by the United Nations to participate in an international meeting for non-governmental organizations interested in the question of Palestine. This meeting is to be convened at Geneva from 9 to 12 September 1985. I have been invited to be an expert member of a panel discussing the current situation in the occupied territories and I have also been asked to lead a workshop in the interest area of women.

I enthusiastically accepted the invitation but the Israeli military authorities have denied me permission to leave the West Bank to attend this meeting.

Indeed, I have consistently been denied permission to leave the West Bank to attend international conferences on issues that concern my work here, such as the welfare of Palestinian families or the preservation of Palestinian culture. Only last month, I was denied permission to travel to Nairobi where I had been invited to be a resource person at the United Nations Conference on the Decade for Women.

I have also been denied permission to travel abroad to see my five children, two of whom were expelled from the West Bank and are not allowed to return to visit me here. I have often wished to travel to see them and I have made repeated efforts to do so but, since 1980, I have been allowed to travel to Jordan only once, for a week in 1983.

For two and a half years, from 1980 to 1983, I could not even "travel" beyond the municipal boundaries of the two of Al Bireh. In those two years, the military authorities imposed five successive two arrest orders upon me - for periods of six months each.

I have never been given a stated reason for these restrictions and denials. I have never been charged with breaking any law or military regulation. Nor have I received a specific order banning me from travelling. I have appealed through several lawyers and have tried all legal sources available to me, but still the answer comes: "No permission. You are denied".

I would like to appeal to you to support my recent request to travel to Geneva by either sending a telegram or a letter of protest to the military authorities or by publicizing my case in any way you can.

## X. A MESSAGE FROM PALESTINIAN WOMEN\*

Palestinian women in the occupied territories wish to express their deep appreciation to the United Nations for convening this conference and for passing scores of resolutions affirming the inalienable rights of the Palestinians.

Palestinian women, being committed to the cause of peace and justice in the region and the whole world, believe that the implementation of the provisions of those resolutions (foremost amongst them the right of Palestinians to self-determination and the establishment of an independent sovereign State on Palestinian land) will lay the ground for peace and security in the region and spare the whole world from the threat of war and violence.

The Israeli policy of establishing facts by aggression and by transgressing the rights of defenceless people is proving to be disastrous to the Middle East and eventually to the whole world. The price that the peoples of the Middle East are paying is exorbitant.

The military might of Israel, fully supported by the United States, is rendering all peoples of the Middle East defenceless, devastating their lands and thwarting their aspirations to unity, harmony and development. But the defenceless will inevitably rise with all their might utilizing all means available to them to lift the load of oppression as it becomes unbearable and to restore their human dignity and political rights. The only guarantee to stopping the cycle of violence would be the acknowledgement of the rights of all human beings to freedom and justice.

Despite the heavy load of oppression and occupation born with fortitude by Palestinian women, they have not been sitting in silence awaiting miraculous acts of salvation. Neither have they been appeased by deceptive utterances and lip service to their cause. They have been taking positive steps towards lifting the suffering of their people and instilling in the young the strength and courage to overcome the brutalities to which they are constantly subjected. They have also been working hard to help shape the destiny of their people by developing their community so that it can eventually be an equal partner in the process of peace and development in the whole world.

While being completely immersed in action, a Palestinian woman dreams, and through her action she hopes that her dreams will come true. A Palestinian woman dreams of peace and security for herself, her husband, her children and her people. She dreams of the day when she can wake up in the morning free of a nagging fear that permeates her thoughts day and night: the fear of waking up to find her land surrounded by barbed wire, never to have access to it again; the fear of never seeing her son or daughter again as they wave goodbye on their way to school; the fear of waking up at night from a knock at her door to find her home surrounded and her husband or son being taken into a lifetime of prison and torture. Sometimes, during her weaker

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\*Delivered through the Interim Co-ordinating Committee.

moments, she does not dare to dream of the future but wishes that time should stand still so that her children will not grow into adults to be subjected to the terrors of their oppressors and to a life without hope.

Yet, Palestinian men and women continue to dream. They have a clear vision of their future. They know what they want, although they might differ in the means of attaining their goals.

By summarizing the Palestinian position on major relevant issues, we hope to help participants in this Conference in their deliberations. Those issues include:

(a) The establishment of an independent Palestinian State in our homeland is an uncontested right on which we can never compromise and which will constitute the first step towards attaining peace in the region;

(b) Our people should practice self-determination in its full sense. Any alliance or treaties are the prerogative of our people and cannot be imposed;

(c) Our people have the full right to elect their leadership with no intervention, harassment or pressure from any source. Our leadership, the PLO, on the other hand, should be recognized legitimately and unquestionably by every member of the world community;

(d) We reject all resolutions, plans or agreements that do not recognize us as a people with full political rights; hence our rejection of Security Council resolution 242 (1967);

(e) We demand that all Palestinian refugees and displaced persons have the right to return to their homeland and property;

(f) We believe that an international conference under the auspices of the United Nations and with the participation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United States and all parties to the conflict, foremost among whom the PLO, would be a positive step towards starting a peaceful process in the Middle East;

(g) In the meantime, we urge the world community to take firm measures against the violations of our human rights which are becoming increasingly excessive and to take steps to offer protection to our people under occupation.

We wish this Conference all the success that it deserves and hope that our consolidated efforts will offer a glimmer of hope to our people in their darkest moments and spare humanity the threat of a global confrontation.

XII. CLOSING REMARKS OF MR. BORIS IVANOVICH KORNEENKO,  
HEAD OF THE DELEGATION OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE  
EXERCISE OF THE INALIENABLE RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

With the adoption of the Declaration we have, after three days of hard work, come to the conclusion of our important task.

Last year's international meeting was of an exploratory nature where both the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People on one hand, and the non-governmental organizations on the other, launched a search for the best ways and means to co-ordinate our efforts in ensuring justice for the Palestinian people and enabling them to exercise their national rights.

This year's meeting has gone a step further. We are no longer at the exploratory stage. The past year has seen increasing co-operation between us and amongst yourselves and this meeting confirms the usefulness of such co-operation.

The Declaration you have adopted contains many interesting and practical suggestions for the Committee to take up in the coming year. I can assure you that I shall bring this to the attention of the Committee personally and that full consideration will be given to those suggestions without delay.

We are very glad to note that your meeting energetically supported the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East and that the issue became the central theme of the meeting. It is most encouraging that such a conference offers the only realistic and practical way towards a solution to the problem of Palestine, the exercise of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, and the establishment of a Palestinian State. We are also in agreement that only a full and comprehensive solution, involving the participation of the PLO on an equal footing, and all concerned countries, in particular the United States and the USSR, can create the basis for a just and lasting peace. We appreciate very much the fact that you decided to make a special effort to help to overcome the obstacles created on the path of the conference and to help to implement the relevant United Nations resolutions on the question of Palestine, in particular resolution 38/58 C. We note that the meeting identified these obstacles, namely the negative attitude of the Governments of Israel and the United States. The Committee, as you know, has already expressed regret over this negative attitude.

The Committee has also followed with the greatest interest your efforts connected with the global Signature Campaign in support of the International Peace Conference. It has been noted that you have decided to continue the campaign until its objective - the convening of the Conference - has been achieved. The Committee would appreciate receiving periodic progress reports on the campaign through the Division for Palestinian Rights.

The election of the new Co-ordinating Committee with wide representation will ensure, I am certain, a continuation of the close co-operation between the United Nations and the non-governmental organizations. I take this opportunity to reiterate the Committee's desire to develop our relationship and co-operation with a view to maintaining and increasing the momentum that has been generated by both the international meetings and the regional symposia.

We are sure that the Co-ordinating Committee will fulfil the co-ordinating role entrusted to it in implementing the decisions of this meeting.

The delegation of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People feels, and I am sure you all agree, that the meeting we have just concluded has been successful, productive and action-oriented, in particular, in assuring support for the international conference. A large measure of the credit for that success goes to the distinguished and eminent panelists who laid the groundwork for our deliberations; to the workshop leaders and resource persons who willingly shouldered the responsibility of guiding the work of the workshops and regional groups; and the moderators who shared the responsibility of guiding the deliberations in plenary. We are also not unmindful of the important contribution that all of you as NGOs or individuals have made to the success of this meeting. Your very presence here, as well as your participation in the discussions, are positive aspects which deserve due recognition. You have rightly emphasized the importance of influencing world public opinion and the valuable role that NGOs can play in that regard. This is entirely in line with the Committee's assessment and I once more take this opportunity to reiterate our continued support for your efforts.

I am happy to say that I can confidently report to the Committee that we have made progress at this meeting and, what is more, that we are now geared to making further progress in the coming year.

Before I conclude, I would like to thank the Chief and the staff of the Division for Palestinian Rights, who worked so actively and enthusiastically to organize this meeting, as well as the conference officers, secretaries, interpreters and translators, who gave of their efforts willingly to make this meeting a success.

Once again, I thank all of you for participating at this meeting and hope that we shall meet again in the coming year. I wish you all bon voyage and declare the meeting closed.

XIII. LIST OF PARTICIPANTS AND OBSERVERS

Non-governmental organizations

African Bar Association  
Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Organization  
All India Indo-Arab Friendship Association  
All-India Women's Conference  
Al-Najah University  
America-Israel Council for Israeli-Palestinian Peace  
American Federation of Ramallah, Palestine  
Americans for Justice in the Middle East  
Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union  
Arab Lawyers Union  
Association of Arab-American University Graduates  
Association belgo-palestinienne  
Association France-Palestine  
Association marocaine de soutien à la lutte palestinienne  
Association Médicale Franco-Palestinienne  
Association Parlementaire Pour la Coopération Euro-Arabe  
Association Sénégalais pour les Nations Unies (ASNU)  
Association Sénégalais des Juristes Démocrates  
Association de Solidarité Franco-Arabe  
Association Suisse-Palestine  
Association suisse des amis de l'Université de Birzeit  
Canada Arab World Parliamentary Association  
Canadian Arab Federation  
Centre internationale d'information sur les prisonniers Déportés  
et disparus palestiniens et libanais  
Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries  
Christian Peace Conference  
Church of Humanism  
CIMADE (Service oecumenique d'entraide)  
Comite catholique contre la faim et pour le développement  
Comité France Jerusalem Al Quds  
Comité Palestine et Israel Vivront  
Committee for Protection of Arab land  
Conference of European Churches/Middle East Council of Churches  
Conference Mondiale des Chrétiens pour la Palestine  
Council for the Advancement of Arab-British Understanding (CAABU)  
Democratic Front for Peace and Equality  
E.A.F.O.R.D.  
Ecumenical Centre for Human Rights (CEPAE)  
Federation of Arab American Organizations  
Finnish Arab Friendship Society  
Finnish-Palestine Committee  
Friends World Committee for Consultation  
Inter-African Union of Lawyers  
International Association of Democratic Lawyers (Swiss Branch)  
International Jewish Peace Union  
International League for the Rights and Liberation of Peoples  
International Peace Bureau  
International Progress Organization

International Union of Students  
International Youth and Student Movement for the United Nations  
Islamic Council of Europe  
Israeli Council for Israeli-Palestinian Peace  
Labour Middle East Council  
London Friends of Palestine  
Middle East Fellowship of Southern California  
Movement of Democratic Women in Israel  
Muslim World League  
Najda: Women Concerned About the Middle East  
National Council of Churches, USA  
Near East Cultural and Educational Foundation of Canada  
November 29th Committee for Palestine  
OXFAM (United Kingdom)  
Palestine Committee of Norway  
Palestine Studies  
Palestine Human Rights Campaign  
Palestine Human Rights Campaign (Australia)  
Palestinafronten i Norge  
Palestine Committee for NGOs  
Polish Committee for Solidarity with the Peoples of  
    Asia, Africa and Latin America  
Presbyterian Church USA  
Prisoners Friends Association  
Quaker United Nations Office - Geneva  
SANAD (Community Services in Palestine)  
SERVAS International  
Solidaritats Kommittee Palestine-Lebanon  
Solidarity Committee of the German Democratic Republic  
Soviet Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee  
Soviet Committee of Friendship with the Arab People of Palestine  
Swiss-Arab Association  
Transnational Perspective  
Umm El-Fahem Cultural Centre  
Union of Arab Jurists  
Union des Avocats Arabes  
United Nations Association of the Arab Republic of Egypt  
United Nations Association of Great Britain  
United Nations Association of Rogaland, Norway  
United States Organization for Medical and Educational Needs  
West of Scotland Friends of Palestine  
Women's International Democratic Federation  
Women's International League for Peace and Freedom  
World Alliance of Young Men's Christian Associations  
World Council of Churches  
World Federation of Democratic Youth  
World Federation of Teachers' Unions (FISE)  
World Federation of Trade Unions  
World Federation of United Nations Associations  
World Peace Council  
World Student Christian Federation  
World University Service  
World Young Women's Christian Association

NGO observers

American Friends Service Committee  
Association internationale des juristes démocrates  
Black Panthers (Israel)  
Bulgarian Committee for Solidarity with Peoples of Asia and Africa  
Caritas Internationalis  
Comité pour le patrimoine palestinien (France)  
Dutch Palestine Committee  
Medical Aid for Palestinians  
Movement Against Racism and for Friendship Between Peoples  
National Union of Arab Students in Israel  
Organisation des Juristes  
Orientalia - Agency for Development in the Near East  
Parti national progressiste unioniste (PNPU), Egypte  
Perspectives judeo-arabe  
Progressive List for Peace  
Russell Peace Foundation  
Soviet Women's Committee  
Wainwright House

Panelists

Mr. Shafiq Al-Hout (Palestinian)  
Mr. Matti Peled (Israel)  
Academician Eugeniy Primakov (USSR)  
Dr. Mohammed Shadid (Palestinian)  
Mr. Tawfik Zayyad (Israel)  
Mr. Amnon Zichroni (Israel)

Members and observers of the Committee on the Exercise  
of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People

Mr. Boris Ivanovich Korneenko (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic),  
Head of Delegation  
Mr. Mehmet Ali Irtemcelik (Turkey), Member  
Mr. André Tahindro (Madagascar), Member  
Mr. Zehdi Labib Terzi (Palestine Liberation Organization), Observer

States Members of the United Nations represented by observers

China  
Egypt  
Jordan  
Madagascar  
Nigeria  
Senegal  
Syrian Arab Republic  
Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic  
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics



United Nations specialized agencies

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization  
World Health Organization

Intergovernmental organizations

League of Arab States

National liberation movements

Palestine Liberation Organization

Press

Guðrun Herunter - Israel & Palestine Political Report  
Y. Balakenae Wakpelle - African Press  
Jean-Marie Lambert - Paris

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