



DIVISION FOR
PALESTINIAN RIGHTS

SPECIAL BULLETIN ON THE COMMEMORATION
OF THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF SOLIDARITY
WITH THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

1987

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I. INTERNATIONAL DAY OF SOLIDARITY WITH THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

On 30 November 1987, the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People was observed at United Nations Headquarters, New York, at Geneva, Vienna and several other capitals.

Two special meetings of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People were held on Monday, 30 November, at Headquarters, in accordance with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 32/40 B of 2 December 1977. All States Members of the United Nations, specialized agencies and observers were invited to attend.

Among those who addressed the special meetings were the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, the President of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council. A message from the Chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) was read out by the observer for the PLO.

Statements were also made by the Minister of State for External Affairs of India and by the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka.

Further statements were made by the Chairman of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, the President of the United Nations Council for Namibia, the Vice-Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid, the Chairman of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories, the representative of the Chairman of the Movement of the Non-Aligned Countries, the Chairman of the Group of African States, the Chairman of the Group of Arab States, the Chairman of the Group of Asian States, the Chairman of the Group of Eastern European States, the Chairman of the Latin American and Caribbean Group and the representative of the Chairman of the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

A number of messages from Heads of State or Government and Ministers for Foreign Affairs were read out by their representatives. Messages were also read out by the Deputy Permanent Observer for the League of Arab States and the Permanent Observer for the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

Statements were also made by the Chairman of the International Co-ordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine and the observers of the South West Africa People's Organization and the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania.

In commemoration of the International Day, the Committee arranged the screening of a series of films during the week beginning 30 November, in the Dag Hammarskjöld Library Auditorium.

At the request of the Committee, in further commemoration of the International Day, the PLO prepared an exhibition which was displayed in the public lobby at United Nations Headquarters from 30 November to 6 December 1987.

II. TEXTS OF STATEMENTS MADE AND MESSAGES RECEIVED ON THE OCCASION OF
THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF SOLIDARITY WITH THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE, 1987

A. Opening statements

Statement by H.E. Mr. Massamba Sarré,
Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the
Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People

[Original: French]

The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People is meeting today in conformity with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 32/40 B of 2 December 1977 to commemorate the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.

I have the pleasure of welcoming H.E. Mr. Peter Florin, President of the General Assembly at its forty-second session, H.E. Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, the Secretary-General, and H.E. Mr. Kivoaki Kikuchi, President of the Security Council. It is my honour also to welcome H.E. Mr. Eduardo Faleiro, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of India, and H.E. Mr. Tyronne Fernando, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka. In addition, I welcome the chairmen of United Nations committees and regional groups, representative of Member States, intergovernmental organizations and liberation movements, representatives of non-governmental organizations, members of the press and all others present here today.

We shall now stand and observe a minute of silence in memory of all those who have given their lives in the service of the cause of the Palestinian people.

We are greatly honoured by the presence of so many distinguished guests at this solemn meeting. In deciding on the observance of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People in 1977, the General Assembly was mindful of the responsibility of the United Nations towards the Palestinian people and of the need to spare no effort in promoting a comprehensive, just and lasting solution to the question of Palestine, the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict in the Middle East. This gathering today is a reaffirmation of the ongoing commitment of the international community to the achievement of this goal. It also provides an opportunity for us to reassess the situation and to reach out to Governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and individuals everywhere in order to mobilize increasing support for the just cause of the Palestinian people.

The year 1987 has marked several important anniversaries in the troubled history of the Palestinian people: it is now 40 years since the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 181 (II) calling for the partition of Palestine; 20 years since the occupation by Israeli forces of the West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem and 5 years since the massacre at Sabra and Shatila. These are but the most significant milestones in the history of dispossession and exile of the Palestinians, which has resulted in an untold number of deaths, in violations of their human rights and the denial of their cultural, social and economic development.

It is clearly a primary duty of the international community to bring to a peaceful settlement such situations of permanent conflict and continued injustice against an entire people, which not only represent a constant threat to peace and security in the region but also undermine the credibility of our Organization.

During the past year, the growing tension and violence in the area, and particularly the intensification of the Israeli "iron-fist" policy in the occupied territories, have led the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People to bring the policies and practices of the occupying Power repeatedly to the attention of the General Assembly and the Security Council as being clearly in violation of the fourth Geneva Convention of 1949. The Committee has also been gravely concerned by the violence directed against Palestinians in refugee camps, for whom the United Nations has a special responsibility.

The Committee has repeatedly warned that tension and violence in the area will continue to prevail as long as the Palestinian people is denied its inalienable rights as defined by the General Assembly, namely the right to self-determination without external interference, to national independence and sovereignty, to return to its home and property and to establish its own independent State in Palestine, and as long as the Palestinian and other territories remain occupied. Your presence here today attests to the growing preoccupation with which the international community views the situation and to its determination to contribute to a speedy solution.

The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, since its establishment in 1976 has continued to strive for the attainment and the exercise by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights, in accordance with the provisions of the Charter and United Nations resolutions. Its recommendations, as you know, have achieved near-consensus in the General Assembly, although they have remained unimplemented because of the opposition of a permanent member of the Security Council.

Already four years ago, the General Assembly in adopting resolution 38/58 C laid down the guiding principles for a peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine through the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East under the auspices of the United Nations and with the participation of the permanent members of the Security Council, the parties directly concerned and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), on an equal footing. That resolution, as well as subsequent ones, were endorsed by overwhelming majorities. Our Committee has consistently held that this Conference is the most comprehensive and widely accepted proposal and that its convening would constitute a major contribution by the United Nations towards the realization of a just and lasting solution.

Unfortunately, as we all know, it has not yet proved possible to obtain the agreement of all the parties to this proposal. In making the convening of the Conference its utmost priority in its programme of work for the past several years, the Committee has sought to mobilize the greatest possible support for this objective at all levels of the international community, while at the same time urging those States which have thus far rejected the idea to reconsider their position. The deteriorating situation in the occupied territories makes it very clear, however, that renewed efforts should be made by all concerned to overcome this impasse. The Committee therefore has reiterated its earnest appeal to the Security Council to take positive action on its recommendations as well as on the proposal for the convening of the International Peace Conference.

In this regard, the Committee has noted with appreciation that the Secretary-General intends to pursue his efforts for the convening of the Conference. I would like to seize this opportunity to congratulate once again the Secretary-General on his tireless search for ways to bring about a peaceful settlement of this question. We firmly hope that this continuing quest will bear fruit before it is too late.

For its part, the Committee remains determined to continue to do its utmost to promote better knowledge and understanding of the just cause of the Palestinian people and of the United Nations recommendations for its solution, and to mobilize at all levels the international support essential to the implementation of the relevant resolutions of the United Nations. Today, on the fortieth anniversary of the partition of Palestine, we should all pledge to intensify our efforts, individually and collectively, until a solution is finally achieved and the Palestinian people has recovered its inalienable rights.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Peter Florin, President of
the forty-second session of the General Assembly

[Original: Russian]

It is an honour for me to address the Special Meeting of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People in observance of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.

Recognizing the need to strengthen and consolidate international support for the Palestinian people, the General Assembly, by its resolution 32/40 B, requested the annual observance of 29 November as the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. Today, in commemorating the occasion, we are renewing our pledge to the Palestinian people that its just demands and aspirations will continue to be supported by the international community.

As is known, 40 years ago, on 29 November 1947, the United Nations General Assembly by its resolution 181 (II) provided for the establishment of two States in Palestine. Only one has achieved realization. The Arab State has not as yet come into being. More Palestinians continue to live under occupation with deprivation and insecurity of life and property, or in exile in refugee camps under conditions of extreme tension and poverty.

The General Assembly has determined that the question of Palestine is at the root of the conflict in the Middle East, and no lasting peace in the region is possible until the Palestinian people can realize its inalienable rights. The Assembly has outlined the main elements for such a solution. These include the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, to return to its homeland and to an independent State of its own; the right of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the representative of the Palestinian people, to participate on an equal footing with other parties concerned in all efforts, deliberations and conferences on the Middle East; the withdrawal of Israel from all territories occupied since June 1967, including Jerusalem; acknowledgement of and respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of all the States in the region and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries.

In its continual efforts to promote a just and lasting solution to the problem of Palestine and the Middle East, the General Assembly has endorsed the call for the convening of an International Peace Conference on the Middle East for the past four years, in conformity with the provisions of its resolution 38/58 C. I think it is encouraging to note from the report of the Secretary-General submitted to the General Assembly and the Security Council on 7 May 1987 (A/42/277/S-18849), that, in contrast with the experience of recent years, none of the Security Council members oppose in principle the idea of an International Conference under the auspices of the United Nations and that, in recent months, there have been indications of greater flexibility in attitudes towards the negotiating process. As was stated in the report of the Secretary-General of 13 November 1987 (A/42/714-S/19249), there are still some serious obstacles to convening the Conference. To remove these obstacles by dialogue and negotiations should be an important task for the international community.

It is hoped that the proposed Conference, in conformity with the provisions of the General Assembly resolutions, will be convened as early as possible. This was reflected in many statements made during the debate last week. As a practical step towards that end, the establishment of a preparatory committee, with the participation of the five permanent members of the Security Council and also of all parties involved, is of particular importance.

The international community is grateful to the Secretary-General for his tireless efforts and intensified contacts with the parties, and I wish him success in his endeavours in the future.

It is encouraging to see an increased momentum and interest on the part of the international community as a whole in favour of an International Peace Conference on the Middle East. In response to this sentiment the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People has exerted all efforts to bring about the early convening of the proposed International Peace Conference and all the United Nations seminars, as well as symposia and international meetings of non-governmental organizations have recognized and urged international action to that end.

I wish to warmly congratulate the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and its Chairman for their continuing efforts to promote the solution of the problem of Palestine in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions. The observance of this Day will certainly inspire hope in the minds and hearts of the Palestinians and convey to them once again that the United Nations remains committed to their just cause and the realization of their inalienable rights. I take this opportunity to extend to you and your Committee my best wishes for the success of your important endeavour.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar,
Secretary-General of the United Nations

[Original: French]

The observance today of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, in implementation of the mandate given by the General Assembly, is symbolic of the great importance which the United Nations attaches to the question of Palestine and of its determination to achieve a just and lasting settlement based on the full recognition of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

The recent violent and tragic incidents in the area underscore the continuing tension and the urgent necessity of reaching a settlement of this complex and difficult problem. I have been particularly distressed by the loss of innocent civilian lives. There is no doubt that the current stalemate is contrary to the interests of all the parties concerned and that it has dangerous implications. It prolongs the unacceptable plight of the Palestinian people, it encourages resort to extremism and it threatens a wider conflagration. The persistent impasse also hampers economic development, social stability and the promotion of human rights.

Following the adoption of General Assembly resolution 38/58 C in December 1983, which spelled out guidelines for the International Peace Conference on the Middle East, there has been increased international interest in the convening of such a Conference. Unfortunately, in spite of my efforts in this regard, it has not yet proved possible to obtain the agreement of all the parties to the principle of a Conference. Their position remain apart on a number of issues of procedure and substance.

I firmly believe that the search must by all means be sustained for a negotiating process, under United Nations auspices, in which all parties would participate, including the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). While a number of obstacles need still to be overcome, I am determined to continue my efforts towards a comprehensive settlement which will meet the aspirations of all the inhabitants of the region. There is a wide measure of agreement that such a comprehensive settlement should include the following elements: withdrawal of Israeli forces from Arab territories occupied since June 1967; acknowledgement of and respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of all the States in the region and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries; and a just solution of the Palestinian problem, based on the recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, including self-determination. In this regard, the question of Jerusalem remains of primary importance.

Forty years have passed since the question of Palestine was brought to the United Nations. Yet despite this long-standing United Nations involvement, and despite the numerous resolutions adopted by both the Security Council and the General Assembly, the people of the area have been subjected to endless suffering and five major wars. At the core of the conflict lies the plight of the Palestinian people, most of whom now live under occupation or in exile. Many of them, especially those living in the refugee camps, face conditions of extreme hardship and insecurity.

The United Nations continues to do all it can to assist the Palestinian people. Since 1950, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), has provided shelter, food, and especially medical and essential educational services to Palestine refugees, who now number more than 2 million. Other United Nations agencies also provide economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people, in accordance with their respective mandates and in co-operation with the PLO and the Arab host countries. In this connection, particular mention should be made of the capital and technical assistance programme underway in the West Bank and Gaza Strip through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

It remains a primary responsibility of the United Nations to strive for a solution of the Palestine question, notwithstanding all the difficulties in the way. Discouragement must not deflect us from our obligation to persevere in the search for a negotiated peace in the Middle East, a peace which will ensure justice for all people in the region and put an end, once and for all, to the violence and frustration which have persisted for nearly two generations. Ever since I was first appointed Secretary-General, I have been strongly committed to the search for a comprehensive settlement of the Middle East problem and I have been exploring ways of achieving such a settlement. I shall continue to do so in the future.

I am deeply conscious of the untiring efforts being made by the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People under the very able and wise leadership of Massamba Sarré, in order to achieve a just solution to the question of Palestine. I should like to take this opportunity to wish you and the Committee all success in your most important endeavour.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Kiyoaki Kikuchi, President of the
Security Council for the month of November 1987

[Original: French]

Let me first thank the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People for the invitation extended to the current President of the Security Council to participate in this special meeting held to commemorate the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.

This annual occasion serves to mark the importance the international community attaches to a just solution of the Palestinian problem. We fully recognize that such a solution would prove to be a decisive element in the achievement of a negotiated, just and lasting settlement of the Middle East question.

We are well aware that the situation in the Middle East and the stability of the region have grave implications for the peace and security of the entire world. Despite the seriousness of this challenge and despite the great and continuing efforts that have been made to find a just and lasting solution to the problem, the situation in the Middle East continues to be one of the most intractable issues facing the international community.

The Security Council has been closely associated with these efforts. It has been called upon many times to direct its urgent attention to the repeated crises

engendered by the conflict and to their consequences. In doing so, the Council has been always aware of the importance of the Palestinian dimension of the problem and of its relevance in the search for a just and lasting solution.

Guided by its responsibilities under the Charter, the Security Council will continue its efforts to seek a just and lasting peace in the Middle East for the benefit of all parties concerned including the Palestinian people.

I should like to express the appreciation of members of the Security Council for the work carried out by the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, under the strict guidance of Ambassador Massamba Sarré of Senegal.

Message from Mr. Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the
Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization

[Original: Arabic]

I would like to express my deepest thanks for your kind invitation for me to participate in your commemoration of the International Day of Solidarity with the rights of our Arab Palestinian people. In the name of our people, my brothers members of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and in my own name, I would like to express to Massamba Sarré, and to the esteemed Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and all its members, representatives and States, the highest appreciation of the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of our Palestinian people, for the unswerving and principled positions of support and solidarity which you adopt on the side of the just struggle of our people to regain its inalienable rights including its right to return, to self-determination and to establish its independent Palestinian State with holy Jerusalem as its capital.

I would like also to acclaim this position of solidarity which embodies the principles of the United Nations and its Charter which call for support of the struggle of the peoples for their redemption from the yoke of colonialism and subjugation, a position which had been forcefully reemphasized by the United Nations General Assembly in its resolution 40/61 of 1985.

Allow me, here, to underline for you the respect and appreciation of our people for all the activities and work carried out by your esteemed Committee as well as for the Division for Palestinian Rights in the United Nations Secretariat for all the acts of solidarity with the just struggle of our people. We are sure that these activities have had an effective role in explaining the justice of our cause and in positively contributing in explaining it to the world public opinion.

On this occasion, I would like as well to express my deepest appreciation to the Secretary-General, Javier Pérez de Cuéllar and to his assistants for their lofty work at the head of the international Organization despite all the difficulties they are confronting in their work. I wish them all good health, strength and success in their important role in the defence of the Charter of the United Nations, in its

respect by all and in carrying out its principles in order to establish peace, security and stability in the world and justice and equality among nations.

Your commemoration in this year of this International Day of Solidarity with the rights of our Palestinian people assumes special importance. It coincides with the fortieth anniversary of the adoption of General Assembly resolution 181 (II) on the partition of Palestine. It is the resolution which was adopted under the pressures practiced by a few countries with colonialist interests headed by the United States of America, in order to create the Zionist entity, an entity which the colonialist States wanted to be a basis for continued aggression against the peoples of the area and with which they wanted to confront the liberation movements in this area.

The United States was not content with this resolution. It went further by strengthening the Zionist entity to occupy all the Palestinian lands and was not satisfied with what the United Nations resolution had partitioned from the Palestinian lands and assigned for the establishment of the Zionist entity, Israel. In spite of all this, Israel is the State which rejects United Nations resolutions and rejects to implement them despite the fact that it had been established in accordance with the above-mentioned resolution in 1947, namely the resolution of the partition of Palestine, the homeland of the Palestinians.

Your commemoration as well comes a few weeks from the seventieth anniversary of the proclamation of the Balfour Declaration inaugurating the colonialist conspiracy, which has supported and planned the Zionist onslaught against our country at the expense of the rights of our people in the territory of their homeland.

This commemoration comes also at a time when two decades have passed by since the aggression of 1967, in which Israel completed the occupation of the whole territory of Palestine and other parts of the territory of the Arab States bordering Palestine.

This year, which reminds us forcefully of those outstanding landmarks in the chain of colonialist conspiracies against our people and their inalienable rights, reminds us as well of the intensifying international solidarity with our people's cause and right in practicing their constant inalienable rights. This support expresses a wider perception of the dangers of continuing to ignore our people's rights. This support also re-emphasizes through your commemoration one basic fact, namely that the United Nations is the natural place for the protection of the rights of the oppressed peoples and for the support of all liberation movements in the world to enable them to get their independence.

This international Organization has adopted various resolutions in the General Assembly and the Security Council in support of the constant and inalienable rights of the Palestinian people out of its belief in the justice of this cause. Each year the members of the United Nations express increasingly their conviction in the necessity of establishing an independent Palestinian State as a reaffirmation of the right of our people to self-determination. One wonders why has not that yet been done especially when the 1947 resolution on the partition of Palestine was adopted at this international Organization.

We should not lose time in looking for reasons. The United States, which claims to be concerned for peace and security in the world and for human rights, is the State which practices all kinds of terrorism and bias and gives unlimited support to Israel whereby it supplies Israel with all forms of modern lethal weapons and all

kinds of political, diplomatic, informational, financial and economic support. Furthermore, it encourages Israel to continue challenging the will of the international community as well as to continue ignoring the rights of our people and occupying the Palestinian and other Arab territories.

Encouraged by the continuation of the United States support, the climax of which has been reached by signing the treaty of strategic alliance, Israel escalates daily its violence and disregard for the international resolutions. The Palestinian people in the occupied homeland face an ever-increasing campaign of rancour and savagery practiced through the policy of State terrorism adopted and carried out by Israel in order to perpetuate its occupation of the Palestinian land and to drive out our people from their homeland.

In this regard, the recent years have witnessed an extremely dangerous escalation because of carrying out the policy of confiscating more Palestinian land, the establishment of settlements in these lands, the confiscation of water resources, the annexation of Arab Jerusalem and the Golan Heights by Israel. In addition, Israel continues committing the crime of destroying Palestinian economic institutions and infrastructure, the liquidation of academic, social, cultural and health institutions, the escalation of the policy of oppression and violation of Palestinian human rights, the intensification of the campaigns of mass punishment, the destruction of homes, detentions, deportations, curfews and the acts of killing of our people at random by the bullets of the Israeli occupation army soldiers and the gangs of armed settlers. All this is taking place within the framework of a rancorous racist and fascist policy and under the protection of the ruling military establishment in Israel.

The continuation of this unlimited support supplied by the United States to Israel is responsible for Israel's expansionist policies. Following the signing of the Camp David accords, which some imagined would bring peace, Israel occupied Lebanon and settled in its southern part despite the unanimous Security Council resolutions which call for its immediate and unconditional withdrawal from brotherly Lebanon.

In addition, Israel continues its barbaric air raids against the Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon, practices acts of naval piracy in front of the Lebanese shores and has hijacked a number of commercial ships including their tonnage of foodstuffs, medicines and construction and building materials. In addition, Israel has air-raided the Iraqi nuclear reactor and the headquarters of the PLO at Hammam As Shat in Tunisia.

In the face of these terrorist practices, our Palestinian people stand, courageously and steadfastly, continuing its resistance of the occupation with all forms and means and reaffirming its resolution to wrench its inalienable rights to return, to self-determination and to establish its independent State in accordance with international legality and on the basis of its resolutions. The continuous and escalating uprising of the masses of our people in the face of the Israeli occupation in our occupied territories and the total commitment of our people to the PLO affirm the vitality and resolution of our people to continue its struggle with all means and methods to liberate itself from the yoke of occupation and to accomplish its national independence.

Our people, while waging its battle and its destiny-bound struggle, armed with a deep belief in its final victory and in international solidarity with its cause and rights - and your commemoration today is an outstanding act of this international solidarity - believe, at the same time, that its struggle is an indivisible part of the total human struggle to liberate itself from the yoke of colonialism, zionism, racism and exploitation in all its forms. It is also a fundamental part of the yearnings and aspirations of the peoples of our globe for peace, progress and prosperity.

Therefore, the choices of our people have always been intertwined and harmonious with the spirit of the choices of the international community. Thus, and despite all challenges, our people insist on carrying the olive branch in the one hand and in the other the gun of the revolutionary and of the freedom fighter in order to protect the olive branch. Hence, our Palestine National Council which met early this year at Algiers adopted the resolution in which it reaffirmed the importance of convening the effective International Peace Conference on the Middle East within the framework of the United Nations and under its auspices, with the participation of the five permanent members in the Security Council and the concerned parties in the conflict including the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, on equal footing with the other parties.

This formula acquired a great thrust because of the strong support it got which was consecrated by the resolutions of the regional organizations like the League of Arab States, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the Organization of African Unity, the Socialist States, the countries of the European Economic Community and other friendly States.

In the face of this international thrust of support for the formula of convening the International Conference, the United States and Israel have adopted a position of unmasked and open challenge aiming, by various means, at obstructing the convening of the International Conference and at insisting on maintaining the hotbeds of tension and at perpetuating occupation and attempting to by-pass it through unilateral settlements and deals which ignore and disregard the rights of our people which are the quintessence of the just, comprehensive and durable peace, unilateral settlements and deals which are in the interest of perpetuating occupation and aggression and threatening world peace.

The United States insists on challenging international will and the whole international society. It continues also to treat recklessly the United Nations and the agreements concluded with it. Following the decision of the United States Administration to close down the Palestine Information Office in Washington, in spite its contradiction of United States laws, we hear today of a new attempt in the United States Congress to close down the office of the PLO Mission to the United Nations, which is protected by the conventions of the international Organization and its agreements with the United States.

Thus, the United States is not content with what support it extends to the policies of expansion and terrorism of Israel, but wants today for the representatives of 5 million people, who are our Palestinian people, to vanish from the United Nations, our people who have contributed and still contribute to the enrichment of human civilization and to the support of its peaceful march. The United States forgets that it is a responsible State and that it is committed to the Charter of the United Nations which calls for supporting the peoples of the world in attaining their right to self-determination and maintaining their independence and

territorial integrity and to live in freedom and peace. It ignores also the right of the United Nations Members, including the representatives of the PLO, the observer-member, to be in the area assigned to them, in the area in which the United Nations is found. The United States, once more, is attempting to present the representatives of the Palestinian people as a sacrifice for its decisions and terrorist and aggressive policies which are biased in favour of Israel, which is occupying the land of the Palestinian people.

As a freedom fighter for peace and freedom, I appeal to every Member of the United Nations to come to the defence of this international Organization in order to put an end to this scheme which attempts to harm the prestige of the United Nations and to bring back the age of colonialism. This would represent a dangerous precedent threatening other Members and peoples with blackmail and is even an omen of great danger perpetrated by the forces of hegemony, exploitation, racial discrimination and zionism, threatening our international society and its conventions.

In spite of all this, the people of Palestine will continue in its steadfastness, struggling by all methods and means not only to regain its legitimate national rights but also for all oppressed peoples. Our people will confront courageously all attempts at international terrorism practised by the United States and Israel. The will of our people will not be affected. On the contrary, it will gain strength and force to liberate itself from occupation, imprisonment and detention which are being imposed on it. Our people will be faithful to the principles and ideals for which it started its struggle side by side with all honourable freedom lovers the world over, stretching out its hands and supporting the oppressed peoples of the world. It will continue to support the heroic people of South Africa who are fighting against the Pretoria régime for its freedom and for the liquidation of racism and racial discrimination. Our people will continue to support the steadfast people of Namibia in order to get its independence under the leadership of the South West African People's Organization, its sole authentic representative. Our people will continue to support the peoples of the African front-line States who are defending their independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity in the face of the continuous acts of aggression perpetrated by the racist Pretoria régime, the twin of the Zionist Tel-Aviv régime. We will continue also our support for and our solidarity with the peoples of southern and Central America whether in Nicaragua or in El Salvador or in other places, who are fighting for their freedom and for maintaining their sovereignty, security and national independence.

Our world today lives on a dangerous nuclear volcano as a result of nuclear armament which is increasing, escalating and threatening humanity with annihilation because of any error or intentional craziness. Despite the peaceful calls made by the Soviet Union for détente, the cessation of nuclear tests, the destruction of nuclear armament and long- and medium-range nuclear missiles, the United States continues in its policy of nuclear armament in addition to its insistence on the Star Wars project, disdainful of the destiny of humanity and its future. In the name of the Palestinian people, we welcome any agreement between the two super-Powers to limit this nuclear danger and the proliferation of all kinds of nuclear armaments.

At the same time in which our world is facing this nuclear danger, the peoples of the Third World in particular are facing other imminent dangers, namely the aggravating economic problems manipulated and increased by the conditions of debts and the international banks including those of the World Bank and the interests on these debts. These unjust financial, economic and monopolizing policies have

greatly burdened our peoples of the Third World and developing countries in an manner unprecedented in ancient or contemporary history. This is not only true, but in addition, the United States policy of monopoly is practicing its madness and gambling with the economic and financial systems existing in the world and through that it is gambling with the riches of the developing and poor peoples who are the majority in this world. This requires, forthwith, a new economic order far away from monopoly and the mentality of colonialists and far away from sucking the riches, nay, the blood of the peoples.

The Iraqi-Iranian war which has lasted for so long and is in its eighth year should and must stop. There is no way but to carry out Security Council resolution 598 (1987) with all its items and in their sequence. I appeal to the Iranian leadership to accept it especially that Iraq has done so and has accepted as well all the Islamic and non-aligned peaceful initiatives in order to save lives and in the best interests of the Iranian and Iraqi peoples of the Third World. The only beneficiaries from the continuation of this war, which has started threatening the whole area are the imperialist forces and Israel. The events of the United States-Israeli arms shipment ("Irangate") prove this United States-Israeli collusion for the perpetuation of this destructive war. The United States makes aggressive wars and creates their causes. It participates in them covertly and sometimes overtly. Then it claims that it works for peace and for human rights, while practising terrorism and supporting the two racist régimes of South Africa and Israel.

In the name of the people of Palestine, I thank you for all the sincere endeavours you made in support of the just struggle of our people. I thank your Committee for the achievements it made in support of the realization of the constant and inalienable national rights of our militant Palestinian people. I thank the United Nations and its Secretary-General for their good efforts to establish the foundations for peace in the Middle East.

Every day that passes without making tangible progress to realize these rights means more pain and suffering for our people who have experienced the plights of their destitution and disregard for their rights for decades. It also means aggravating the situation of tension and war in our region, the consequences and direct threats of which will not be far from the rest of the world.

Your commemoration of this Day in solidarity with the rights of our people is in itself an endeavour for international peace. There will be no just peace without our people getting their rights and regaining their freedom and national independence.

Let us strengthen our united struggle in the interest of the rights of the oppressed peoples. Let us strengthen our struggle to help our Arab Palestinian people to live like the other peoples, free and master in the independent free Palestinian land.

B. Messages from Heads of State or Government

AFGHANISTAN

H.E. Dr. Najibullah, General Secretary of the Central Committee
of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan and President of
the Revolutionary Council of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan

[Original: English]

I would like, on behalf of the people and the Government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, to express my best felicitations and profound greetings on the occasion of the Day of Solidarity with the heroic people of Palestine proclaimed by the United Nations, and to reaffirm the full support of the people of Afghanistan for the just struggle of the Palestinian people for its inalienable rights.

The peace-loving people of Afghanistan continue as always to support the just cause of the heroic people of Palestine and stand firm on the side of freedom lovers and fraternal people of Palestine. The continued and brutal actions by Israeli inhuman Zionists in collaboration with world imperialism, headed by United States imperialism, against Arab peoples, in particular the Arab people of Palestine is the cause for the deep aversion of all progressive mankind including the heroic people of Afghanistan, who resolutely condemn them.

The Government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan appreciates the United Nations endeavours towards maintaining justice and finding a durable solution for the Middle East issue on the basis of immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Israeli aggressive forces and the restoration of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to its real and vanquished representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) including the establishment of an independent national State of Palestine.

While expressing once again its all-round support for the Palestinian brothers, the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan is confident that their cause will triumph and is convinced that they will achieve their goals. We wish prosperity and well-being for the Palestinian Arabs.

ALGERIA

H.E. Mr. Chadli Bendjedid, President of the Republic of Algeria
and Secretary-General of the National Liberation Front

[Original: French]

The celebration of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, which coincides this year with the fortieth anniversary of the deprivation of the national rights of the Palestinian people, is taking place at a time that is marked by a concern for the worsening situation in the occupied territories and by an increase in tension in the region because of the policies of aggression and threat of the Zionist régime against Lebanon and other countries of the region.

In its occupied homeland the Palestinian people is facing implacable repression by the Zionist occupying forces, which deny it the exercise of its fundamental rights and to redouble the violence and brutality. To institutional violence is added ceaseless attacks and measures of harassment and persecution which come from groups of terrorists acting with impunity and often at the instigation of the Zionists.

This twofold violence, which has increased in the past few weeks after incidents in the Gaza Strip and Al-Quds al-Sharif, accompanied by the continuation of immigration policies or reinforcing settlement colonies, the object of which is to achieve the annexation of the occupied territories, began with the annexation of the Golan and Al-Quds and which was declared by the international community to be null and void.

The convening of an International Peace Conference on the Middle East, which has almost universal support, and was endorsed in principle at the recent summit meeting of Arab States, is a most appropriate context for a comprehensive, definitive settlement of the crisis in the Middle East, of which the Palestinian problem is the core.

The United Nations, whose responsibility remains that of restoring the national, inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, must therefore do everything possible to bring about the convening of that Conference, in which the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, must participate on an equal footing.

Finally, on behalf of the Government and the people of Algeria I wish to reaffirm my country's unswerving solidarity with the Palestinian people and express our admiration for the heroic resistance of the Palestinian people in order to recover its national inalienable rights and the triumph of its revolution.

BAHRAIN

His Highness Sheikh Isa Bin Salman Al Khalifa,
Emir of the State of Bahrain

[Original: Arabic]

The Palestinian issue has been occupying the interest of the world for many years. The United Nations has not seen an issue which has captured the attention of the world more than that of the Palestinian people. Since the beginning of the plight of this people in 1948, this issue has been on the agenda of the General Assembly of the United Nations year after year without achieving any tangible progress in finding a just solution that would ensure the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people.

The United Nations has adopted various resolutions supporting the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including its right to self-determination and choice of national leadership. While recognition by the countries of the world of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) as the sole, legitimate representative

of the Palestinian people and of the national rights of its people - approved by all international norms and, in particular, the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights - is increasing, Israel is heightening its arrogance and increasing its acts of aggression against the Palestinian people in occupied Arab territories.

The position of Bahrain regarding this just, humane issue has been expressed in all international forums. Here we again reaffirm our complete solidarity with the Arab Palestinian people and its legitimate struggle and endeavours to preserve its national identity and ensure its rights.

Bahrain has consistently supported the efforts made to find a peaceful, just and comprehensive solution to this problem in order to redress the situation. On this basis, we support the convening of the International Peace Conference, which enjoys the support of all countries calling for a peaceful settlement of this issue, which will be realized only through full recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian Arab people, including its right to establish an independent State on its national soil under the leadership of the PLO, its sole legitimate representative.

The United Nations, now commemorating this Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, bears a special responsibility vis-à-vis that struggling people. It is therefore called upon to implement its numerous relevant resolutions designed to put an end to the inhumane Israeli practices against the Palestinian people and aggressive Israeli expansionist policies based on the usurpation of land and deportation of the indigenous population through terrorism and suppression - resolutions supporting the inalienable rights of the Palestinians who for more than 20 years have remained under the yoke of occupation.

I take this opportunity to express, on my own behalf and on behalf of the people of Bahrain, deep appreciation for the sincere efforts of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People to render assistance to that people in its struggle to achieve its rights, to restore its land and to live in peace, security and stability.

BANGLADESH

H.E. Mr. Hussain Mohammad Ershad,
President of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

[Original: English]

The annual observance of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People is not only a reflection of our deep concern for the Palestinian people but also a striking reminder that the question of its legitimate rights lies at the core of the complex situation in the Middle East. The Government and the people of Bangladesh once again join the world community this year to observe the Day and reaffirm our total support to the dauntless Palestinian people in its glorious struggle for justice and self-determination.

The situation in Palestine is one of the greatest tragedies of the contemporary world and still remains the crux of the problem in the Middle East. The people of Palestine continue to shed its blood for the liberation of its land while Israel arrogantly defies the will of the international community. This presents a challenge to the conscience of humanity. The situation in the Middle East vitally affects the stability in that troubled area of the world and, moreover, carries a potential threat to international peace and security. In spite of all efforts made by the United Nations for the last four decades, little progress has been made towards a comprehensive solution that alone can ultimately ensure peace and justice in the Middle East. It is also overwhelmingly recognized that a comprehensive settlement covering all aspects of the Middle East problem cannot be conceived without regard to the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people.

To achieve a comprehensive settlement of the Middle East problem, Bangladesh fully endorses the efforts of the Secretary-General of the United Nations to convene an International Conference on the Middle East with the participation of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), on an equal footing with all other parties. Bangladesh also would like to reiterate its whole-hearted support to the call for an immediate withdrawal by Israel from all occupied Arab and Palestine territories including Al-Quds Al-Sharif and the restoration of the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people including the right to establish its own independent State in Palestine under the leadership of the PLO, its sole and legitimate representative.

In commemorating the day of solidarity with the Palestinian people, the people of Bangladesh would like to rededicate themselves to the just cause of the Palestinian people once again.

BULGARIA

H.E. Mr. Todor Jivkov, General Secretary of the Central Committee
of the Bulgarian Communist Party and President of the Council of
State of the People's Republic of Bulgaria

[Original: French]

I extend warmest congratulations to you on the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Arab people of Palestine. The Bulgarian people deeply appreciate the heroic and selfless struggle being waged by the Palestinians, under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), for the exercise of its inalienable national rights to self-determination and to the establishment of its own State on its soil. This just struggle has been broadly recognized internationally and enjoys the support of all progressive and democratic forces in the world.

In expressing our active solidarity with the struggle of the Palestinian people we are persuaded that the Palestinian resistance movement will close ranks on an anti-imperialist and patriotic basis and consolidate its alliance with progressive Arab forces.

I should like to assure you that the People's Republic of Bulgaria will, on the basis of its position of principle, in the future also give various forms of support to the Arab people of Palestine and to other Arab peoples in their struggle to establish a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

BURKINA FASO

H.E. Captain Blaise Compaore, President of the
Popular Front, Chief of State of Burkina Faso

[Original: French]

On 29 November 1947 the General Assembly of the United Nations decided that peace between Jews and Arabs in Palestine was to be built on two distinct sovereignties, two independent States - one Jewish, one Arab - in order to resolve the problem of the two nationalisms which were disputing the region.

Forty years later, the Arab people of Palestine are still waiting for the world to do justice to its cause. It is in this hope that we again have given the opportunity today to demonstrate our solidarity with the Palestinian people in its quest for its inalienable right to self-determination and independence on its own land in Palestine.

As President of the Popular Front of Burkina Faso, I should like to associate the people of Burkina Faso with the commemoration of this struggle and to assure the Palestinian people, through its sole legitimate representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), of our unfailing militant support.

The people of Burkina Faso, in appropriate solidarity with the struggle of all peoples fighting to regain their inalienable rights, are increasingly flooded each day with information about the realities of combat going on in this region of the world and are learning to recognize the inhuman conditions being imposed on the Palestinian people by imperialism and its regional arm, zionism.

The echoes of harassment, imprisonment, massacres and other killings to which they are subject come to us every day and outrage us.

Given this suffering, pain and depersonalization of the Palestinian people, the international community must redouble its efforts to find a just and lasting solution to the problem. In this framework, Burkina Faso will support any initiative along these lines. It will particularly support the idea of an International Conference enjoying the participation of all concerned parties, and certainly including the PLO.

The United Nations has a primary role to play in this regard, given the totality of experiences which the United Nations has accumulated in this region of the world. We exhort the United Nations to work assiduously in order to be able finally to correct the injustice committed against the Palestinian people.

CHINA

H.E. Mr. Li Peng, Acting Premier of the
State Council of the People's Republic of China

[Original: Chinese]

The Palestinian people have for the past four decades carried on arduous struggles to restore its legitimate national rights. In recent years, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the Arab countries and the international community have made great efforts for the peaceful settlement of the Middle East issue. However, the Israeli authorities have, in defiance of the just call of the international community and a series of United Nations resolutions, clung to their policy of aggression and expansion, refused to recognize the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people and obstructed the convening of an International Conference on the Middle East, hence the absence of a settlement of the Palestinian issue to this day. All this has brought not only continued agony to millions of Palestinian people but also a prolonged bitter experience of turbulence to the people in the Middle East region and has posed a serious threat to world peace.

On the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, I wish to express once again, on behalf of the Chinese Government and people, our profound sympathy and strong support to the Palestinian people and to take this opportunity to reiterate that the Chinese Government and people resolutely oppose the Israeli policy of aggression and expansion. Israel must withdraw from all the Arab territories it has occupied since 1967, the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people should be restored and all countries in the Middle East region have the right to independence and existence.

We believe that peaceful negotiations offer the best solution to the Middle East issue. We are in favour of the convening of an International Conference on the Middle East under United Nations auspices to seek a just settlement of the Palestinian issue. The PLO, as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, has the right to participate in the Conference on an equal footing.

We call on the international community to make continuous efforts toward an early and fair settlement of the Palestinian issue and, in particular, to urge the Israeli authorities to change their erroneous position by exerting great pressure on them. I am confident that under the PLO leadership and with the support of all the justice-upholding countries and peoples the world over, the Palestinian people will reach the lofty goal of restoring its national rights by strengthening its unity with other Arab countries and persevering in its struggle.

CUBA

H.E. Mr. Fidel Castro Ruz, President of the
Council of State and Government of the Republic of Cuba

[Original: Spanish]

On the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, it is an honour for me to address to you this message and express the support and militant solidarity of the people and the Government of Cuba to the Palestinian people in its heroic and just struggle for the restoration of its inalienable rights under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), its sole legitimate representative.

This commemoration is of special significance this year because it coincides with the fortieth anniversary of the adoption of General Assembly resolution 181 (II) of 29 November 1947 on the partition of Palestine. During these past four decades the international community, in particular the United Nations, has made energetic efforts in search of a solution to the serious Middle East crisis, at the core of which lies the question of Palestine.

Today more than ever requires the efforts and common action of all States truly interested in putting an end to this deplorable situation in which an occupying Power, Israel, is keeping dispersed throughout the world part of the Palestinian people, while subjugating those still living in the occupied Arab territories.

The aggressive and interfering policy which the United States is exercising in the Middle East region through Israel, its unconditional ally, impedes any action aimed at the eradication of the hotbed of tension existing there. Contrary to the desire for peace, agreements on strategic co-operation signed between both are stimulating the Zionist expansionist, repressive and genocidal policy which the Israeli Government is conducting against the Arab people in general and against Palestinians in particular.

Because the crisis of the Middle East poses a threat to world peace, it requires priority attention. The international community must focus all its efforts towards achieving a just and comprehensive solution of this crisis, whose prerequisite must be Israel's total and unconditional withdrawal from all Palestinian and Arab territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem, and the Palestinian people's recovery of all its national inalienable rights, including the return to its homeland, self-determination, free of external interference and the establishment of an independent and sovereign State in Palestine.

Cuba believes that the proper place to seek such a solution is provided by the holding of an International Peace Conference on the Middle East, under the auspices of the United Nations and with the participation, in conditions of equality, of all parties involved in the Arab-Israeli conflict including the PLO. We reiterate once again our support for the prompt convening of that Conference.

In the arduous commitment to eradicate the stigma which the humiliation suffered by the Palestinian people under Israeli occupation represents for mankind, the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People is playing an important and positive role.

I take this opportunity to express our gratitude to you for your active participation in the efforts made by this Committee to try to achieve the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

Today, once again, the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People has come to pass at a time when the rights of the struggling people of Palestine have been violated by the Zionist Government and, regrettably, following several years later, a heroic and valiant people are still homeless in refugee camps.

The half-hearted and inefficient international efforts do not represent a record of positive experience in the realization of the rights of the original proprietors of the Holy Land and the realization of the independence of the victimized people of Palestine. Consequently, the efforts so far undertaken are null and void and the irresponsible and reconciliatory steps taken by individuals and groups claiming to have been appointed to represent the heroic and valiant people of Palestine are condemned. Therefore, the Islamic Republic of Iran sees the most successful means of recovering the lost rights of the Palestinian people in a decisive struggle by the capable children of Palestine.

The history of Palestine has been witness to extensive heroism and struggle and there is still hope that Palestinian men and women will realize the wishes of their fathers by bullet and fire, blood and struggle. We hold dear the memory of the martyrs in the path of achieving the freedom and dignity of Palestine.

We pray to Almighty for the well-being, prosperity and good fortune of the people of Palestine.

IRAQ

H.E. Mr. Saddam Hussein, President of the Republic of Iraq

[Original: Arabic]

On the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, it is my pleasure to express once more on my behalf and on behalf of the people and the Government of Iraq our appreciation of the sincere efforts made by your Committee on the question of Palestine and for the reaffirmation of the established, inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, which is another important aspect of mankind's struggle for international peace and justice.

Your meeting provides an opportunity to underscore the fact that the Palestinian people are uppermost in our soul and conscience, and in the souls and consciences of all peace-loving and justice-loving peoples in the world, at a time when the Zionist entity displays utter disdain for international laws and values, as that entity continues openly its practices of subjecting the Palestinian people to the most abhorrent forms of oppression and torture, depriving it of its economic, cultural and political rights. That entity continues the establishment of settlements in usurped Arab territories, its occupation of southern Lebanon and its acts of aggression against other Arab countries.

International organizations expressing the aspirations of the international community to achieve justice and security in the world are called upon today more than ever before to intensify their efforts to express their outrage over the aggressive conduct of the Zionist entity and to condemn it in order to force it to

Organization (PLO), its sole and legitimate representative, have never wavered in its quest for independence, justice and human dignity. Through faith and perseverance it has continued its steadfast resistance, earning for it the unbounding admiration and support of the international community.

As a nation proud of its own legacy of struggle against colonial subjugation and for national independence, we in Indonesia have always considered the Palestinians' sacred cause as our own cause and their determined struggle as part of the irreversible global movement against colonial rule and alien domination.

Neither the passage of time nor Israeli intransigence diminishes the fact that the Middle East conflict can be resolved only on the basis of the exercise by the Palestinian people of its right to an independent State of its own and Israel's unconditional withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories, including Jerusalem. At the same time it is also self-evident that interminable delay is fraught with dangerous consequences for the region and beyond.

Today, the only universally recognized framework within which all the dimensions of the Arab-Israeli conflict and its core aspect of Palestinian self-determination can be addressed is the proposed International Peace Conference on the Middle East, where all the parties concerned could participate on an equal footing, including the PLO.

The cause of the Palestinian people is a cause for justice and peace. Indonesia is confident, therefore, that the Palestinian struggle for national liberation will emerge triumphant.

In conclusion, I should like to pay tribute to the Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, for his tireless efforts on behalf of a just settlement to the conflict in the Middle East. Likewise, Indonesia is deeply appreciative of the dedicated and effective manner in which the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People has discharged its noble and humane mission.

May God Almighty bestow His blessings and wise guidance on all of us.

IRAN, ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF

H.E. Hojjat-ul-Islam Walmuslimenn Seyed Ali Khamenei,
President of the Islamic Republic of Iran

[Original: English]

The significant day of 30 November, the anniversary of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, has come to pass. We avail ourselves of this opportunity to offer the victimized people of Palestine, on behalf of the revolutionary and Muslim people of Islamic Republic of Iran, our wishes for their success and prosperity and emphasize the deep and friendly bonds between the peoples of Iran and Palestine rooted in their shared revolutionary and Islamic heritage.

I take this opportunity to emphasize that delays in seeking a comprehensive and just solution to this problem will only escalate tension and turmoil in the Middle East. A just and lasting solution must include the exercise of the right of self-determination by the Palestinian people and the setting up of an independent State in Palestine. Israel must withdraw from all Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied by it since 1967, including Jerusalem.

We continue to believe that the International Peace Conference on the Middle East remains the most feasible framework for a solution of the Middle East problem. The Secretary-General has made special efforts to promote the convening of the Conference. We have noted the cautious optimism in his report on the unfolding developments in the past year. He has stated the growing international consensus in favour of the early convening of a conference. We support his efforts.

I take this opportunity to acknowledge the important role played by the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People in its efforts in finding a just solution to the question of Palestine. I pledge India's full support, as a Member of this important Committee, to spare no effort in working alongside other members in the pursuit of our common objective.

History has shown that a just cause will triumph no matter how long and arduous the struggle may be. We are confident that the Palestinian cause will achieve complete success. Towards this, we pledge our unflinching support."

INDONESIA

H.E. Mr. Soeharto, President of the Republic of Indonesia

[Original: English]

The annual commemoration of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People is a solemn occasion for the Government and people of Indonesia to join the international community in renewing their pledge of unstinting support to the struggle of the Palestinian people for the restoration of its inalienable national rights.

The tenth observance of this Day takes on a particular poignancy as it coincides with certain historical benchmarks which highlight the question of Palestine as one of the most protracted yet at the same time most acute problems of our time. It is now 40 years since the adoption of the General Assembly resolution calling for the partition of Palestine, 20 years since the occupation by Israel of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, the Golan Heights and East Jerusalem and 5 years since the massacres at Sabra and Shatila.

For Indonesia, these milestones in the saga of a brave people's struggle for liberation bring into sharp relief the appalling dimensions of oppression and tyranny, dispossession and exile, suffering and death to which the Palestinian people have for so long been subjected.

Yet, despite the magnitude and duration of its hardships and deprivation, the courageous Palestinian people, under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation

INDIA

H.E. Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, Prime Minister of India, delivered by
H.E. Mr. Eduardo Faleiro, Minister of State of the Government of India

[Original: English]

At the outset, I should like to thank the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People for the invitation extended to me to participate in the special meeting held to commemorate the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.

I have the honour to read out a special message sent by Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi for the present occasion:

"Despite its long and valiant struggle the Palestinian people remain deprived of its legitimate and inalienable right to self-determination and to a State of its own. There cannot be durable peace in the Middle East as long as the just aspirations of the Palestinian people are not realized.

"On the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian people, I reiterate the firm and continued support of the Government and people of India for the cause of the Palestinian people and its sole legitimate representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO)."

The struggle of the people of Palestine has always been considered by the Indian people as being a part of the wider movement against colonial rule and oppression. Ever since the beginning of our freedom movement, support to the Palestinian cause has been a consistent part of India's foreign policy. It is indeed a tragedy that in spite of its arduous and long struggle, the brave Palestinian people remain without a homeland of its own.

There is almost universal recognition that the question of Palestine is the core of the Middle East problem. So long as the just aspirations of the Palestinian people to self-determination are not achieved, the Middle East region will not have lasting peace. The people of Palestine have demonstrated, by its heroism and bravery, that it will never give up its just struggle, however heavy the odds against it and however great the sacrifices it may be called upon to make. It is the duty of us all to support this indomitable people in their efforts to bring the unfinished revolution to conclusion and victory. We are confident that the Palestinian people, led by the PLO, will triumph and take its rightful place in the comity of nations.

I take this opportunity to convey my fraternal greetings to my distinguished colleague and friend, H.E. Mr. Farouk Khadoumi, Head of the Political Affairs Department of the PLO and through him, our greetings to H.E. Chairman Yasser Arafat.

The observance of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People is not merely an annual ritual. This day symbolizes our determination to stand shoulder to shoulder with our Palestinian brethren. It symbolizes our faith in the Palestinian people in the occupied territories who, against all kinds of repression, have kept the torch of freedom burning. This day marks our conviction that its efforts and those of Palestinians around the world will not be in vain.

GHANA

H.E. Flt.-Lt. Jerry John Rawlings,
Chairman of the Provisional National Defence Council of Ghana

[Original: English]

On this occasion when the United Nations observes the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, the Government and people of Ghana join me in reaffirming our support for the heroic struggle of the Palestinian people for a homeland; we consider its case a just one.

We also welcome the efforts of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People to make a positive contribution towards the realization of the aspirations of the Palestinian people, which is its inalienable rights through the achievement of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East, in accordance with the United Nations resolutions relating to the question of Palestine.

In this connection we reject all agreements and arrangements which violate the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and contradict the principles of a just and comprehensive solution to the Middle East problem which would ensure the establishment of a just peace in the area.

The Palestinian people have suffered long enough since its displacement from the land of its birth and the international community must in the name of humanity and justice, and without further delay, lend weight to its just struggle by co-operating fully with the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People in the performance of its tasks, and thus help bring nearer their day of victory.

GUINEA

H.E. Brigadier-General Lansana Conte,
President of the Republic of Guinea

[Original: French]

The observance of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People gives us a welcome opportunity to send to you, on behalf of the Guinean people and Government and on my own behalf, our most sincere and hearty congratulations. We are following with great attention the continuing efforts of the United Nations, through the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, to enable the suffering people of Palestine to exercise its legitimate right to self-determination. We urge you to persevere in these laudable efforts until the Palestinians are able to acquire complete sovereignty. We reaffirm the unqualified support of the Republic of Guinea for the Palestinian cause under the leadership of its sole representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).

Egypt attaches special importance to the achievement of a common Arab position in support of Palestinian rights, so that the march towards the achievement of a comprehensive, just peace that would ensure the security, tranquility and coexistence of all parties may continue.

In conclusion, we must express our thanks and appreciation to the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People for the important part it has played and the remarkable contribution it has made, under the leadership of its Chairman, in the search for peace in the Middle East. We again express our belief that peace in our region is inextricably linked to the peace, stability and security of the whole world.

GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

H.E. Mr. Erich Honecker, General Secretary of the Central Committee
of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany and Chairman of the
Council of State of the German Democratic Republic

[Original: English]

The German Democratic Republic takes the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People to reaffirm its support for the just struggle of the Palestinian people and its sole legitimate representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).

It is a matter of deep concern that the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including its right to the establishment of its own State, have not yet been implemented and that the Middle East remains in a state of explosive tension. Common sense dictates that international conflicts and contentious issues be settled peacefully, by way of dialogue on the basis of equal rights and strict respect for the Charter of the United Nations.

A comprehensive, just and lasting solution to the conflict is needed to ensure peace and guarantee the Palestinian people's right to self-determination as well as the security of all States in the region. Such a solution can, in the view of the German Democratic Republic, be attained through the convening of an International Peace Conference on the Middle East under the auspices of the United Nations and with the participation of all interested sides, including the PLO.

Any problems still existing on the road to a conference should be overcome as soon as possible with goodwill and in a spirit of realism. Your efforts to this effect, Mr. Secretary-General, are much appreciated by the German Democratic Republic.

EGYPT

H.E. Muhammad Hosni Mubarak, President of the Arab Republic of Egypt

[Original: Arabic]

Yet another year has elapsed adding to the suffering of the brotherly Palestinian people, whose question is one of the most serious questions incised on the agenda of the United Nations. This anniversary means the addition of a new year to the life of the Palestinian question. Yet the situation seems to be, and is indeed, different this time. Last year witnessed a unanimous international will and consensus to make use of the available opportunities so as to implement the idea of convening the International Peace Conference on the Middle East. It is high time that all the peoples of the Middle East region, including the Palestinian people, enjoyed peace based upon justice.

It is high time that they all exercised their legitimate right to progress and development, in order to catch up with the march of this century and to enter the twenty-first century armed with progress and prosperity and thereby be able to make their contribution to the welfare and progress of mankind in all corners of the globe.

We are all called upon to be the reflection of the conscience of the international community. We should draw upon its wisdom and courage as we shoulder our responsibilities in connection with the restoration of the rights of the Palestinian people and the translation of those rights into concrete fact.

Many developments have taken place and many positions have emerged that must be considered in regard to this question. These have been positive developments and positions. No one can deny that they reflect a great deal of maturity and an increased awareness of the seriousness of the situation, of the need to change the status quo without delay and terminate the occupation, which each day generates more violence and hatred.

Despite the responsibilities and obligations imposed upon Egypt by the sheer volume of its external political activities, Egyptian diplomacy has concentrated the utmost efforts on support for the Palestinian question, as a matter of principle. This is one of the cornerstones of Egyptian political efforts, since the Palestinian question is the core and the crux of the conflict in the Middle East. Egypt has had constant, and indeed intensified, contacts with the various sides and influential international Powers concerned. Egypt has also supported the efforts of the United Nations, including those of the Secretary-General. It has sincerely co-operated with the Secretary-General with a view to ensuring the convening of an International Peace Conference on the Middle East. In this respect, Egypt has spared no effort to find moderate, practical and acceptable formulas.

In its quest for a just solution to the Palestinian question, Egypt bases itself on its firm commitment to peace. It is aware that peace is an indivisible whole and that justice is the pre-condition for peace. Egypt continues to make every effort to overcome the existing obstacles and to establish an atmosphere favourable to the convening of the International Peace Conference. It is doing everything possible to achieve agreement among the parties concerned on the most appropriate formulas for participation in the Conference.

this unprecedented injustice, the Palestinian people as a whole has risen up in armed revolt in defence of its basic human right to a safe life in its homeland, the right of return, and the right of self-determination and the establishment of its own State, under the leadership of its sole legitimate representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).

Today's commemoration of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People this year comes at a time when the struggle and direct confrontation between the Palestinian people and its leadership and the Zionist racist régime of Tel Aviv and its strategic ally, the United States, are becoming markedly intense. The United States and the Zionists are trying to deprive the Palestinian people of the results of its struggle, which they have achieved at great cost, in blood and tears. A top priority in that drive is to deprive the Palestinian people of its international standing and, more specifically, to deprive the PLO of its observer status through the efforts of certain extremists in the United States Congress who have been clamouring for the closing of the PLO Mission to the United Nations. They were encouraged in this by the success they scored at great cost to the credibility of the United States Constitution when they closed down the PLO information office in Washington. This arbitrary treatment and the subsequent call to end the activities of the PLO United Nations Mission have been met by condemnation and by solidarity with the Palestinian people on the part of all justice-loving peoples, everywhere.

We especially commend the brave efforts of the Secretary-General and the United Nations on behalf of the Palestinian people. This latest attack on the status and reputation of the PLO has been launched by branding as terrorist its legitimate struggle. The intention is to try and liquidate the organization in consonance with the "iron-fist" policy pursued by the Zionist régime in the occupied territories.

That "iron-fist" of the Zionist racist régime in the occupied territories has caused untold suffering and immersed the territory in terror, repression and human rights violations.

That defence of the just and legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, in solidarity with this people's struggle is a sacred mission for all peace- and progress-loving forces in the world.

My country feels that those efforts should be aimed first and foremost at convening an International Conference on Peace in the Middle East at the heart of which is the cause of the Palestinian people. The Conference should have the necessary authority to deal with the **distortion**: it should be under United Nations auspices and have the full participation of permanent members of the Security Council, the PLO and all other parties to the conflict. In this regard, we highly commend the significant efforts of the Soviet Union, the great friend and champion of peace, friendship and human rights for all peoples of the world, without exception.

Our country would like to reaffirm, too, the need for international efforts to mobilize international public opinion, make it aware of the situation and move it to express its solidarity and support for the cause of the Palestinian people, both in its own land and in the diaspora.

We condemn Israel's "iron-fist" policy in the occupied Arab territories and the violation of the sacred sites. We demand that Israel cease these policies, ensure respect for human rights, free the Palestinian militants and put an end to its siege of the Palestinian camps in Lebanon as well.

DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA

Comrade Kim Il Sung, President of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea

[Original: English]

On the Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People I extend militant greetings to you, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the resistance fighters and the Palestinian people on behalf of the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Korean people and myself.

The Palestinian people and the resistance fighters, under the leadership of the PLO, have waged a vigorous struggle to regain the usurped homeland and restore their legitimate national rights, including the right to the establishment of an independent State.

The Korean people stand firm by the Palestinian people who are bravely fighting against the aggression and repressive moves of the imperialists and Zionists and will actively support and encourage it in its just struggle in the future, too.

Convinced that the cause of the Palestinian people, who enjoy the broad support of the world's progressive people, will surely emerge victorious, I sincerely wish you and the Palestinian people greater success in the struggle for the final victory of the Palestinian revolution.

The friendship and solidarity between the Korean and Palestinian peoples will further strengthen daily.

DEMOCRATIC YEMEN

H.E. Mr. Haider Abubakar Al-Attas, Chairman of the Presidium of the People's Supreme Council of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen

[Original: Arabic]

It is a pleasure for me, on behalf of the Supreme Council of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen and on my own behalf, warmly and sincerely to congratulate and thank the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People for its praiseworthy efforts to ensure solidarity with all oppressed peoples, and particularly the Palestinian people. We wish the Committee full success on this International Day of Solidarity and express the hope that it will achieve its noble objectives.

There can be no doubt that the cause of Palestine has become a cause of conscience for the whole world. For over 39 years now, the Palestinian people has been harassed, oppressed and displaced in a vicious attempt to blot out its national identity and uproot it physically from its homeland and its very history. That is the goal of the Zionist régime, with the absolute support of United States imperialism. That régime's strategic alliance with the United States has brought untold misery and suffering not only to the Palestinian people but also to all the neighbouring Arab countries and peoples in the Middle East region. In the face of

CYPRUS

H.E. Mr. Spyros Kyprianou, President of the Republic of Cyprus

[Original: English]

On the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, I wish to reiterate, on behalf of the Government and the people of Cyprus, our unswerving support to the just struggle of the Palestinian people for the restoration of its inalienable rights including the establishment of its own independent and sovereign State.

The struggle of the Palestinian people, under the leadership of its sole and legitimate representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), is a struggle for freedom, justice and human dignity. A just, viable and lasting solution to the long-standing Palestinian question can only be achieved through the effective implementation of the relevant resolutions of the United Nations. We strongly believe that such a solution not only will put an end to the long sufferings of the Palestinian people, but, undoubtedly, will serve the cause of peace and security in the sensitive and volatile Middle East region.

I would like, on this occasion, to reaffirm our commitment for a just solution to the Palestinian question and renew our solidarity with the Palestinian people in its quest for freedom, self-determination and independence.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

H.E. Mr. Gustáv Husák, General Secretary of the Central
Committee of the Community Party of Czechoslovakia and
President of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic

[Original: English]

I would like to send you, the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), as well as all the people of Palestine, our sincere expression of affection and solidarity on the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.

The nations of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic support the firm struggle led for tens of years by the people of Palestine against the Israeli oppression for its inalienable national and human rights.

The power of your people lies in the united character of the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. That is why we have welcomed the results of the eighteenth conference of the Palestine National Council in which the unity of your ranks has been re-established and the line of further crucial struggle aimed at the implementation of your just goals has been marked out. We consider it to be the essential pre-condition for successfully advancing the comprehensive settlement of the crisis in the Middle East and its core Palestinian question through the convening of an International Conference, attended by all parties involved, including the PLO.

I would like assure you that the people of Socialist Czechoslovakia will keep providing full support to your just struggle until the final victory.

abandon that path. It is clear that the United Nations as the principal international organization, is called upon to live up to its responsibility to achieve those aspirations. Needless to say, the foundations of justice, security and peace in the world will not be strengthened so long as the tragedy of the Palestinian people is not alleviated through a lasting, comprehensive and just solution.

The question of Palestine is the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict and is at the heart of the problems of our region, which is of special international importance. The struggle of the Palestinian people, under the leadership of its sole legitimate representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), as recognized by all sincere and honest people, is a natural and legitimate struggle for its right to exist, to live in security and peace, to exercise self-determination and to choose its own path on its national soil. We are confident that the struggle of the Palestinian people to achieve its just and legitimate goals will be successful in the end, despite the proliferation by the Zionist entity of all forms of torture and killing, and despite the assistance it receives. Without speedy international measures to put an end to that Zionist entity in a serious and effective way and without an acceptable and just solution to the Palestinian problem, the tragedy of Palestine will continue and the problems of the Middle East will become more complex, thus undermining peace and security in the region and exacerbating tensions in the world.

The struggle between the forces of good and evil in the world today comprises many aspects; it is clear that the Zionist entity is an ally of the racist régime of Pretoria, a régime which tramples underfoot the aspirations for liberation and independence of the peoples of southern Africa, and that it is co-operating with the expansionist racist Iranian régime in the military field. The Zionist entity is providing weapons to the Iranian régime, which has been waging an expansionist war against our country for seven years now.

That attests clearly to the expansionist goals of the two racist régimes, which covet the Arab territories and arrogantly continue to reject the decisions of the international community and the resolutions of the United Nations and thereby contribute to the increase of tensions and the threat of war in the world.

Note should be taken on this occasion of the unanimous statement by the Arab countries during their summit conference in the capital of Jordan, Amman, this month that the question of Palestine is a central issue for the Arab States and is the core of the Israeli-Arab conflict; and that the struggle for the attainment of Palestinian rights is a national Arab responsibility. At that conference, the participants renewed their commitment to provide material and moral assistance to the Palestinian people.

I am pleased to express once again our confidence in this Committee and its effective and serious efforts and activities to deal with the question of Palestine.

JORDAN

His Majesty King Hussein bin Talal of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

[Original: Arabic]

I should like at the outset to express to you and to the other members of the Committee our sincere thanks for the efforts you have made in defence of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and to put an end to that people's suffering on both the humanitarian and the political levels in the occupied territories of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The tragedy of that people has been created by continuing occupation and the lack of any just, honourable peace in the region.

This annual observance of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People is of special importance. We regard it as vivid evidence of the justice of the Palestinian cause and as an opportunity for us to renew our commitment to Arab rights in Palestine and to work seriously and tirelessly to preserve those rights while awaiting a just solution to the problem in accordance with international law, the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and United Nations resolutions, in particular Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). We firmly believe that peace between the Arabs and Israel necessarily involves a just solution to the Palestinian problem. That belief underlies the legitimacy of the Palestinian people's claims for its rights and embodies the common commitment of all civilized nations to justice, law and equality. Those values are the foundation of the international order to which we all aspire, one created out of fraternity, peace, co-operation and understanding among nations, including all the peoples of the world, under the banner of peace and ensuring justice within the framework of law, freedom, security, progress and development for all, in equality and co-operation.

While we agree that this observance is an opportunity to renew our commitment to Palestinian rights and to act in solidarity with the Palestinian people so cruelly tyrannized and robbed by the occupation forces, it is also an opportunity to reevaluate and readjust our thinking. We must review the past in order to learn from it, and we must think about and understand the present in order to correct it and in order to open the way to a better future.

While those are the aspirations of all who believe in the Palestinian cause, we Jordanians are, together with our Palestinian brothers, in the front line of this struggle. They were attacked first and they are continuing to endure oppression, persecution and exile owing to foreign military occupation. We are in the vanguard of those fighting against expansionism. We must accept the consequences of that position, which affects our security, as well as our economic, political, geographical and demographic point of view. We have suffered from the Palestinian tragedy from its very inception and have endured with our Arab brothers the repercussions of the premeditated acts of aggression against them from all sides, acts of aggression that have targeted the Arab nation as a whole.

Furthermore, Palestine is dear to all Arabs. Its holy places are sacred to millions of believers, and Palestine has always been alive in our minds. That is where the Prophet Mohammed - to whom my family is greatly honoured to trace its ancestry - ascended.

In the city of Jerusalem lie the remains of King Hussein Ibn Ali, who led the great Arab revolution for the liberation and unity of the Arab nation and the struggle for its emergent political independence. My grandfather, Abdallah Emir Hussein, founder of the Kingdom of Jordan, gave his life for that cause. For those reasons, it would be nugatory for me to reaffirm my personal commitment to the Arab character of Palestine and Jordan's solidarity with regard to our Palestinian brothers, with whom we are linked by history, a common origin and, in particular, a unity of destiny and goals that bind us all together.

In our opinion, there can be no question with regard to defence of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. It is incumbent upon us all because of history and because of our common objectives and interests. It is also a question of principle that the family of nations should stand firm against acts of aggression, from whatever quarter and whatever their origin. It is a question of the defence of the principles of justice, freedom and equality upon which the Charter of the United Nations is founded, for it is defence of the rights of the peoples of the world.

It is precisely that right of which the Palestinian people have been deprived. Our privileged relationship with Palestine and with its people, as well as our special status have compelled us to take a special approach with regard to the development of the Palestinian problem in peace and in war. Our approach is based on our concept of the precise nature of Israeli aggression. Facts have proved that that aggression is primarily aimed at the acquisition of land. Thus, certain assumptions according to which the conflict of Palestine is competition between two nations in the same land are in error and do not correctly reflect reality. Such assumptions cannot form the basis of a pragmatic, effective policy in the face of Israeli threats. We are convinced, and experience has proved us right, that the conflict is one between the legitimate owners of the land and the usurpers of the land.

It is for that reason that we maintain that it is a conflict over Palestine, not within Palestine itself. It is not two nations that are confronting each other, as some maintain, but rather a territorial and human conflict. For that reason, our policy with regard to the Palestinian problem has from the very outset been directed at regaining the land, at putting an end to the occupation and then at establishing, in a permanent manner, the Palestinians in their land, ensuring their presence in their homeland.

Although efforts to liberate land and person from occupation have not so far been successful, we will spare no effort to ensure that our people can continue to live there in order to prevent the annexation and Judaization of which we are all aware. Convinced of the justice of the cause, we have attempted to work together with other Arab States for reasons of principle and practicality, for we all - Jordanians and Palestinians - are part of the same nation, a nation that desires to put an end to aggression.

We also respect the international approach towards the maintenance of international peace and security and justice for all. We bear that approach in mind in arriving at and implementing our policies. We support a regional and international consensus with regard to the Palestinian problem, for that is in line with the interests of the Palestinian people, not because we view it as being in the interests of Jordan alone. Indeed, in my view it is impossible to make a distinction between Jordanian and Palestinian interests.

We accept what our brothers who are living under occupation accept. It is they who suffer daily and who must endure the consequences of the condition. Therefore, we have made every effort possible, and we too need assistance. Our efforts have always been aimed at preventing further deterioration of the conditions under which our people are living in the occupied territories.

There has been great turmoil between political and military choices, but as far as the Palestinian problem is concerned some events are beyond our control. Indeed, political immobility has gripped our region since 1973, in spite of a brief, irregular and interrupted period of diplomatic action. The tension in other countries of our Middle East region has increased, diverting attention from the deteriorating situation in the occupied Arab territories. Israel has taken advantage of that tension and has exploited the situation.

But there is a third option - the so-called humanitarian option. We in Jordan reject that option. We are attempting to help the expatriated who are constrained to choose between the violence of the occupation and the Israeli option. Given the harmful repercussions of continuing Israeli occupation, we have redoubled our sincere efforts at both the regional and the international levels to eliminate pressing problems of concern to the parties to the conflict which divert them from the Palestinian problem.

God has fortunately enabled us to count on the understanding of our brothers and on the assistance of our friends. In fact, between 8 and 11 November, at Amman, an urgent Arab summit meeting was held to consider the Iraq-Iran war as well as the situation in the Gulf region, with a view to putting an end to the cruel war in the area and devoting all our energies to finding a solution to the main problem, that of instability. At that historic meeting the Arab leaders reaffirmed their support for a settlement of the Palestinian problem in all its aspects on the basis of the implementation of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), and called for the convening of an International Peace Conference on the Middle East, with the participation of the five permanent members of the Security Council and all parties to the conflict. That proposal for finding a solution to the Palestinian problem enjoys the agreement of the great majority of States throughout the world.

We sincerely believe that combined international action will put efforts in the proper context to achieve a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East, taking fully into account the rights and legitimate interests of all parties to the conflict, restoring the security and stability of all States of the region and enabling their peoples to devote themselves to the pressing tasks of economic and social development.

It is my sincere hope that the Committee will continue its worthy efforts to achieve that noble goal and that God's peace may be with you.

KUWAIT

His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah,
Emir of the State of Kuwait and Chairman of the Fifth
Summit Conference of the Organization of the Islamic Conference

[Original: Arabic]

On the occasion of observing the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, it gives me pleasure to address this statement to all of those participating in commemorating the declaration of solidarity with this unfortunate people and supporting it toward solving its issue and achieving the exercise of its established and inalienable rights, including its right to self-determination on the soil of its homeland, and the homeland of its fathers and ancestors.

Forty years have elapsed since the tragedy of Palestine unfolded and there is still no just and lasting solution while the cause continues to pitch and plunge and to cry out to world conscience and the international community, as represented in the United Nations and the Commission on Human Rights, a cause which, despite all its justness, has to this day not received the concern it merits. All we have are resolutions not implemented and which are inoperative and unavailing. This situation thus serves the objectives of the usurping occupiers who crave for the demise of the cause through procrastination.

The approach to the cause has, indeed lacked earnestness, and that is due to the effect, influence and propaganda of those forces which persevered to mislead, distort and mistify. It is beyond doubt that the injustice to which the people of Palestine has been subject has as such rarely been practiced against another nation in the world, and this epoch in history has not witnessed the like of this tragic issue.

It is therefore the duty of every champion of justice and righteousness to uphold this cause against oppression and outrage and to stand for the administration of justice and prevalence of truth. Those countries which abet the aggressor in evil-doing will realize that it is against their conscience and does not suit the distinguished status they enjoy and the principles of freedom which they often advocate.

In the face of those challenges and arbitrary practices which Israel continues to intensify day after day, it is the duty of all of us and every protagonist of justice, righteousness and freedom to condemn those practices and all the hatred and racism they symbolize. The world community, as represented in the United Nations, and particularly the major countries, should be asked to prevent the persistence of those practices, then expedite the settlement of this quite prolonged issue.

Unquestionably, those acts are intended to liquidate the issue and coerce the native Arab Palestinian population to go into exile and homelessness. The occupiers have been deliberately applying all methods of oppression, torture, torment, persecution, attenuation of livelihood, suppression of liberties, detention and suffocating universities and educational institutions by closing them and banning their protests. And they continue to build settlements, confiscate lands and seize them by deception and fraud. They also impose rigid restrictions

on dealings with Palestinian family reunions and obstinately reject all the proposed peace plans, such as the International Conference and others.

All this constitutes a flagrant violation of the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and is contrary to observed international norms and laws. Some even deliver a direct blow to the very core of Muslim Arab presence on the land of Palestine, such as the continued excavations around Al-Aqsa Mosque, the desecration of sanctuaries, and the encircling of Al-Quds with buildings surrounding it on all sides with the aim of altering its legal status in view of the fact that it is an existing symbol of uninterrupted Islamic Arab existence on the land of Palestine for 14 centuries and a place dear to the hearts of over a billion Muslims throughout the world.

While hoping that a comprehensive and just solution of this issue will eventually be reached, we emphasize the significance of holding an International Peace Conference to break the stalemate by realizing the desired peace and the national longings to which this people aspire so that the entire region may enjoy prosperity, stability and peace.

LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

H.E. Mr. Phoumi Vongvichit, President of the Lao People's Democratic Republic

[Original: French]

On the occasion of the commemoration of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian people which continues its struggle against the Israeli aggressor to recover the exercise of its fundamental inalienable rights, I should like on behalf of the Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic and the Lao people to convey, through you, to the valiant Palestinian people and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), its sole legitimate representative, our warm fraternal greetings.

The question of Palestine is not new. It has been on the agenda of the General Assembly for a long time now; it is also at the very heart of the Middle East problem and the main cause of the Arab-Israeli conflict. The key elements of a solution to this conflict are to be found in the complete, unconditional withdrawal of Israeli troops from the Arab territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem, and the exercise by the Palestinian people of its fundamental, inalienable and legitimate rights, including its right to establish an independent Palestinian State in Palestine.

The only way to resolve this question is to convene an International Peace Conference on the Middle East, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 38/58 C of 13 December 1983 and subsequent Assembly resolutions.

It is regrettable that some countries are continuing to oppose the convening of such a Conference. I should therefore like to take this opportunity to appeal to leaders of those countries to reconsider their position and rejoin the international community's consensus, so that the Conference may be convened as

quickly as possible, because until the question of Palestine is resolved peace and stability in the Middle East, as well as international peace and security, will always be threatened.

With regard to the position of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, I should like to reiterate our assurances of the militant solidarity and unswerving support of the Government and the people for the just struggle of the Arab Palestinian and other Arab peoples until their final victory.

LIBYAN ARAB JAMAHIRIYA

H.E. Mr. Oumar Moustafa El-Mountasir,
General Secretary of the General People's Committee
of the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya

[Original: Arabic]

The yearly commemoration of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People is a symbol of the international community's increasing conviction of the justice of the question of Palestine and the legality of the Palestinian people's struggle to regain its inalienable national rights, above all, its right to self-determination and the establishment of an independent State on its national soil.

This international occasion clearly reflects the international community's commitment, whether emotional or political, to support the struggle of the Palestinian people to preserve its existence - exposed as it is in camps to annihilation - and to defend its causes when they are submitted to international forums. This conviction and commitment reflect the basic facts of the conflict in the region, foremost of which is that the question of Palestine is the core of the conflict in the Middle East and that peace and stability in the region cannot be achieved without a just and lasting solution to the question of Palestine that takes into consideration the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

Today, more than ever, the international community is called upon to intensify its efforts, stand by the Palestinian people and support its just struggle. International support for the people of Palestine is a clear condemnation of all parties whose deeds contradict their words. Such parties speak about the right of peoples to self-determination and about the preservation of their existence but deny that right or fall silent when it comes to the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and the preservation of its existence. International solidarity with the Palestinian people and its commitment to and sympathy with them is a true indicator of the international community's interest to preserve the principles upon which the United Nations was established, principles enshrined in the Charter, in the goals of international law and in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

We express our appreciation of the efforts of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. We value its endeavours to alert international consciousness and to reveal the reality of the racist,

aggressive policies and practices perpetrated by the Zionist entity. We are confident that the endeavours of the Committee will eventually succeed in enlightening world public opinion about the justice of the Palestine question and the propriety of acceding to the demands of the Palestinian people. We shall support them in full. International solidarity with the Palestinian people is growing and will bring us closer to the victory of the Palestinian people and the realization of all its just and legitimate aspirations.

We need not reaffirm our confidence or that of the international community in the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. That confidence is reflected in the interest of the General Assembly in renewing the mandate of the Committee. Once again we express our appreciation and respect for the valuable efforts made by the Committee despite all hardships and obstacles.

MALAYSIA

H.E. Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, Prime Minister of Malaysia

[Original: English]

On the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, the Government and people of Malaysia join the international community in reaffirming our continued support and commitment to the Palestinian people and its historic and valiant struggle for justice.

Since the occupation of Palestine four decades ago, the Palestinian people had suffered much. Its honour and security as a people have been trampled, and it had been driven away from its homeland. Those who remain behind have been persecuted, while those who left have been continuously harassed and forced to move from camp to camp. Yet the world community appears helpless to stop this blatant disregard for the norms of international and regional behaviour by the Tel Aviv régime.

Not that the world community is disinterested in doing justice to the Palestinians. A number of resolutions have been adopted on the question of Palestine in the past 40 years. But Israel, arrogant and expansionist as it is, defied all of them. It continues to deny the rights of the Palestinians, the definitive people of the land, to exist. It has spurned all efforts and suggestions to solve the problem peacefully. While the world community has accepted the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, Tel Aviv continues to refuse to deal with it despite its reasonable and moderate posture.

The Government of Malaysia strongly condemns Israeli arrogance and appeals to the international community to work together to implement United Nations resolutions pertaining to the rights of the Palestinian people to its homeland. Malaysia also believes that the Palestinian people, as any other people of the world, has a role to play in the affairs and well-being of the region and that role should be given to it.

On behalf of the Government and people of Malaysia, I wish to reiterate our firm support for a just, lasting and comprehensive solution to the problem of Palestine so that the Palestinian people will be able to exercise its inalienable right to an independent homeland. Malaysia, therefore, supports the convening of an International Peace Conference on the Middle East to include all relevant parties, including the PLO, as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

NIGER

H.E. General Seyni Kountche, President of the Supreme
Military Council and Head of State of the Republic of the Niger

[Original: French]

On the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, I wish, on behalf of the Government and people of the Niger, to reaffirm our deep commitment to the cause of the Palestinian people, whose basic, inalienable rights are still spurned and trampled upon and who, day after day, suffer depredation and maltreatment at the hands of Israel. This disturbing situation, deliberately cultivated by Israel, exacerbates tensions in the region and represents a serious obstacle to the success of international efforts to arrive at a just, lasting and global solution to the question of Palestine, which lies at the heart of the conflict in the Middle East.

On this solemn Day, I wish to reiterate our conviction that no just and lasting peace in the Middle East is possible without the unrestricted exercise by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights to national self-determination, independence and sovereignty, including the right to set up its own State in Palestine, and the immediate, unconditional withdrawal of Israel from all Palestinian and other occupied Arab territories. The Government and people of the Niger regard the International Peace Conference on the Middle East, with the participation on an equal footing of all parties to the conflict, including the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, as the best forum in which to seek a just solution to the question of Palestine leading on to a lasting comprehensive settlement to the conflict in the Middle East.

Finally, I should like to convey to the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, which it is your solemn duty to chair, our wholehearted encouragement and best wishes for complete success in its uplifting and noble work for the cause of the Palestinian people and the triumph of the ideals and principles set forth in the Charter of the United Nations.

NIGERIA

H.E. General Ibrahim B. Babangida, President and
Commander-in-Chief of the Federal Republic of Nigeria

[Original: English]

On behalf of the Government and people of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, I extend warm greetings to the people of Palestine on the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.

This year is particularly significant in the painful history of the Palestinian people, whose plight is at the heart of the Middle East problem. Four decades ago, the people of Palestine were rudely forced into exile. Also, 20 years ago, the State of Israel forcibly occupied the Palestinian land of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem. The tragedies of 1947 and 1967 have spelled untold hardships, death, deprivation, cultural degradation and misery for the Palestinians. Hardly a week goes by without stories of woes regarding the suffering but heroic people of Palestine.

Only recently we heard of the shooting of students and women by Israeli troops. We have also heard of the massive violations of the human rights of the people in the occupied territories. These actions, a manifestation of the unacceptable "iron-fist" policy of Israel is intolerable and can only further the cycle of violence in the Middle East.

The Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria has in the past declared its total solidarity and support for the people of Palestine and its sole legitimate representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). We again reaffirm this solidarity and salute the PLO whose tireless efforts have brought to global attention the suffering of the Palestinians. We take the opportunity to repeat our support for the 1983 Geneva Declaration on Palestine which elaborated the principles to guide an International Peace Conference on the Middle East. The Federal Republic of Nigeria will continue to support all efforts to find a durable and just solution to the Middle East problem. Such a solution would, of course, have as its core the exercise by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights in a State of its own that is sovereign and independent.

PAKISTAN

H.E. General Mohammad Zia-Ul-Haq,
President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan

[Original: English]

Today, the world observes the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. The Government and people of Pakistan share the pain and anguish which have been the lot of their brothers in Palestine ever since an alien entity was planted on their soil 40 years ago. On this solemn occasion, we pay tribute to the courage, determination and heroic struggle of the Palestinian

people to resist the illegal occupation of its homeland by Israel, a brutal and expansionist Power whose policies and actions have betrayed a strong contempt for the will of the international community.

All initiatives by peace-loving nations to resolve the long festering Palestinian issue have thus far been repeatedly frustrated by Israel's complete disregard for international law. Pakistan deplores Israel's intransigence and repressive policies, which we consider to be the root cause of the turmoil in the Middle East and a serious threat to international peace and security.

On this occasion the Government and people of Pakistan reaffirm their unstinted support for the people of Palestine in its just struggle for the attainment of its legitimate rights of self-determination and for a free and independent State of its own under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), its sole and legitimate representative.

H.E. Mr. Mohammad Khan Junejo, Prime Minister
of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan

[Original: English]

The International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People brings into sharp relief the hardships and tribulations faced by generations of our Palestinian brothers as a result of the inhuman and expansionist Zionist policies whose principal objective has been to perpetuate Israel's illegal and forceful occupation of Palestinian lands. These policies, which have made Israel a pariah in the region, have been widely denounced as posing a serious threat to international peace and security.

The Government of Pakistan strongly condemns Israel for its repression of the Palestinian and Arab people and calls upon the international community vigorously to champion the Palestinian cause and to overcome Israeli intransigence to all initiatives aimed at a comprehensive, just and durable settlement in the Middle East.

We in Pakistan look with admiration upon the valiant and heroic struggle of the Palestinian people to defend its legitimate rights against the brutal policies and machinations of the usurper. During the period of our own struggle for independence we extended unwavering support for the cause of the Palestinians. On this solemn occasion the Government and people of Pakistan reiterate their strong support for the struggle of the Palestinian people for its inalienable rights and call for a just and durable settlement of the Middle East problem based upon complete Israeli withdrawal from all Arab territories including Al-Quds Al-Sharif and exercise by the Palestinian people of the rights of self-determination and the establishment of a State of its own in its homeland.

QATAR

His Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Hamad al-Thani,
Emir of the State of Qatar

[Original: Arabic]

I am pleased hereby to participate in the tenth annual commemoration by this Committee of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. It provides an opportunity for peace- and justice-loving Governments and peoples of the world to reaffirm in the United Nations their solidarity with the courageous Palestinian people in its heroic struggle to attain its legitimate rights and to support it in its tragedy, unprecedented in terms of aggression and oppression.

The plight of the Palestinians is unique in its atrocity. All forms of colonialism are directed towards the objective of occupying the territories of those oppressed people, enslaving them and plundering their resources. But the Palestinians are locked in a freedom struggle to oust the usurper from their land.

However, the forces of colonialism, oppression and zionism had from the beginning agreed on a plan to annihilate the Palestinian people and displace it from its land and that of its forefathers so that for over four decades Israel might replace it and inflict the worst forms of persecution and oppression.

Nothing causes us greater agony and pain than the daily news of the terrorist attacks inflicted on the Palestinian people by the Israeli usurpers. They persist in bloodshed and killing, suppression of freedoms, demolition of houses, plundering of properties and desecration of sanctuaries - with no religious scruples, respect for international law and moral values or respect for United Nations documents and resolutions, first and foremost the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

It is universally recognized that the question of Palestine is at the heart of the conflict tearing asunder the Middle East and of the crushing crisis threatening peace and security not only there but in the whole world.

We cannot believe that this is the wish of the international community. Yet the Palestine conflict remains without a lasting, just solution, still exposing the whole international community to grave danger. Hence it is high time for concerted international efforts to restrain Israeli tyranny and to grant all possible assistance to the Palestinian people in its glorious struggle so that it may maintain its existence, regain its usurped land and be able to return there to a peaceful and serene life, as well as to exercise its legitimate rights, first and foremost the right to self-determination.

This is our aspiration. It requires, however, that the five permanent members of the Security Council, in keeping with the norms of international legality, assume their responsibility for speedy action and lend all material and moral support to restoring the full rights of the Palestinian people, achieving justice and implementing this Organization's resolutions. We support the recent unanimous decision that the best way to find a solution to the question of Palestine is to convene, under United Nations auspices, an International Peace Conference featuring the participation of the five permanent members of the Security Council and all parties concerned, including of course the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

Every effort should be made to achieve the will of the international community so that this Conference may be held as soon as possible and that we may achieve its noble objective.

In conclusion, I should to express my profound gratitude and that of the people of Qatar to this Committee for its serious, constructive and persistent efforts in support of the great Palestinian people in its just struggle to regain its legitimate rights.

SAUDI ARABIA

The Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques,
King Fahd Bin Abdul-Aziz Al Saud, King of Saudi Arabia

[Original: Arabic]

This day, the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People is back before the world, while the Palestinian people are either captives in its country or scattered in refugee camps awaiting return. In between captivity and dispersement, a régime of terror, which came from the outside under the umbrella of colonialism, has been established on the soil of its country, and is determined to deny the fundamental rights of the Palestinians as well as to fight all United Nations attempts towards the realization of right and the alleviation of injustice from the land of Palestine.

This year, this day coincides with the passage of 40 years since the promulgation of the United Nations General Assembly resolution to partition Palestine between its people, and foreigners who entered it in spite of the will of its owners, between the Arab people, the owners of the land, and world zionism, bringing over aliens from their own countries to the Arab land in order to replace a people living peacefully in its country. We witness before us today the results of that resolution. We warned the world then of its consequences and we warn it today about the continued reluctance to confront the facts of the situation in Palestine. These facts are no longer hidden, despite all efforts to the contrary. These facts confirm our reiteration for a restoration of the right to its people, if peace and peacefulness are to be secured in occupied Palestine and the Middle East region.

While I express our thanks and appreciation to you, Mr. Chairman, and to your colleagues, the members of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People for your efforts in giving the United Nations an effective role in uncovering the Israeli practices which are violating international law and humanitarian norms against the Arab people in Palestine, these facts that you arrive at and expose annually to be witnessed and heard by the delegations of the world and its Governments are a constructive contribution toward the restoration of right and the revelation of a tragic reality which the United Nations had, in the first years of its existence, a regrettable role in causing. The United Nations and its Member States today must bear their responsibility for what has happened to the problem of the people of Palestine, and the complications it has caused in Palestine and the region, thus endangering the security of its

people, its stability and basic interests. The United Nations bears a basic share of the responsibility for dispersing the Palestinian people at the beginning, and the responsibility for subsequently standing idle before Israeli aggression against the Palestinian people, whom Zionism is seeking to deprive of its country and basic rights, while the Zionist establishment continues to violate conventions, laws, norms and international resolutions, as well as to disrupt every effort to arrive at a solution which can alleviate the injustice it has been inflicting upon the Arab and Moslem nation in Palestine.

We in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia today are committed, as we have been for every day and as shall so remain, to the preservation of the full rights of the Palestinian people, as well as to back and support it and its cause, until right is restored to its people, and until the Arab people in Palestine stand free and proud in the land of their fathers and forebearers. We reaffirm again the right of the Palestinian people to return, to sovereignty and to the establishment of its own independent State on the soil of its country, under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization, their sole and legitimate representative. This is a firm and fundamental position that is shared by all the Arab and Islamic States as well as by peace- and justice-loving States, and it is, as we know and you know, the path for the solution, and the remedy that will secure peace and stability in the region.

We repeat here what we stated on the same occasion last year, that the Arab peace plan which was adopted by the Fez Summit in 1982 was an opportunity for the Israelis, had they wanted a balanced peace. The Arab plan was a reaffirmation of the Arab intentions for arriving at a peaceful solution to this historic tragedy, as well as a test for the intentions of Israel, which introduced aggression and continues to practice it, thinking this is the way of life. The days are still revealing, every day, the proof of Israeli intentions, which threaten the security and stability of the region, and its unwillingness to arrive at a peace based on justice. You have before you a just and balanced peace. We know and the international community knows that the continuation of aggression upon Arab rights and the Arab countries could only lead to the worst results for regional and international stability, and Israel must bear its responsibility.

The steadfast Palestinian people are a struggling people defending a fundamental right which the United Nations, by virtue of its Charter, is committed to defend. The effort of your Committee in this vital field deserves appreciation, thanks and encouragement. The Zionist practices against the Palestinian people, which Israel is committing before the eyes of the world, is only one of the many facets of Israel's defiance of the international will, and only one of the dimensions of the Zionist challenge to Arab and Islamic values and rights.

The cause of the Arab and Islamic right in Palestine, and Al-Quds, is a trust on the shoulders of the United Nations, and it is an Arab and Islamic right to whose preservation the Arab and Moslem world are committed with all their power.

To you, Mr. Chairman and the distinguished members of the Committee, go our thanks and appreciation for your efforts and objectivity in conveying a truthful picture, which we hope the international community will appreciate with its sense of responsibility and a commitment to the principles of right and justice.

May peace be upon you and the mercy of God and His blessings.

SENEGAL

H.E. Mr. Abdou Diouf, President of the Republic of Senegal

[Original: French]

The observance of 29 November of each year of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, beyond its traditional nature, provides an opportunity for the world as a whole, under the dynamic impetus of the United Nations, to give special expression to its active support for the courageous people of Palestine in its legitimate struggle to recover its dignity and fully enjoy its rights to self-determination, to return to the land of its ancestors and to establish an independent State in Palestine, its homeland.

In taking part in this universal observance with the active enthusiasm it feels whenever the cause is just, Senegal, while reaffirming its faith in the victory of the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people, also remains aware of the obstacles still standing in the way to a solution of the complex problem of the Middle East, the heart of which is the question of Palestine.

Those obstacles are rooted in prejudice, intolerance and blind violence, in their persistence, in the frustration of the Palestinian people. The responsibility for such a state of affairs can be imputed to certain differences that exist, unfortunately, within the international community. It can also, especially, be imputed to the intransigence of Israel, to lack of political will on the part of those States that could have acted to create conditions propitious to the concerted search for just and lasting comprehensive solutions.

However, those obstacles must not weaken the determination of the international community to redress one of the most serious anomalies of recent history. Fortunately, the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People is in the vanguard of the broad surge of solidarity, increasing daily, in favour of the peaceful restoration of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people in accordance with the wish expressed long ago by the United Nations, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the Organization of African Unity.

This is an opportunity to restate our conviction that the United Nations is the ideal framework within which to seek ways and means to restore the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, in particular through an International Peace Conference on the Middle East, an idea that has today been accepted by almost all members of the community of nations. In this connection I am happy to express our satisfaction at the remarkable work done by the Committee in its task of promoting the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

Your Committee and its wise recommendations enjoys and will continue to enjoy our unswerving support.

The people and the Government of Senegal, through me, encourage you to persevere in your efforts. In working for the restoration of the rights of the Palestinian people, you are serving the ideals of peace and justice that are the very foundations of the Charter of the United Nations.

SEYCHELLES

H.E. Mr. France Albert René,
President of the Republic of Seychelles

[Original: English]

On the auspicious occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, the people and Government of Seychelles join me in conveying to you our warmest wishes and our continued support for the courageous struggle of the Palestinian people for the recovery of its homeland.

The people of Seychelles have followed with great admiration the exemplary struggle of the Palestinian people in the quest for self-determination, independence and a homeland of its own. We are confident that the commitment and dedication of the Palestinian people will enable it to bring an end to the tragedy imposed on it, in spite of the obstacles that lie ahead.

On this occasion, I would like to reiterate our assurances that my Government will pursue all efforts to ensure that the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people are recognized and respected.

SIERRA LEONE

H.E. Major-General Joseph Saidu Momoh,
President of the Republic of Sierra Leone

[Original: English]

On this solemn occasion of the observance of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, the Government and people of the Republic of Sierra Leone once again join the international community in renewing their pledge of unstinted support and solidarity with the Palestinians who are struggling for the restoration and the exercise of its inalienable rights.

The commemoration of this day by the international community demonstrates the desire of all of us to restore to the Palestinian people its inalienable rights to self-determination, in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the United Nations. In this connection, I would like to pay warm tribute to the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, for its devotion to this cause since its inception.

The question of Palestine is indeed one of the most disturbing problems of our time which requires a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement based on the attainment of the legitimate and inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. The continued denial by Israel of those rights to the Palestinian people has been the core of this perennial problem.

We therefore believe that a just and lasting settlement of this dispute can be achieved only through negotiation in which all parties to the conflict should

accept, unambiguously, two principles, namely: the right to existence and security of all States in the region, and the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and the creation of a State of its own. In this regard, the convening of an International Peace Conference, under the auspices of the United Nations, with the participation of the permanent members of the Security Council and all parties concerned, including the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), could in my view achieve positive results that would bring about the desired settlement of the Palestinian question. May I therefore once again appeal to all peace-loving peoples of the world to make positive and concerted efforts for the early convening of this Conference.

SRI LANKA

H.E. Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, delivered by H.E. Mr. Tyronne Fernando, Deputy Foreign Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka

[Original: English]

On the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, Sri Lanka joins other members of the international community in reaffirming their solidarity with the Palestinian people.

Over the decades many resolutions on Palestine have been adopted by the United Nations, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and other international bodies. But despite all the efforts at national and international levels, the plight of more than 4 million displaced Palestinians continues, with no apparent prospect of any solution to their problem. The Palestine problem remains a challenge to our will and capacity to bring about a better world characterized by peace and justice for all.

The International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People is an occasion on which the international community has to rededicate itself to the task of promoting a solution to the Palestine problem. We in Sri Lanka give full and unequivocal support to the just struggle of the Palestinian people to assert its right to self-determination and to return to its homeland. We continue in our full support for the only true representative of the Palestinian people, namely the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). We reiterate our commitment to support all action aimed at solving the Palestine problem and the promotion of peace in the Middle East.

SUDAN

H.E. Said Ahmed Elmirghani,
Chairman of the Council of State of the Republic of the Sudan

[Original: Arabic]

It gives me great pleasure to address you today on behalf of the Government and people of the Republic of the Sudan on the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, foremost among the peoples struggling for the restoration of their legitimate rights. The proclamation by this Organization of 29 November as the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People strongly reaffirms the importance given by the international community to the just cause of the valiant Palestinian people.

It also undoubtedly embodies the increasing and renewed support given by the peoples of the world in general to the question of Palestine and the right of the Palestinian people in its just struggle to realize its rights.

On numerous occasions, and through the resolutions of this Organization and other international and regional forums, the international community has emphasized that the core and essence of the conflict in the Middle East is the Palestinian question, without the solution of which no just and permanent peace in the Middle East can be established. It could be established with the full and unconditional withdrawal of Israel from all Palestinian and other occupied Arab territories, particularly Holy Jerusalem, the first of the two kiblals and the third Holy Shrine. This could also be achieved through the granting to the Palestinian people of the right to self-determination, the right to return to its land and the right to establish its independent, sovereign State, under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), its sole and legitimate representative.

Since its independence, the Sudanese people has participated in the legitimate struggle of the heroic Palestinian people, under the PLO. Today, on this occasion, we reaffirm our support, respect and solidarity with the relentless struggle of the fraternal Palestinian people.

While we appreciate the commendable efforts of the United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, my country hopes they will be continued to achieve the desired objectives and we reiterate our full support of the Committee's efforts.

THAILAND

H.E. General Prem Tinsulanonda, Prime Minister of Thailand

[Original: English]

Today Thailand once again joins the international community in commemorating the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. In so doing, Thailand wishes to demonstrate its firm and consistent support for the just and legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people, under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), its sole and legitimate representative.

Thailand continues to believe that the question of Palestine remains the core problem of the Middle East. Therefore it must be satisfactorily resolved if a durable peace in the region is to be achieved. And, peace in the Middle East is vital to global peace and security. A comprehensive and lasting settlement in the Middle East should be based on relevant General Assembly and Security Council resolutions, particularly resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973).

Thailand shares the concern for the Palestinian issue with its partners in the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN). At their twentieth meeting in Singapore on 16 June 1987, the Foreign Ministers of ASEAN issue a communiqué in which they reiterated their full support for the legitimate struggle of the Palestinian people to exercise its inalienable rights, including the right to self-determination and the restoration of Arab sovereignty over the occupied territories. They called for renewed efforts to achieve a just, comprehensive and lasting settlement by negotiations. They also expressed support for the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East under the auspices of the United Nations. Peace is long overdue. So let all the parties concerned intensify their efforts to bring about peace in the Middle East and the realization of the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people.

Let me take this opportunity also to pay tribute to the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People for its invaluable contribution and devotion to the Palestinian cause.

TUNISIA

H.E. Mr. Zine Elabidine Ben Ali,
President of the Republic of Tunisia

[Original: Arabic]

The commemoration of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People gives me an opportunity to emphasize to you that Tunisia, which has experienced suffering for the sake of freedom and independence, pays tribute to your great efforts in support of the heroic Palestinian people.

Also, I express our appreciation of your support to and solidarity with that people, which has been suffering unprecedented displacement and oppression.

I wish to assure you that I stand at your side and support you in this endeavour. I fully intend to work with you so that the Palestinian people will realize its right to self-determination, in accordance with international legitimacy, and to establish its independent State on its national soil, under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), its sole legitimate representative.

TURKEY

H.E. Mr. Turgut Ozal, Prime Minister of Turkey

[Original: English]

On the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, I would like to confirm, on behalf of my Government and on my own behalf, our support for the Palestinian people and reiterate our solidarity with it.

I am pleased to note that there is growing support and sympathy in the world community for the legitimate cause of the Palestinian people. In this context, I wish to commend the efforts made by the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People to promote wider awareness of the question of Palestine.

The Palestinian National Council, which convened in April 1987, demonstrated a spirit of growing unity among the Palestinians. It is our earnest hope and wish that this development will contribute to the realization of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people within the framework of a just, durable and comprehensive solution of the Middle East problem. I am confident that, with further understanding and support of the international community, on the one hand, and with enhanced unity in their ranks, on the other, the Palestinian people, under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), will succeed in its endeavours.

Turkey believes that recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people is essential for the establishment of a just and durable peace in the Middle East. Furthermore, we maintain that no lasting settlement of the question can be found unless Israel withdraws from the Arab territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem. We support all peace initiatives aimed at reaching a peaceful solution of the problems of the Middle East on the basis of these fundamental principles.

I take this opportunity to reiterate the best wishes of the Turkish nation and of the Turkish Government to the Palestinian people.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

His Highness Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan al-Nahyan,
President of the United Arab Emirates

[Original: Arabic]

This year, 1987, is the seventieth anniversary of the despicable Balfour Declaration, which was the basis for the denial of the rights of the Arab Palestinian people and of the conspiracy to hand over its land to foreigners from various parts of the world.

This year also marks the fortieth year since the adoption of the unjust resolution that led to the partition of Palestine, contrary to the aspirations of the Arab people and its right to self-determination. That resolution resulted in the establishment of an alien State on the majority of Palestinian land and the displacement of the Palestinians, who now live in the diaspora as refugees and displaced persons.

This year also marks the twentieth anniversary of the aggression by Israel against some Arab States. As a result of that aggression, which was supported by the forces of evil, oppression and tyranny, the aggressor usurped the remainder of Palestinian territory and continued the displacement of its owners: the long-suffering, patient Palestinian people.

We see in this commemoration of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People three praiseworthy and hopeful signs: we see in the commemoration the embodiment of the international community's rejection of the aggression and injustice inflicted on the Palestinians over the past 70 years. We also see in it an acknowledgement by this Organization of the legitimacy of the struggle of the Palestinian people, under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the sole legitimate representative of that people, to regain its rights, including the right to return, to self-determination and to the establishment of an independent State on Palestinian soil. We see in it a recognition of the legitimacy of this struggle, which is in consonance with the purposes and principles of the Charter and the norms of international law.

We also see in this commemoration a pledge by the international community to work diligently to put an end to the injustice that has been inflicted upon the Palestinian people, a commitment to support the Palestinians and their struggle and a renewed undertaking to develop a just international settlement of the question of Palestine in the context of which the Palestinian people will regain its rights and exercise them in full freedom.

We in the United Arab Emirates support the approach adopted by the United Nations to the attainment of a just and lasting solution to the Middle East question and the question of Palestine through the holding of an International Conference under the auspices of the United Nations, in which all the parties concerned, including the PLO, and the permanent members of the Security Council would participate on an equal footing.

We still maintain that some of the major Powers should reconsider their domination-oriented policies. Like others, they must take the path of justice and

recognition of the rights of others. They must cease their obstruction of the convening of an International Conference, for such a Conference is the only way to achieve the desired just solution, under which the Palestinian people could regain its rights.

Until such a settlement is achieved and the Palestinian people regains its rights, the Government and people of the United Arab Emirates remain pledged to support the struggle of the Palestinian people and to render all possible assistance to it.

We have full confidence that, God willing, the day will come when the Palestinians will return to their land and exercise their rights in freedom, like other peoples in the world.

VIET NAM

H.E. Mr. Pham Hung, Chairman of the Council of Ministers
of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam

[Original: English]

On the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People observed by the United Nations, I would like to convey to you and to the Palestinian people and fighters the Vietnamese people's greetings of militant solidarity.

Over the past four decades, the Arab and Palestinian people, with their tradition of perseverance and undauntedness, have been carrying out an unrelenting struggle against the imperialist and Israeli Zionist intervention and aggression for national liberation and are now valiantly fighting against every scheme of creating tensions, sowing discords among Arab countries and imposing a separate solution.

The eighteenth session of the Palestine National Council, held last April at Algiers reaffirmed the Palestinian people's will to achieve unity and its unshakable faith in its just and invincible cause.

Progressive people in the world have been expressing sympathy with and strong support for the Arab and Palestinian people's struggle and categorically condemning the policy of aggression and expansion carried out by imperialism and zionism in the Middle East.

As a consistent friend of the Palestinian people, the people and Government of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam unswervingly support the Palestinian people in its just struggle to regain its fundamental national rights, including the right of returning to its homeland, the right to self-determination and the right to set up an independent Palestinian State on its own territory. We fully support the convening of an International Conference on the Middle East with the participation of all parties concerned, including the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, in order to seek a just and lasting solution to the Palestine issue, and the establishment of a

preparatory committee for the Conference, comprising the permanent members of the United Nations Security Council.

The people and Government of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam rejoice at the progress of the Palestine resistance and believe that the Palestinian people, under the leadership of the PLO, bringing into play the tradition of staunchness and solidarity and enjoying the strong support of the people of the Arab countries, the Socialist countries, the non-aligned countries and peace- and justice-loving forces, are bound to achieve a complete victory in their glorious revolutionary cause.

YEMEN ARAB REPUBLIC

H.E. Colonel Ali Abdullah Saleh,
President of the Yemen Arab Republic

[Original: Arabic]

It is a pleasure for me to convey my sincerest wishes and congratulations to you and to express the appreciation of the people of the Yemen Arab Republic for your constant efforts and those of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People intended to bring about the triumph of the just cause of the Palestinian people and to defend its rights and justice in keeping with the noble ideals of the United Nations Charter. This has allowed us to keep alive in the minds of peace-loving and justice-loving peoples the cause of the Palestinian people.

It is up to the United Nations, which was created to save humanity from the horrors of war, to bring about the triumph of the cause of subject peoples and to remain always on the side of the oppressed peoples fighting against the forces of oppression, exploitation and arbitrary actions, and to check the desire of the death merchants and enemies of peace. The United Nations should reflect the conscience of contemporary mankind. How does it do so? How does it reflect resistance to war? How does it reflect the desire to live in freedom and peace?

During 40 years' existence the United Nations has not been able to find a just solution for the cause of Palestinian and Arab peoples - and that despite hundreds of resolutions on that subject adopted by the Organization. That is due to Israel's intransigence and defiance of the relevant resolutions, as well as the result of its policy based on expansion through force and thanks to the support given it by colonial Powers. During this time the Palestinian people have suffered ever more under the yoke of oppression and been the object of genocide; they have been forced into exile.

No doubt, the practices against the Palestinian people inside and outside the occupied territories and the acts of terrorism and the use of force are in flagrant violation of the most elementary rules of international law and United Nations decisions and resolutions, and contrary to the most elementary values of civilized man.

In the Yemen Arab Republic we make every effort to find a just solution to the question of Palestine that would allow those people to exercise its right to self-determination and establish its own independent State on its own national soil, including Jerusalem.

In conclusion, I again express our deep thanks for the role which the Committee has played in helping the Palestinian people in its struggle. I assure you, Sir, of our support for your success.

YUGOSLAVIA

H.E. Mr. Lazar Mojsov, President of the Presidency
of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

[Original: English]

On the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, on behalf of the peoples and nationalities of Yugoslavia, the presidency of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and in my own name, I should like to express also in this way our full support and solidarity with this heroic people and its liberation organization, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), in the struggle for freedom, self-determination, independence and the right to establish a State of its own on its national soil.

In the past four decades the Palestinian people has proved time and again that just aspirations cannot be broken by force and violations of elementary human rights. The Israeli policy of aggression, terror, annexation, colonization and the denial of the national identity of Palestinians is doomed to failure, since neither the Palestinian people nor the international community will ever accept the situation created by such a policy.

The Palestinian people has also proved time and again its readiness to participate, through negotiations, on a footing of equality, in the quest for a just solution to the realization of its inalienable rights. It is understandable that no solution can be allowed without it and at its expense, and in that resolve it has our strong and lasting support.

It is our profound conviction that any solution to the Middle East crisis - if it aims at being comprehensive, lasting and just and only as such tenable - must include the withdrawal of Israel from all the territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem, and enable the Palestinian people the right to freedom, self-determination, to return home and the establishment of a State of its own on its national soil. Only in this way will the right of all peoples and countries of the Middle East region to independence and safe development within recognized borders, including Israel, be ensured.

It is high time to renew efforts to find such a solution in order to remove the consequences of the Israeli policy of aggression and expansion, which has transformed the whole region of the Middle East into one of the most dangerous hotbeds of crisis in the world, into a permanent threat to international peace and

security. Therefore I point out this time again the positions of the eighth summit Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries on the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East under the auspices of the United Nations. It is encouraging that this initiative now enjoys the wide support of the international community.

On this occasion I should like to express full support for the work of the United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People in which Yugoslavia will continue to play an active role.

C. Messages from Ministers/Secretaries for Foreign Affairs

GREECE

H.E. Mr. Karolos Papoulias, Minister for Foreign Affairs

[Original: English]

Today, the international community pays tribute to the Palestinian struggle for freedom and justice in celebrating the Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. Its struggle lies at the core of the Middle East problem whose solution is long overdue. Its long and tortuous path daily convinces more and more Governments all over the world that there cannot possibly be any peace and prosperity for the peoples of the region as long as the issue of the future of the Palestinians remains unresolved.

The solution of this complicated problem will be possible only if the Palestinians are given the opportunity to participate in the peace process, along with all other parties concerned through their sole legitimate representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). In accordance with its principled policy, Greece believes that, all States are entitled to exist within secure and internationally-recognized borders, so must the Palestinian people be given the opportunity freely to exercise its right to self-determination with the view to the creation of its own independent State. Greece will, therefore, continue to encourage the Palestinian people in its struggle for self-determination and the creation of its own State.

At the same time, Greece has consistently supported the mission of the United Nations and the work of its specialized body, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), and has emphasized the role it can play in compliance with the existing resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly for the settlement of the issue. Israeli troops must withdraw from all territories occupied since 1967. The convening of an International Conference on the Middle East under United Nations auspices, which would have an essential role to play in the attainment of a solution, and which would include all the parties which have legitimate rights and interests in the area, is, we believe, the most fruitful path towards a peaceful solution to the problem.

Greece will continue to support the tireless efforts undertaken by the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People for the accomplishment of its difficult but vital task. It is our belief that only through a just, lasting and comprehensive settlement of the question of Palestine can peace and stability be achieved in the region and the rest of the world, a belief which is accompanied by the feeling that a great and ever-increasing number of people all over the world have realized the magnitude and urgency of the problem.

JAPAN

H.E. Mr. Sosuke Uno, Minister for Foreign Affairs

[Original: English]

On the tenth International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, I wish to extend cordial greetings on behalf of the Government of Japan.

Ten years have passed since this International Day was established by a United Nations resolution. The bond of solidarity between the peoples of the world, including the people of Japan and the Palestinian people, has grown steadily in strength, and many efforts have been made to solve the Palestinian question. It is truly regrettable, however, that the prospect for a solution is yet to be seen, and that the plight of the Palestinian people, who had been forced to flee its homeland and live in refugee camps or in the territories occupied by Israel, continues.

Japan has long insisted that, in order to solve the Palestinian question, Israel must completely withdraw from all the Arab territories it has occupied since the 1967 war, in accordance with Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973); that the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, based upon the Charter of the United Nations, should be recognized, and that include the right of a people to self-determination and the right to establish an independent State. At the same time, needless to say, it is essential that the right of all States in the region to exist must be respected and that the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), which represents the Palestinian people, participate in the peace process as one of the parties concerned.

At the eighteenth session of the Palestine National Council, held in April of this year in Algeria, the PLO reaffirmed its solidarity in working together towards the realization of the Palestinian cause under Chairman Arafat. And at the recent special summit meeting of Arab leaders, unanimous support was expressed for the convening of an international Middle East conference. Following these developments, I earnestly hope that the momentum generated for an early settlement of the Middle East problem and the Palestinian question, which is at its core, will gain strength.

In order to help relieve the sufferings of Palestinian refugees, Japan has made cash contributions totalling \$84 million, \$10 million this year, and food assistance with a total value of \$49 million. Japan has started to receive Palestinian technical trainees since the year before last. I would like to note also that Japan will continue to provide co-operation to the project to build a school for Palestinian children in Jarash in Jordan, begun last year. My predecessor as Foreign Minister, Mr. Kuranari, on the occasion of his visit to Jordan in September, visited the Jarash school and saw first hand the conditions in which Palestinian refugees were living. I think this very well exemplifies the depth of the concern Japan feels over the Palestinian question.

I want to add that, as a responsible member of the international community, Japan will continue to provide as much co-operation of this kind as it possible can to assist Palestinian refugees, and I hope that the day will soon come when the Palestinian question will be resolved enabling the Palestinian people and others in the region to live in peace.

MADAGASCAR

H.E. Mr. Jean Bemananjara, Minister for Foreign Affairs

[Original: French]

In accordance with General Assembly resolution 32/40 B of 2 December 1977, we today celebrate the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.

It is now almost 40 years that the Middle East, and Palestine in particular, have held centre stage in world affairs.

True, the international community has several times sought ways and means of establishing a just and lasting peace in the region, and continues to do so. A number of decisions have been taken and a number of resolutions adopted but the Palestinian problem remains unresolved and remains to this day the hot spot in that corner of the planet.

Over those 40 years, the Palestinian people had been the victim of moral as well as physical and material persecution, and blood has flowed freely in that part of the world: from the Deir Yassin massacre to the massacres in Shatila and Sabra, the cost in human lives can no longer be counted.

Taking a purely logical and impartial view of the situation in the Middle East, we can say quite bluntly that there could have been peace in the region a long time ago were it not for the pliant attitude of certain countries which sympathized with the misfortune of the Jews and turned a blind eye to the genocide of the Palestinian people, covering their ears to avoid hearing the cries of a people lamenting its martyrs. So cynical are these countries that they lump the Palestinian people's liberation movement together with terrorist movements.

Once upon a time, others rose up against colonization and all other forms of domination, but today they are willing to be Israel's outposts in a continent which has only recently thrown off the colonial yoke.

In doing so, these countries forget that they are establishing a new principle in international relations - that of expandable frontiers. If not, how can they allow Israeli territory to expand immediately, and, what is more, by force of arms?

It is time this practice ended. It is also high time that the supposedly well-off countries brought their ethical standards up to the level of their economic power and that justice and peace become golden rules in international relations.

As in the past, Madagascar, faithful to its principles, extends unconditional support for the cause of the legitimate, inalienable rights of the Palestinian people - the right to self-determination and the establishment of an independent State in Palestine.

Hence, it supports the convening of an International Conference on the Middle East with the participation of the members of the United Nations Security Council and, on an equal footing, of all the parties involved including the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), to consider the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the region and the unrestricted exercise by the Palestinian people of its rights.

Just and lasting peace in the Middle East can be established only when the question of Palestine, which lies at the heart of the Middle East problem, has been resolved.

OMAN

H.E. Mr. Youssef bin Alawi bin Abdullah,
Minister of State for Foreign Affairs

[Original: Arabic]

On this occasion, as the international community celebrates the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, we are pleased to reaffirm our solidarity with the Palestinian cause, which we continue to debate session after session. The question of Palestine, in connection with which dozens of resolutions have been adopted in support of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including its right to self-determination, to return to its homeland and to establish its own State on its national soil, has come to constitute a threat not only to the Middle East region, but a major threat to international peace and security, as a result of Israel's persistence in its arbitrary policy and its continued contempt for international resolutions and instruments.

The international community is called upon today to take decisive and more effective measures to put an end to the sufferings of these people whose fundamental rights have been denied and wrested from them. It must also take more effective measures in conformity with its previous resolutions and in conformity with the efforts being undertaken by the parties to find a just and prompt solution to the question of Palestine.

In accordance with its faith in the right of peoples to self-determination and in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations and its resolutions, the Sultanate of Oman, in joining with the peoples of other nations of the world in commemorating this International Day, expresses its solidarity with the Palestinian people and its full support for the restoration of that people's legitimate rights, including its right to self-determination in its own territory. At the same time, we believe that, as long as Israel fails to respond to initiatives for peace and to comply with United Nations resolutions, the continuation of the status quo, without any just solution which restores the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, will continue to be a source of concern and a factor which undermines the security and stability of all countries in the region.

PHILIPPINES

H.E. Mr. Raul S. Manlapus, Secretary of Foreign Affairs

[Original: English]

On this International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, the people and Government of the Republic of the Philippines reaffirm their support for the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination and for the establishment of an independent State under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the sole, authentic and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

To this end, the Philippines supports the work of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People under the leadership of H.E. Mr. Massamba Sarré of Senegal.

A just, comprehensive and lasting settlement must be achieved if we are to eliminate a major threat to international peace and security. The Philippines supports the convening of an International Conference on the Middle East with the participation of all the parties concerned, including the PLO and the five permanent members of the Security Council, under the auspices of the United Nations. This would be a most appropriate means for the peaceful and just resolution of the Palestinian question.

POLAND

H.E. Mr. Marian Orzechowski, Minister for Foreign Affairs

[Original: English]

On the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, I would like to convey the feelings of solidarity and support of the Polish People's Republic for the struggle of the Palestinian people for the exercise of its inalienable rights.

Poland consistently stands for the exercise by the Palestinian people of its right to self-determination and independence and for the lasting settlement of the Middle East conflict by the convening of an International Conference under the auspices of the United Nations with the participation of all interested parties, including the recognized representative of the Palestinian people.

We actively co-operate with the efforts of the United Nations for the restoration in the Middle East of a just and lasting peace, which would guarantee security and stability of all States and peoples of that region.

I extend appreciation of the important work of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.

REPUBLIC OF KOREA

H.E. Mr. Kwang Soo Choi, Minister of Foreign Affairs

[Original: English]

On the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, I, on behalf of the people and Government of the Republic of Korea, would like to join leaders of the international community in renewing our full support for the Palestinian people in its just struggle to implement the inalienable right to self-determination and to attain national independence.

While observing this meaningful Day, we note with great concern that, in spite of the common aspirations shared by all the peace-loving people of the world, the question of Palestine is yet to be resolved and the tension in the Middle East still persists.

We have repeatedly urged the international community and parties concerned to make every effort to bring about the settlement of the Palestine question as early as possible because the question is recognized as a key element in solving the Middle East problem. At the same time, we share the view that there can be no lasting solution to the Middle East conflict without recognition of the rights of the Palestinian people and without its participation in any settlement.

The Government of the Republic of Korea wishes to reaffirm its position based on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and other relevant resolutions adopted by the United Nations, that Israel should withdraw from all Arab territories occupied since the war of 1967, including Jerusalem, and that the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, including its right to self-determination should be respected.

Furthermore, the Korean Government recognizes the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and supports the establishment of an independent State of its own.

In commemorating this solemn occasion, the Government of the Republic of Korea reiterates its full commitment that it will continue to do its part, as it has done before, to help to create the international environment conducive to the peaceful settlement of the Palestine issue, and also to extend humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people who have been enduring the scourge of conflict.

In conclusion, I take this opportunity to pay a high tribute to the Chairman and members of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People for their efforts to achieve a peaceful solution of the Palestine question.

SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC

H.E. Mr. Farouk Al-Shara,
Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Syrian Arab Republic

[Original: Arabic]

It gives me great pleasure, on behalf of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, and on my own behalf, to pay a tribute to your Committee on this Day of Solidarity with the Arab Palestinian people in its just struggle to restore its usurped rights.

When we mention the Arab people of Palestine, we have before us an image of extreme oppression practised against this people as a result of the conspiracy plotted in the capitals of colonialism and collaboration with world zionism. The Palestinian people, which has suffered much from aggression unprecedented in history, is the victim of imperialist policy aimed at subjugating the Arab nation; the goals of this imperialist policy coincides with those of zionism, which are aimed at the fragmentation of the Arab land and the establishment of Israel as an outpost for colonialism and the means for aggression and expansion.

The United Kingdom and the United States have played the largest role in implementing this colonialist policy and in enabling zionism to invade Palestine, occupy it and displace most of its people through massacres and terrorist acts. They also enabled Israel, after its establishment, to torture those remaining in the land of Palestine, oppress them, confiscate their land and expand, through armed aggression, into the Arab lands neighbouring Palestine through a series of wars and acts of aggression, in order to implement their design of zionism aimed at the establishment of greater Israel in the Arab world.

The United States and United Kingdom policies are the main source of all the suffering of the Palestinian people. They also remain the reason for the continuation of the serious situation in the Middle East, which jeopardizes peace and security in the world. These two States, instead of honouring their obligations as permanent members of the Security Council, instead of working to achieve a just peace, have consistently supported Israel in its acts of aggression and violations of the Charter of the United Nations; they have become prejudiced in favour of Israel in the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The international community, represented by the United Nations, has the responsibility of compelling Israel to implement the resolutions on the rights of the Palestinian people, all the more so because the United Nations Members which established Israel by the adoption of a resolution have said that United States pressures caused them to vote in favour of that resolution by a simple majority of one additional vote. Despite the fact that the United Nations linked the admission of Israel to membership of the United Nations with Israel's commitment to applying the principles of the Charter and implementing the resolutions of the United Nations, Israel has continued to enjoy membership of this Organization although it repeatedly violates the Charter and flouts the resolutions of the United Nations.

The question of the Arab people of Palestine is the central question in the Syrian Arab Republic. It is also at the core of our struggle for a just peace, which should be based on full Israeli withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories, in addition to the guaranteeing of the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people, which have been recognized by the United Nations, the instituting of an appropriate framework for the implementation of the United Nations resolutions, and the establishment of a comprehensive and just peace to which the peoples of the region and the world aspire.

However, Israel, supported by imperialism and colonialism, blocks the path to a just peace. Israel, in maintaining its domination over occupied Arab territories and in annexing some of them, building settlements on them, and denying the rights of the Palestinian people, does not in any way abide by the principles of international law or the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. On the contrary, it proceeds from metaphysical convictions and methods based on the most reactionary and extremist ideas.

The apparent difference among the rulers of Tel Aviv regarding peace is only a difference between those who want to wrench an official Arab signature on a document under which the Arabs relinquish all usurped Palestinian rights and most of the occupied Arab territories and those who did not originally recognize the existence of occupied Arab territories and usurped Palestinian rights. Israel does not seek peace. It seeks only to impose its hegemony on the region by force and to dictate its conditions, not on the Arab side alone but also on the international community.

The Syrian Arab Republic will continue its support for the just struggle waged by the Palestinian Arab people until its full national rights are restored. We are firmly convinced that Israel will not enjoy peace in our region, however militarily mighty it is, if it continues its occupation of any part of the Arab territories and if it continues its denial of the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people. It will not be forever protected by the unlimited support given to it by the United States and its strategic alliance with that country. That is because people cannot barter their national rights, however powerful and inhuman their enemy is.

On behalf of the Syrian Arab Republic, I wish your meeting every success in supporting the Arab people of Palestine and in supporting its national rights, the realization of which will surely contribute to the establishment of the just peace for which we struggle.

UKRAINIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC

H.E. Mr. Vladimir A. Kravets,
Minister for Foreign Affairs

[Original: Russian]

On the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, we wish to convey our deep appreciation to the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People for its commitment to the implementation of the crucial tasks entrusted to it by the General Assembly of the United Nations.

For four decades, the Arab people of Palestine, forcibly deprived of its homeland, has had to suffer the deprivations of exile and live under the oppression of foreign occupation. It still remains the victim of aggression, brutal terror and repression. The plight of the Palestinian people calls for immediate action to protect and exercise its legitimate inalienable rights.

The Palestinian issue is at the core of the critical conflict situation in the Middle East which poses a serious threat to international peace and security. The United Nations is duty-bound to provide all possible assistance in its just solution.

It is time to intensify action-oriented international efforts in order to settle comprehensively the Middle East conflict on the basis of withdrawal of Israeli forces from all Arab territories occupied since 1967 and to secure the exercise of the legitimate national rights of the Arab people of Palestine, including its right to self-determination and to create an independent State of its own.

Genuine and just settlement, as well as lasting peace in the region, can be reached only through collective efforts. Of great significance for the attainment of these objectives is an early convening of an International Conference on the Middle East, under the auspices of the United Nations, with all the parties concerned, including the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and the permanent members of the Security Council, participating on an equal footing. The credit for the consensus broadly evolving in the world in favour of such a conference we ascribe also to the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.

The Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic reaffirms its solidarity with the just struggle of the Palestinian people under the leadership of the PLO, its sole legitimate representative, for its freedom and independence.

We wish to assure you that persistent efforts of the Committee aimed at promoting the full exercise by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights will always enjoy the support of the Ukrainian SSR.

D. Messages from Governments

BOLIVIA

[Original: Spanish]

In view of various events which have occurred recently, my Government is concerned that the principles governing international relations between countries, such as non-intervention and self-determination, are being continually violated by the use of force.

The date commemorated today is linked to a cause to which the Bolivian people and Government attach great importance and are committed. It represents for our country the reaffirmation of the right of all peoples in the world, in this case the Palestinian people, to self-determination and to return to its occupied homeland in accordance with the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, and to the establishment of a sovereign and independent State on its national soil without foreign interference, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 181 (II) of 1947.

At the same time, my Government reiterates once again that the basic conditions exist for holding an International Peace Conference on the Middle East within the framework of the principles and historical practices of the United Nations, with the participation of all States and organizations which can contribute loyally to the establishment of a climate of peace and brotherhood among the peoples of that region.

CYPRUS

Dr. Vassos Lyssarides, President of the House of
Representatives of the Republic of Cyprus

[Original: English]

On the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, the Committee for Solidarity with the Palestinian People of the House of Representatives of Cyprus reiterates its full support for the restoration of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. We are committed to supporting all efforts for a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the question of Palestine in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and its relevant resolutions and fully endorse the call by the United Nations General Assembly in resolution 41/43 D for the immediate convening of an International Peace Conference on the Middle East under the auspices of the United Nations and with the participation of all the parties concerned including the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

HUNGARY

Presidential Council of the Hungarian People's Republic

[Original: English]

On the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, the Presidential Council of the Hungarian People's Republic and the people of Hungary assure the Palestinian people and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) of their high esteem and support in the struggle they are waging for the exercise of their national rights and a just solution of the Palestinian problem.

We are convinced that a just and lasting peace in the Middle East cannot be brought about without the settlement of the Palestinian problem. The holding of an International Conference under the auspices of the United Nations and with the participation of all the parties concerned, including the PLO and the permanent members of the Security Council, would be of great importance to the establishment of peace.

We take this opportunity to reaffirm our solidarity with the cause of the Palestinian people and to emphasize our continuing intention to develop close and friendly relations with the Palestinian people and its sole legitimate representative, the PLO.

We wish the Palestinian people and the PLO every success in strengthening their unity and asserting their inalienable national rights as well as in their efforts at a comprehensive settlement of the Middle East crisis.

LEBANON

Mr. Hussein Hussein, President of the National Assembly of Lebanon

[Original: Arabic]

The Lebanese people's solidarity with the Palestinian people is an established fact. The Lebanese people's support for the Palestinian people is constant.

The cause of the Palestinian is at the heart of the Middle East crisis. Unless the Palestinians are allowed to exercise their legitimate rights - the right to return, their right to self-determination and the establishment of their own State on their territory - peace will not come to the Middle East. Thus it is necessary to hold an International Peace Conference, in which all parties concerned would participate on a footing of equality, including the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. The five permanent members of the Security Council would also participate in that Conference in order to find a just, global and lasting solution to this question.

Lebanon accepts the principle of holding an International Peace Conference on the Middle East. As a party interested in the fate of thousands of Palestinians on its territory, we support the Secretary-General's efforts and those of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People to bring about such a Conference. In this regard, Lebanon sends its thanks to the Secretary-General and to you personally, Mr. Chairman.

MONGOLIA

Council of Ministers of the Mongolian People's Republic

[Original: Russian]

We warmly congratulate you and the brave Palestinian people and its sole legitimate representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). On this day of celebration we again express the deep solidarity of the Mongolian people with the just struggle of the Palestinian people against the strategic co-operation of the imperialist and Zionist reactionary forces and against their aggressive policies. We support it in its desire to establish its own State as part of its inalienable rights.

The People's Republic of Mongolia has consistently supported the practical efforts and activities carried out under the auspices of the United Nations. We support the convening of a Peace Conference on the Middle East. That would be the only sensible way to settle the Middle East problem. All interested parties, including the PLO, should participate in the Conference on an equal footing. We wish the Palestinian people, under the leadership of the PLO, great success in consolidating the Palestinian resistance. We call for support by the entire world of the progressive Arab forces.

NICARAGUA

[Original: Spanish]

The ninth anniversary commemorating the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People should remind us of the heroism of the struggle of a people forced into a nomadic existence as a result of the illegal occupation of its territory, which dismantled and scattered the Palestinian society.

This heroic people has refused to accept the occupation as the irreversible historical reality that Israel claimed is to be. Generation after generation, the Palestinian people has recovered and maintained its own identity; it has maintained and renewed its national movement and has waged the struggle for its national rights, which have been denied. Under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the Palestinian people has rebuilt its devastated society. It has established its political, military, economic, cultural and social institutions. By virtue of all this, the Palestinian people is an active participant in Middle East affairs.

In view of the firm determination of this people, the international community must respond. Israel's systematic disregard for the numerous General Assembly and Security Council resolutions makes it necessary to take serious and responsible measures enabling us to bring about just and lasting peace in that region, which will be possible only if the Palestinian people is permitted to return to its home through the establishment of its own free and independent State.

The Government and people of Nicaragua, on this occasion, wish to reaffirm once again their unswerving solidarity with the fraternal Palestinian people, convinced that both peoples are the victims of the same imperialist policies.

The Government and people of Nicaragua will demand indefatigably the immediate withdrawal by Israel from each and every one of the occupied Arab and Palestinian territories, because that occupation violates the most basic norms of international law.

The Government and people of Nicaragua also reaffirm their strong solidarity with the PLO, which before long, in the vanguard of its people's struggle, will be able to lead the Palestinian people to its ultimate liberation.

UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

Council of Ministers of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

[Original: Russian]

On the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, we are extending to the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and through it to the entire Arab Palestinian people, our cordial congratulations and wishes for success in the joint struggle for the exercise of its legitimate national rights, including the right to self-determination, to the creation of its own State.

We in the Soviet Union are following, with feelings of solidarity and sincere affinity, the dedicated struggle of the Palestinians under the leadership of the PLO as the only legitimate representative of the Palestinian people against the Israeli occupation of its lands, infringement of its rights and dignity, for a just and comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict and its key - the Palestinian problem - in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and its decisions. The road to such a settlement lies through the convocation of an International Conference on the Middle East with the participation of all parties concerned, including the PLO and the permanent members of the United Nations Security Council.

The world knows very well and appreciates the contribution made by the PLO, in accordance with the decisions of the eighteenth session of the Palestine National Council, to international efforts to prepare that forum. Success in this undertaking can be insured by joint actions of all those who are genuinely interested in a just and lasting peace in the Middle East, coupled with close co-operation and co-ordination of the Arab States and peoples, and the consolidation of the unity and cohesion of the Palestinian movement itself.

E. Statements by Regional Groups at the United Nations

GROUP OF AFRICAN STATES

H.E. Mr. Timon Sam Mangwazu, Permanent Representative
of Malawi to the United Nations and Chairman of the
Group of African States for the month of November

[Original: English]

On behalf of the African Group, I have the honour to address this special meeting to commemorate the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.

For 40 years now, the Palestinian people have been subjected to innumerable indignities, torture, deprivation of its inalienable rights to self-determination. Because of these and other conditions the Palestinians are scattered all over the Middle East, mainly as refugees under extremely difficult conditions, to say the least.

Africa understands what it means to be a people under foreign rule, and worse still, to be without a homeland. It is natural, therefore, that we view the plight of the Palestinian people with great seriousness and sympathy. We do not believe that the situation under which the Palestinians live helps to create a situation under which there could be peaceful coexistence in the Middle East between Arabs and Israelis. The Palestinian people has the right to a homeland and self-determination, as Israel has that right.

We strongly believe that without finding a solution to the problem of the Palestinian people there can be no solution to the conflict between the Arabs and Israelis. Unfortunately, the occupation of Arab territories by Israel in 1967 and the illegal activities undertaken by Israel in those territories are causing extreme anxieties. In this regard, the international community has recently been quite loud and clear during the debate on item 38, on the question of Palestine. It is our sincere hope that Israel has taken note of the views expressed by Member States of the United Nations.

The African Group cannot but be sympathetic with the Palestinian people in its unacceptable situation. It is our hope that it will soon be free and be able to exercise its inalienable right in its own homeland.

In expressing our solidarity with the Palestinian people, we would like to be positive, but in being positive it is crucial to be honest. It will not do to pay lip-service to the need of finding a peaceful solution to the problems of the Palestinian people: there ought to be an honest intention to enter into serious negotiations with a spirit of give and take on both sides of the negotiating table, otherwise, regimentation will continue to create an impasse.

The General Assembly has endorsed the idea of holding an International Peace Conference on the problems of Palestine and the Middle East. We strongly believe that all the parties concerned should participate in the Conference. However, we are aware of the need to resolve the many problems that there are on the holding of the Conference. It is our sincere hope that negotiations will start without undue delay so as to make it possible for the International Peace Conference to be held soon. To this end, we appreciate the good work of the Secretary-General in

encouraging the parties concerned to agree to the holding of and their participation in the International Peace Conference.

We have noted with interest that some countries are providing economic assistance to the Palestinians and are opening their markets for agricultural and other products from the Palestinians. This assistance should be encouraged and ought to be emulated by other countries able to provide competitive and lucrative prices for products from the Palestinians.

We wish to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the good work your Committee is doing and to you personally for the excellent leadership you are giving in the interest of the Palestinian people.

Palestinians require support from all peace-loving countries of the world. We of the African Group wish to express our solidarity with the Palestinian people on this Day and always.

GROUP OF ARAB STATES

H.E. Mr. Mohamed Salem Basendwah, Permanent Representative of the
Yemen Arab Republic to the United Nations and Chairman of the
Group of Arab States for the month of November

[Original: Arabic]

It is a special honour for me to speak on behalf of the Group of Arab States on this important occasion. Our participation is based on our fraternal relations with the Palestinian people and our absolute belief in the right of all colonized peoples to regain their homelands and achieve self-determination, freedom and independence.

We are grateful to the Committee for having convened this important meeting; we wish also to thank all the champions of Palestine world-wide, especially the Secretary-General and the Chairman and other members of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.

We are gathered here to commemorate the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. This is a very special gathering, for we embody international solidarity with and support for the struggle being waged by the Palestinian people.

They have been tireless in that struggle for the right to self-determination and to the establishment of an independent State in its sacred homeland and under the leadership of its sole legitimate representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). Today's meeting is intended to remind the international community of the tragedy of the Palestinian people, which has endured too much for too long; it has waited too long for a just solution. It is intended also to remind peoples and States that we must continue to condemn Israel, which is responsible for the calamities that have befallen the heroic Palestinian people.

We are commemorating this International Day of Solidarity barely five days after last Wednesday's attack by the heroic fedayeen against the Israeli army camp; that is no accident. It showed that Israel cannot guarantee its security by force alone; that is an illusion believed only by Israel itself. That courageous, daring act showed that the will of an undaunted people will result in the exercise of that people's inalienable rights, and that the only road to a just and lasting peace in the Middle East inevitably leads through a must solution to the Palestinian problem guaranteeing the Palestinians their legitimate right to their homeland, to self-determination and to build an independent State on Palestinian soil.

The Israeli solders fled in the face of the attacks by the heroic Palestinian heroes of the feyadeen, proving that justice will finally win out over injustice. Thus far, the Israeli authorities have been able to usurp Palestine by chasing out its inhabitants and by promoting massive immigration by Jewish settlers. They have relied on blind military force, massacres, exile, dispersion. But their temporary success has not eliminated the Palestinian identity, and it cannot overcome the courageous struggle of that heroic people.

The arrogance engendered by armed force and by the unlimited support given Israel by the United States has thus far convinced Israeli leaders that high-handed rejection of a just and lasting peace can win out. That is a challenge to the Palestinian people, to the entire United Nations and to all who cherish freedom and justice.

The new road to a solution to the Middle East and Palestinian problems was laid out clearly in General Assembly resolution 38/58 C, which sets the guidelines for an International Peace Conference on the Middle East. But the arrogant Israelis, filled with a sense of their own strength, continue stubbornly to reject the Conference; they are betting on military force to achieve a peace to their own liking. They have not read their history carefully. The lessons of history will teach them to return to reason.

Israel must abandon its settlements. It cannot rely solely on support from imperialist States. In its resolution 38/58 C the General Assembly blazed the trail to a historic rendezvous which we must not fail to keep. The Israeli authorities must not let this occasion pass, or there will never be peace. The valiant Palestinian people remain under the leadership of its sole legitimate representative, the PLO; they will fight valiantly to the end. It is Israel that will be conquered, along with all those who assist it, all who are enemies of the people, all who are enemies of peace.

GROUP OF ASIAN STATES

H.E. Mr. Karim Ebrahim Al-Shakar, Permanent Representative
of the State of Bahrain to the United Nations and Chairman
of the Group of Asian States for the month of November

[Original: Arabic]

It gives me great pleasure, in my capacity as Chairman of the Group of Asian States at the United Nations for this month, to address this special meeting on such a solemn occasion, in which the international community is observing the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. On behalf of the Asian Group, I extend to you, Mr. Chairman and to the distinguished members of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, our gratitude for your tireless and continuous efforts to alleviate the suffering of the Palestinian Arab people.

The Asian nations share the international community's solidarity, based on the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, with the just struggle of the Palestinian people. They have consistently voted in favour of all United Nations resolutions condemning the continued Israeli occupation of Palestinian and other Arab territories and the inhuman practices in those territories, particularly in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. They have also been host to a number of seminars held under the auspices of the various United Nations bodies, with a view to mobilizing public opinion in support of Palestinian rights.

The Asian Group has always stated its profound belief that the crux of the Middle East conflict is the question of Palestine which has been on the agenda of this Organization for over four decades. The essence of that question is the attainment by the Palestinian people of its legitimate national rights, including its right to sovereignty in Palestine, the return to its homeland and self-determination. The Group has also indicated on many occasions that the only way towards the attainment of this goal is through the realization of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace based on the principles of international law and the relevant United Nations resolutions. For this reason, the Asian States supported the call for the convening of an International Peace Conference on the Middle East, under the auspices of the United Nations, in which all of the parties concerned participate on an equal footing, including the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, as well as the permanent members of the Security Council.

Because of the deep commitment of the Asian countries to the Palestinian cause and also because of the continued grave deterioration of the situation in the occupied territories, and the region as a whole, resulting from the Israeli intransigence in rejecting all United Nations initiatives and resolutions related to the question of Palestine, the group reiterates its position in support of convening an International Peace Conference under the auspices of the United Nations, as has been specified in the various General Assembly resolutions.

It is gratifying to note that the United Nations spared no efforts to put an end to the injustice suffered by the Palestinian people for more than four

decades. The General Assembly and the Security Council, as well as other international bodies, have adopted, in accordance with their moral obligations and in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of justice, numerous resolutions reaffirming the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force and calling for the unconditional withdrawal of Israel from all the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem. Regrettably, however, Israel continues to apply its "iron-fist" policy by uprooting and displacing the Palestinian people and destroying its national identity, contrary to all United Nations resolutions on the question and the principles of international law and in violation of human rights.

The brutality of the Israeli occupation in the West Bank and other Arab territories has been denounced and condemned by the majority of nations on numerous occasions for its violations of international law and the principles of the United Nations Charter. These violations include: collective punishment, mass expulsions, demolition of houses, expropriation of land and water resources, all of which are intended to force the Palestinian Arabs to leave their homes in order to fulfil the Israeli objective of the Judaization of the entire Palestinian land. The international awareness and concern that the rights of the Palestinians were thus continuously being trampled upon and ignored, together with the realization that the lack of a comprehensive and just solution to the question of Palestine continues to endanger international peace and security, led to the establishment of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People in 1975. The fact that today the international community observes a day of solidarity with the Palestinian people is clear evidence of the efforts of the United Nations in gaining global recognition for its basic and inalienable national rights.

We are living in a world no longer capable of compartmentalization. The Middle East region is no longer capable of containing the dangers of the Arab-Israeli conflict. For that reason, we urge the international community, on this solemn occasion, which coincides with the twentieth year of the Israeli occupation, to stand up to its responsibilities by intensifying its efforts in bring and end to the tragedy of the Palestinian people and by actively working towards the convening of an International Peace Conference on the Middle East, in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions, so peace can become a reality in that part of the world and confidence in the United Nations can be restored.

GROUP OF EASTERN EUROPEAN STATES

H.E. Mr. Eugeniusz Noworyta, Permanent Representative of the
Polish People's Republic to the United Nations and Chairman of the
Group of Eastern European States for the month of November

[Original: English]

On behalf of the Group of Eastern European States and in my capacity as its Chairman, I should like to extend to you, Mr. Chairman, our Group's appreciation of the important work of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People in promoting the cause of the Palestinian people and enabling that people to exercise its rights.

The International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People serves to remind the international community of the plight of the Palestinian people and also to mobilize international opinion towards taking action to enable that people to recover and fully exercise its legitimate rights. On this solemn occasion I should like to reiterate our solidarity with and firm support for the Palestinian people, led by its sole legitimate representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), in its struggle for the attainment of its inalienable national rights. We should also like to assure them of our resolve to work relentlessly towards finding a solution to the question of Palestine.

By general recognition, the question of Palestine is the underlying cause of the Middle East conflict. Despite the continuing efforts of the international community to find a peaceful, just and lasting solution to the question of Palestine, that objective has not been attained, and the fate of the Palestinian people continues to cause great concern throughout the world. We are concerned at the continuing deterioration of the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories as a result of illegal measures taken by the Israeli authorities which only heighten tension in the region and present serious obstacles to international action for a just and lasting solution to the question of Palestine. In the absence of such a solution, the violence will continue, with serious consequences not only for the region but also for international peace and security the world over.

The basis for the solution of the question of Palestine and by the same token, of the Middle East conflict is to be found in the relevant United Nations resolutions. They provide for the full exercise by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights including the right to return, the right to self-determination without external interference and the right to create its own independent State in Palestine, as well as the withdrawal of Israeli forces from all Arab territories occupied since 1967, while providing guarantees for the independence and sovereignty of all the States of the region.

Ever since the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 38/58 C, support has been growing for the convening of an International Peace Conference on the Middle East as the only practical approach to advance the prospects of a Middle East settlement. A number of proposals to advance the search for a peaceful settlement has been put forward, inter alia, the Soviet Union's proposals of 29 July 1984 on a Middle East settlement and proposals of other Socialist countries, the Arab Peace Plan of Fez and the Final Declaration of the Amman Summit Meeting, which offer important guidelines to the work of the Conference.

The members of the Group of Eastern European States voice their support for the establishment of a preparatory committee within the framework of the Security Council and with the participation of its permanent members, as called for in General Assembly resolution 41/43 D, as a means of undertaking practical steps towards the convening of the Conference, and support the efforts of the Secretary-General with a view to convening the Conference.

We share the conviction expressed in the aforementioned resolution that the convening of the Conference will constitute a major contribution by the United Nations towards the realization of a just solution to the question of Palestine conducive to the achievement of a comprehensive, just and lasting solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The States members of the Eastern European Group view the results of the eighteenth session of the Palestine National Council, held at Algiers in April 1987, as a significant contribution to achieving a just solution to the question of Palestine. They welcome in particular the unequivocal support of the PLO for the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East. As the Secretary-General of the United Nations indicates in his report on the work of the Organization, "Unfortunately, it has not yet proved possible to obtain the agreement of all the parties to the principle of an international conference" and this has hindered his efforts to make progress in the preparations for such a Conference.

Therefore, additional concrete and constructive efforts by all Governments are urgently needed in order to convene the Conference without further delay. The States members of the Eastern European Group encourage the Secretary-General to pursue his efforts in search of a comprehensive settlement in the framework of an International Conference under United Nations auspices, in which all parties would participate. We will continue to support all endeavours by the United Nations towards the solution of the question of Palestine. I am sure that the special meeting of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People to commemorate the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People will provide new stimuli to redouble international efforts to solve this issue.

LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN GROUP

H.E. Mr. Victor E. Beauge, Deputy Permanent Representative of
Argentina to the United Nations and Chairman of the Latin
American and Caribbean Group for the month of November

[Original: Spanish]

I have the honour to participate in this observance of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People on behalf of the States members of the Latin American and Caribbean Group for the purpose of emphasizing the special importance the region attaches to the struggle the Palestinian people is waging to achieve recognition by the international community of the full exercise of its legitimate and inalienable rights.

Today, as in the past, the question of Palestine is the core of the situation in the Middle East. More than 35 years have passed since that question became one of the most urgent and delicate matters with which the United Nations has had to deal. During those long years we have witnessed numerous diplomatic initiatives which regrettably have not resulted in the settlement of the Palestinian problem. The way opened up by those initiatives should now lead the international community to redouble its efforts so that peace may be established once and for all in that turbulent region.

The just and final solution to which we all aspire has been outlined in numerous resolutions of both the General Assembly and the Security Council. It includes express recognition of the Palestinian people's legitimate right to national self-determination and independence, its right to set up a national State, and the right of all the States of the region to exist in peace within secure and internationally recognized boundaries. The convening of a peace conference under United Nations auspices, which has almost total support, should receive our immediate attention. That Conference should become the appropriate mechanism for the attainment of the objective we have sought for so many years.

On this day I cannot fail to mention the important work being done by the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. That Committee, under the intelligent guidance of Ambassador Massamba Sarré of Senegal, deserves the special gratitude of all the countries of our region.

I should like to end my statement by reaffirming the commitment of the Latin American and the Caribbean region to a peaceful and just settlement of the Palestine question with the participation of all the parties concerned, including the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), which has a historical role to play in the attainment of peace in the Middle East.

F. Statements by United Nations Committees

SPECIAL COMMITTEE AGAINST APARTHEID

H.E. Mr. Guennadi I. Oudovenko, Permanent Representative of the
Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic to the United Nations and
Vice-Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid

[Original: English]

On this solemn occasion of the observance of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, the Special Committee against Apartheid joins the international community in reiterating its dedication to the exercise of the Palestinian people's legitimate rights. We wish to express our unequivocal support for the struggle of the Palestinian people, under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the Palestinian people's sole legitimate representative, for self-determination and statehood. This meeting should help to focus attention on the continuing plight of the Palestinian people and on the imperative need urgently to reach a just and permanent solution to the problem.

The denial of the right of self-determination is the common root cause of the sufferings of both the people of Palestine and the black people of South Africa. The problems of both Palestine and apartheid have long been before the United Nations and have caused the gravest concern to the international community. Both the Palestinians and the South African black majority are the victims of settler-colonialism, subjugation, discrimination, repression, mass arrests, torture, killing of civilians and other such inhuman treatment. The close collaboration between Israel and South Africa, in defiance of the United Nations and the international community, stem from their common interest in selfishly perpetuating their exploitative and expansionist policies at the expense of the oppressed peoples of Palestine, South Africa and Namibia.

It is high time that the United Nations should take effective action to remedy the situation. The Palestinian people should be enabled to return to its homes and establish its own independent State. The Palestinian problem is the core of the Middle East conflict. It has been 40 years since the matter was brought before the United Nations for consideration and 20 years since Israel occupied the West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem. The plight of the entire Palestinian people in the diaspora, in refugee camps, and in the occupied territories, should be ended with a just and lasting solution that will entail the exercise of its right to self-determination, to national independence and sovereignty and to return to its homes.

For a peaceful solution of the problem, the centrality and importance of the role of the authentic representative of the Palestinian people, namely the PLO, should be borne in mind. The withdrawal of Israel from the occupied Arab territories is essential. The main elements pronounced by the General Assembly for a solution include the right of all States to live in peace within secure and recognized borders as well as the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and independent statehood. Under the present circumstances, there seems to be no better way to a peaceful solution than a negotiating process through the International Peace Conference under the auspices of the United Nations.

Regrettably, the recommendations of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, which have been repeatedly endorsed by the General Assembly, have not been implemented because of the opposition of certain permanent members of the Security Council. Incidentally, the opponents of these recommendations are the same ones which have alone prevented the Security Council from imposing comprehensive mandatory sanctions on the apartheid régime under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations. It is encouraging, however, that the Extraordinary Arab Summit Conference, held at Amman from 8 to 11 November 1987, supported the convening of the International Peace Conference under United Nations auspices and with the participation, on an equal footing, of all parties concerned, including the PLO and the permanent members of the Security Council.

I would like to appeal to the international community to extend all possible moral, diplomatic and material support to the struggling people of Palestine. At the same time, I would like to pay tribute to the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Right of the Palestinian People for the excellent work carried out to mobilize public opinion and international support for the implementation of the relevant resolutions of the United Nations. I pledge to the Committee our full co-operation.

I would also like to take this opportunity to express our deep appreciation to the Secretary-General for his tireless efforts in the search for a comprehensive settlement in the Middle East, which would take fully into account the rights of the Palestinians.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE SITUATION WITH REGARD TO THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF
INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES (SPECIAL COMMITTEE OF 24)

H.E. Mr. Tesfaye Tadesse, Permanent Representative of Ethiopia to the
United Nations and Chairman of the Special Committee of 24

[Original: English]

This Day of Solidarity symbolizes the commitment of the United Nations to the Palestinian cause and its reaffirmation of a fundamental responsibility to seek a just and lasting solution to the Palestinian problem. The meeting also emphasizes once again the recognition by the international community that no durable solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict can be found outside a just solution of the Palestinian problem. Indeed, a comprehensive settlement covering all aspects of the Middle East crisis cannot possibly be conceived without the effective involvement and participation of the Palestinian people and its representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).

This Organization must accordingly work diligently for the creation of all the conditions which are indispensable for a just and lasting peace in the area. These include the realization of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination, including the right to establish an

independent State, the right of all States in the area to an independent existence and a strict observance of the principle of non-acquisition of territory by force.

To that end, the General Assembly, in its resolution 38/58 C and 41/43 D, set out in no uncertain terms the course of action to be taken, namely the convocation of an International Peace Conference on the Middle East. It is encouraging to note in that connection that a growing measure of support exists for the convening of such a Conference, under the auspices of the United Nations, to serve as a negotiating basis towards a comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. We are particularly grateful to the Secretary-General for his intensified effort in this regard, which will no doubt enhance the prospect for agreement on the part of all concerned.

The encroachment by Israel of Arab territory over the past two decades, its armed aggression and other repressive measures against the people of Palestine, must not be permitted to continue with impunity. An end must be put, without any further delay, to the suffering of the people in the area, who have, over the past four decades, lived through incessant acts of violence and inhumanity. Given the necessary will and commitment of all concerned and assisted by the continued endeavour of the Secretary-General, I am confident that the day is in sight for the people of Palestine to exercise freely its inherent rights, including its inalienable right to self-determination, as we advance a step closer to a comprehensive settlement based on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973).

The Special Committee of 24 attaches great significance to the mobilization of international opinion towards the attainment of the objectives of the United Nations on the question of self-determination for all people under alien or colonial domination. We are profoundly aware of the power of an alert and informed world public opinion in the struggle against injustice, oppression and alien and colonial domination. I am confident therefore that our meeting today will serve not only as a reminder for the Organization that it must redouble its efforts in the finding of a just solution to the question of Palestine, but also as a clear message to the world at large in solidarity with and support for the cause of the Palestinian people. In so doing, we shall be serving the cause of justice and peace.

Before concluding, I should like to acknowledge with appreciation the very important work carried out by the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, under the outstanding and dedicated leadership of Ambassador Sarré of Senegal. In keeping with the relevant decisions of the General Assembly, it is incumbent upon all of us to work closely and to co-operate fully with the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People in the discharge of its tasks to enable the Palestinian people to decide its destiny in accordance with its own aspirations and wishes. Only then will the injustice imposed upon it for so long be brought to an end and the special obligation assumed by the United Nations in 1947 finally be fulfilled.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE ISRAELI PRACTICES AFFECTING
THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE POPULATION OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

H.E. Mr. Nissanka Wijewardane, Permanent Representative of
Sri Lanka to the United Nations and Chairman of the Special Committee

[Original: English]

On behalf of my colleagues on the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories and on my own behalf, I am delivering this short message on the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.

Since it was established in December 1968 arising from the 1967 hostilities and territorial occupation by Israel, the Special Committee has prepared and submitted a total of 19 reports to the General Assembly and has attempted in these reports to provide as accurate a description of the situation of the human rights of the civilian population in the occupied territories as is possible on the basis of evidence gathered by it.

As in previous years, the Government of Israel has persisted in its lack of co-operation with the Special Committee. The Special Committee has constantly been denied the opportunity of visiting the occupied territories. The Special Committee has nevertheless endeavoured to fulfil its mandate by reflecting in its report a composite picture of the reality of life in the occupied territories as it affects the human rights of the civilian population.

On the basis of the information and evidence before it the Special Committee has reached the conclusion that the climate of tension and violence which pervades the occupied territories shows no sign of abatement: on the contrary it seems to be reaching a climax coinciding with the twentieth year of occupation.

The unrelenting determination on the part of the Israeli authorities implementing the so-called "iron-fist" policy and that of Israeli settlers imposing their will on the civilian population has resulted in the aggravation of the diverse forms of harassment and humiliation imposed on the Arab population. These harassments take different and varied forms from arrests and administrative detention orders imposed on civilians to intensification of the recourse to illegal practices such as that of collective punishment imposed on innocent victims by destroying their houses and arbitrary measures of expulsion and deportation used for obvious political reasons.

Furthermore, the civilian population has put up with continuing deterioration of its living conditions, while economic pressures are persistently being exerted on workers and farmers. At the same time limitations are being placed on the exercise of basic freedoms, such as freedom of movement, expression and association. The situation regarding education in the occupied territories has been particularly devastating and is marked by tragic events leading to the death of students, the frequent closure of educational institutions and severe repression against teachers and students.

The Israeli policy of settlement and physical annexation of the occupied territories continues to be ruthlessly implemented, causing the forcible expropriation of Palestinians and inducing them to leave their homeland, joining several hundreds of thousands of Palestinians who have been denied by the Israeli authorities the fundamental right to return to their homeland.

In concluding this short but harrowing narration, I should therefore like, together with my colleagues, to reiterate our strong appeal to the international community to assume its responsibility towards the Palestinian civilian population, by adopting measures for the alleviation of their burdens and provide adequate safeguards for the realization of their long-denied fundamental rights and freedom.

UNITED NATIONS COUNCIL FOR NAMIBIA

H.E. Lt. Gen. Peter D. Zuze, Permanent Representative
of Zambia to the United Nations and President
of the United Nations Council for Namibia

[Original: English]

Throughout history, conflicts have afflicted mankind in varying degrees and most of them have been caused by land disputes. Whereas man has in some cases managed through mediation to end such conflicts, in many cases collective efforts to restore peace have yielded no result. The question of Palestine is one of those issues that have for a long time now eluded our collective efforts to find a just and lasting solution. It is thus an honour and a great privilege for me as President of the United Nations Council for Namibia, to join you in this solemn observance of the Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People and to express the Council's solidarity with the dispossessed and struggling Palestinians.

On this occasion, I should like to reiterate the appreciation of the Council for Namibia for the valuable work which the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People carries out under the wise and dedicated chairmanship of Ambassador Sarré of Senegal.

It is fitting on this solemn occasion to recall that the General Assembly's decision to create two separate States in Palestine, a Jewish State and a Palestinian State, has not been fulfilled in total. While a Jewish State known as Israel exists, the Palestinians have no homeland. They have been displaced from their land and now live in the diaspora as refugees and in some cases under Israeli occupation in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. This unfortunate situation has brought about tension and conflicts in the Middle East. We in the Council for Namibia firmly believe that unless and until the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination and independence are fully realized, the Middle East conflict will continue for a

long time. For it is a fact that the question of Palestine is the core of the Middle East conflict. It is one of the most pressing items on the agenda of the United Nations.

We in the Council for Namibia wish to reiterate that Security Council resolution 242 (1967) which, inter alia, provides for the right of the Palestinian people to return to its homeland and properties, offers the best chance for a peaceful solution to this vexing problem. The Palestinian people must be allowed to return to its homeland in dignity so that a process for determining its own destiny could start.

The final documents of the summits of the League of Arab States held at Fez, Morocco in 1982 and Amman, Jordan, in 1987 provide additional elements for resolving the Middle East conflict. We call on Israel scrupulously to respect the rights of the Palestinian people and to withdraw from all occupied Arab lands as a first step towards the realization of the rights of the Palestinian people. In this regard, I wish to reiterate the Council's belief that in order to have a chance to establish mutual trust and confidence, Israel should accept unconditionally the idea of holding an International Peace Conference on the Middle East at which the parties to the conflict would participate on an equal footing. We believe that both the United States and the Soviet Union should participate in such a Conference.

Israel should realize that it is in its own interest that this problem is resolved peacefully. Continued armed attacks on its neighbours will not solve the problem. There is no doubt that, if the question of Palestine is addressed fully, Israel could peacefully co-exist with all its Arab neighbours in secure and internationally recognized boundaries.

There are striking similarities between the situation in the Middle East and that of Namibia. Both issues have been on the agenda of the United Nations since its inception. Indeed, on these issues, the United Nations has set up blueprints for a lasting solution. Yet, despite the international consensus in favour of the oppressed, both issues are far from resolution. Both represent failed collective efforts of the United Nations to intervene successfully in matters of threats to international peace and security. Ordinary people the world over now question the credibility of the United Nations as a guarantor of peace and freedom in the world today.

We the States Members of the United Nations have an inescapable responsibility to ensure that the rights of all peoples to self-determination and independence are fully realized without further delay. We have a responsibility to restore the fading credibility of the United Nations and thus contribute to the goal of the preservation of international peace and security. We must rededicate ourselves towards the fulfilment of the letter and spirit of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. I believe that the rights of the Palestinian people are sacrosanct and as such they must be realized sooner than later to avoid further bloodshed and suffering.

G. Statements by intergovernmental and other organizations
with observer status at the United Nations

EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY

[Original: English]

The recent debate in the General Assembly on the question of Palestine confirmed the international community's sincere interest in the plight of the Palestinian people and the strong support that exists for its cause.

In this statement during the debate, the Twelve reaffirmed that a comprehensive, just and lasting solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict must be based on Security Council resolution 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and the following two fundamental principles: the right of all States in the area, including Israel, to exist within secure frontiers; and the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination with all that this implies. These principles must be respected by all the parties concerned and thus, by the Palestinian people and by the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), which will have to be associated with the negotiations. Thus the essence of a settlement must be a full, just and lasting accommodation between Israel and the Palestinian people, so that they can live together in peace and security.

The solution of the Arab-Israeli dispute should be based on the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, and in international law, of non-recourse to the use of force and of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force. This implies that Israel must put an end to the territorial occupation it has maintained since the conflict of 1967. Furthermore, pending a withdrawal Israel must, in accordance with the provisions of the Hague Convention of 1907 (IV) and of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, fulfill its obligations as the occupying Power to lift restrictions on political and economic activities and, as the Twelve have reiterated recently in their declaration of 14 September 1987, put an end to the illegal policy of settlements.

The Twelve remain committed to help to bring a lasting political settlement nearer. They have in their declarations of 23 February and of 13 July 1987 expressed their support for an International Conference which is at present the only formula to allow the peace process to move forward. The Twelve have welcomed the fact that the idea of such a Conference has been strongly supported by the Arab Summit Meeting in Amman where important efforts were made to adopt common positions and to foster the unity of the Arab world.

Pending a settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict, the European Community and its member States will continue to help the situation of the Palestinian people by providing economic assistance directly to the Palestinians, as they have done in the past, and by giving effect to their recent decision to give tariff-free access for the occupied territories for all the manufactured products exported to the Community as well as preferential access for some agricultural products. Moreover the Twelve are making major contributions to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) both individually and through the Economic Community. The total value of European Community aid alone will, as a result of a new Convention between the European Community and UNRWA, reach some \$US42 million this year.

LEAGUE OF ARAB STATES

H.E. Mr. Chedli Klibi, Secretary-General of the League of Arab States

[Original: Arabic]

May I express, through you, the full appreciation of the League of Arab States to the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, which has constantly, actively and bravely fought to assert the right of the Palestinian people to independence and the creation of an independent State under the guidance of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), its sole legitimate representative, and under the principles of international law and justice which reject injustice and the usurpation of rights.

Forty years have elapsed since the violation of Palestine, the ejection of the Palestinian people from its land and deprivation of its identity, despite hundreds of international resolutions asking for the restoration of its land to that brave people and for the creation of an independent Palestinian State on its national soil. Respect for the PLO is well known to the international community. The number of States which recognize the PLO and have relations with it is constantly on the increase because that organization represents the national conscience of all Palestinians.

The Arab States have stressed that the only way to settle the Palestinian question is to convene an International Peace Conference on the Middle East under the aegis of the United Nations. That Conference must be objective, effective and have comprehensive terms of reference. All permanent members of the Security Council must take part in that Conference, as must parties to the conflict, including the PLO, on a footing of full equality with all other parties and members of the Conference.

Terrorism organized and perpetrated by Israel against the inhabitants of the occupied Arab lands runs counter to the principles of international law and international conventions, among them the Geneva and Hague Conventions.

In addition to daily spoliation of hundreds of acres of Palestinian lands in order to make possible the establishment of Jewish settlements and colonies and to expel Palestinians from their lands, Israel destroys Palestinian land under cultivation by burning such land, thus compelling the Palestinians to leave that land.

Among these arbitrary practices Israel resorts to monstrous torture against prisoners and, as members know, many organs of the world's press have described those tortures, which have been condemned many times by the international community. When the United Nations adopted a resolution setting up a committee of inquiry, Israel refused to receive that committee on its soil.

We must stress the dangers of organized State terrorism such as that perpetrated by Israel, since it has become a daily occurrence. It is an integral part of the strategy of Israel. As members know the leaders of the Zionist entity, whether legislative or executive, are experts in the matter of terrorism.

We have expressed many times our serious desire to have global, lasting peace, peace founded on the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law. Decisions of the Fez summit meeting bear witness to

our devotion to peace and international law, which recognizes the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination and the creation of its own State in Palestine.

The League of Arab States, on this Day of Solidarity, expresses its faith in the solidarity of the international community and its power to put an end to Israeli injustice and to restore a worthy and free life to the Palestinians.

We extend our most sincere wishes for full success to your Assembly and the United Nations.

MOVEMENT OF NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES

H.E. Mr. R. G. Mugabe, Executive President of the Republic of
Zimbabwe and current Chairman of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries

[Original: English]

Today marks the fortieth anniversary of the bringing of the question of Palestine before the United Nations. Four decades ago, through the adoption by the General Assembly of its resolution 181 (II), popularly known as the partition resolution, the United Nations assumed a moral responsibility to ensure a just and lasting solution to the Palestinian question, which the international community has come to recognize as the core of the Middle East crisis.

We in the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries have undertaken to give our full support to the Palestinian people in its just struggle for the liberation of its homeland and the recovery of its inalienable rights. The realization by the Palestinians of their inalienable rights is indispensable to the solution of the crisis in the Middle East. The United Nations has on numerous occasions reaffirmed those rights, which include the right of the Palestinians to return to their homes from which they have been displaced and uprooted, their right to self-determination without foreign intervention, and their right to establish their own independent and sovereign State on their national territory in conformity with the principles of the Charter and pertinent resolutions of the United Nations. The attainment of those rights can be possible only after Israel's total and unconditional withdrawal from all the occupied Palestinian and Arab territories.

The situation facing the Palestinians in refugee camps in the areas of armed conflict resulting from Israel's invasion and occupation of Lebanese territory is a cause for grave concern. The Movement of Non-Aligned Countries has devoted particular attention to developments in those areas. Following the sudden deterioration of the situation in and around the refugee camps at the end of last year, we made an appeal to the parties concerned to exercise restraint and end the siege that had been imposed on the camps, and we urged the Secretary-General to use his good offices to ensure the provision of humanitarian assistance to the besieged camps. We commend the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and other United Nations agencies for the important work they are undertaking to alleviate the plight of the Palestinians.

However, there remains a pressing need to provide guarantees to protect the safety of Palestinian refugees in the face of continuing Israeli raids and atrocities against the refugee camps. As the presence of Palestinians in refugee camps is a consequence of the non-implementation of General Assembly resolution 181 (II), whose anniversary we are observing, the United Nations has the responsibility to provide guarantees for the protection of those refugees.

At their eighth summit Conference, held at Harare in September 1986, the non-aligned countries were convinced that attempts at partial solutions confined only to some aspects of the Middle East problem while excluding others can only lead to further complications and the deterioration of the situation. They stressed the urgent need to organize an International Peace Conference of the Middle East in conformity with General Assembly resolution 38/58 C of December 1983 in order to achieve a just and comprehensive solution to the problem. We believe that such a conference, convened under the aegis of the United Nations, is the best way to establish a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

That is why we welcomed the adoption by the General Assembly last year of its resolution 41/43 D, which inter alia, calls for the establishment of a preparatory committee within the framework of the Security Council with the participation of all its permanent members as a means to undertake practical steps to convene the Conference. The Movement of Non-Aligned Countries has committed itself to rendering full support to all efforts to carry forward the preparatory work for the convening of the International Peace Conference. The Movement's Committee of Nine on Palestine met at the ministerial level four times this year - in Georgetown, Guyana, in Harare, in Pyongyang and in New York - to review developments in the Middle East and to consider ways and means of hastening the setting in motion of the preparatory process for the peace conference. It also met several times at the ambassadorial level.

The Committee of Nine is determined to render the Secretary-General all the assistance it can in his very important consultations with the parties involved in the Middle East problem. His special effort needs the support of the whole international community, which to a large extent has already accepted the concept of a peace conference. Despite the difficulties and obstacles facing the Secretary-General, the United Nations cannot afford to grow weary and give up, for the Organization has an obligation to ensure the attainment by the Palestinians of their inalienable rights. A further determined effort should be made to find a way of moving forward.

We wish on this occasion to reaffirm our solidarity with the Palestinian people and to renew our firm commitment to supporting the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the sole legitimate, authentic representative of the Palestinian people. We wish also to reaffirm the principles of **non-interference** and non-intervention in the internal and external affairs of the Palestinian people and the right of the PLO to free and independent decision-making.

As the whole international community focuses its attention on the preparations necessary for the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East we wish to emphasize that the PLO alone has the full right to represent the Palestinian people, and we reaffirm the right of the PLO to participate on an independent and equal footing in all endeavours, international conferences and activities whose objective is to ensure respect for and the attainment of the exercise of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

In that context, we are gravely perturbed at the closure of the PLO office in Washington and present pressure directed at the organization's Mission to the United Nations.

ORGANIZATION OF THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE

H.E. Mr. Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada, Secretary-General
of the Organization of the Islamic Conference

[Original: English]

The Organization of the Islamic Conference joins the international community in commemorating the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. This decision of the United Nations General Assembly in 1977 to observe this day annually is in reaffirmation of the support of the international community for the just and legitimate struggle of the Palestinian people, under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), its sole and legitimate representative, for the restitution of its inalienable national rights to return, to self-determination, and to an independent and sovereign State in Palestine, with Al-Quds as its capital.

The question of Palestine constitutes the core of the conflict in the Middle East and is a direct consequence of Zionist usurpation and illegal occupation of Palestinian territories and the oppression, carnage and suppression to which the people of the occupied territories have been subjected. The Zionist entity, since its illegal occupation of Palestinian territories, has pursued policies of violence and terrorism against the people of the occupied territories. It has tried systematically to judaize Palestine, has desecrated the holy places of Muslims in Jerusalem and in the West Bank, has established hundreds of illegal settlements in these territories and has adopted barbaric measures to silence protests by the Palestinian people by killing innocent men, women and children, large-scale detentions and torture of prisoners, eviction of Palestinians from their lands and houses, demolition of their properties, closure of their educational institutions and exploitation of their natural and human resources. It has also consistently committed aggression against Palestinians in the diaspora. These policies are designed to undermine the Palestinian cause and destroy the will of the Palestinian people to struggle against illegal occupation and tyranny. However, these Zionist ambitions are destined to fail. Its barbaric policies have only served to strengthen the resolve of the Palestinian people within the occupied territories as well as outside to continue its struggle for the restitution of its inalienable national rights.

The conflict in the Middle East and the question of Palestine have an important bearing on regional and international peace and security. The principles of a just and lasting settlement of this conflict have been enunciated and reiterated by the United Nations, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the Organization of the Islamic Conference and other international forums. These include the immediate and total withdrawal of Zionist occupation forces from Palestinian and Arab territories including the Holy City of Jerusalem, the restitution of national and inalienable rights of the Palestinian people including its right to return, to

self-determination and the establishment of a sovereign State in Palestine, with Jerusalem as its capital, under the leadership of the PLO, its sole legitimate representative, and right of all States in the region to live in peace within secure and internationally-recognized boundaries.

The Zionist entity has, however, rejected and systematically worked to destroy all peace initiatives by the international community as well as by the Arab States and the peoples of Palestine for a comprehensive and lasting settlement in the Middle East, with full diplomatic, political, military, financial and economic support from the United States.

The Organization of the Islamic Conference calls upon the international community and particularly those countries which continue to assist the Zionist entity despite its clear rejection of peace, to shoulder their responsibility and to undertake effective measures to ensure that the Palestinian people exercise its inalienable rights freely. We believe that the International Peace Conference on the Middle East, under the auspices of the United Nations, and with the participation on the basis of equality by concerned parties, including the PLO, would provide the best opportunity to establish a just and lasting peace in the region. Failure to undertake immediate steps to bring about a just and durable peace in the region can only result in the perpetuation of the conflict and increased threats to international and regional peace and security.

On this day, the Organization of the Islamic Conference reiterates its complete solidarity and total support for the people of Palestine in its valiant struggle against Zionist aggression, occupation, oppression and expansionism. We salute the heroic Palestinian people for the sacrifices it is offering in its noble struggle for the restitution of its inalienable national rights. We also salute Chairman Yasser Arafat for his dynamic leadership of the PLO and for his unceasing efforts for the success of the Palestinian cause.

H. Statements by representative of national liberation movements

PAN AFRICANIST CONGRESS OF AZANIA

Mr. Ahmed Gora Ibrahim, Chief Representative

[Original: English]

On behalf of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC), the custodian of the genuine aspirations of the oppressed, exploited, discriminated against and dispossessed people of Azania, the African name for apartheid South Africa, allow me, on the occasion of the Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, to express our firm support to the oppressed, exploited, discriminated against and dispossessed people of Palestine.

In many respects, the Azanian and Palestinian peoples have had to share a common colonial fate. The peoples of Azania and Palestine have had their countries colonized and then handed over, by British colonialism, to settler minorities. The legitimate and inalienable rights of the indigenous peoples were blatantly flouted and totally disrespected.

Today southern Africa and the Middle East constitute areas of international tension. However, through manipulation, the respective conflicts have been totally distorted, particularly in the West. The Palestinian people, fighting for all those principles for which the United Nations was established and which are enshrined in its Charter, are branded as "terrorists", whilst the usurper is considered a "Member State". The Palestinian people has an inalienable right to establish its free and democratic State in its homeland, Palestine. It also has the right to employ all methods at its disposal to realize this sacred right.

The right to self-determination is an inalienable one. No law, no treaty and certainly no force can deny a people its claim to this right. However, all that can happen is that the exercise of this right can be delayed or temporarily denied, but not the legitimate claim to this right.

In apartheid South Africa, minority settlers were given all political, military and economic rights by the British Parliament, the so-called citadel of democracy, to the total exclusion of the rightful minority. The settlers, who comprised one fifth of the total population, allocated to themselves 87.3 per cent of the land area. It is this wholesale dispossession of a people's country and its right to self-determination that constitutes the cornerstone of the current problem in Southern Africa. Apartheid is not mere racial discrimination but the denial of the fundamental right to self-determination of the oppressed and dispossessed majority.

Given that apartheid South Africa and Zionist Israel are both products of British colonialism; given that settlers were imposed on the majority indigenous populations; and given that they both subscribe to the myth of racial superiority, it is not very difficult to understand the close collaboration that exists between Pretoria and Tel Aviv, despite the fact that the present rulers in apartheid South Africa were known collaborators with the Nazis.

The struggle of the Azanian and Palestinian peoples is one struggle. It is the struggle of peoples to realize their inalienable right to self-determination in the land of their forefathers.

The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and PAC have kept the torch of freedom and the claim of their respective peoples to self-determination in their usurped lands very much alive. They enjoy the full support of their respective peoples and are enjoying ever-growing support of justice-minded peoples the world over. Consequently they must triumph, and they will triumph.

Only the establishment of a free Azania and a free Palestine can effectively end the current crisis in these two parts of the world. And this fact, too, is being fast recognized.

PAC enjoys excellent relations with the Executive Committee of the PLO. The Azanian and Palestinian peoples are daily victims of racist and Zionist terror, hence our solidarity is only natural.

PAC unreservedly supports the just and legitimate struggle of the Palestinian people. This is only natural given the close military, nuclear, intelligence and other forms of collaboration that exist between Pretoria and Tel Aviv.

SOUTH WEST AFRICA PEOPLE'S ORGANIZATION

Mr. M. Nnumzana, Representative

[Original: English]

I wish first of all, on behalf of our fighting people and its vanguard movement, the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) of Namibia, to express our deep appreciation for the kind invitation extended to us in order to participate in the observance of this memorable occasion, the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.

Let me take this opportunity also of commending the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, under the able and dedicated guidance of its Chairman for the work it is doing in mobilizing international solidarity with and support for the just struggle of the Palestinian people.

Once again, we are gathered here to mark an occasion of solidarity with the people of Palestine. It is very sad to recall that for 40 years now the question of Palestine has remained one of the most important questions on the agenda of the United Nations - a question that is still unresolved. Forty years were indeed long enough to bring peace to the oppressed people of Palestine. However, despite the will and the efforts of the international community to bring about a solution to the problem, the Zionist régime of Israel, with the support of its imperialist allies, has created obstacles through renewed acts of violence against innocent Palestinians who only demand their inalienable rights to freedom and self-determination, to their homeland and to sovereignty over their land and resources.

The oppressed but fighting people of Namibia, under the vanguard leadership of SWAPO, its sole and authentic representative, fully identify with the legitimate and just struggle of the people of Palestine, under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), its sole and authentic representative, for political emancipation and national independence.

It is not by mere chance or coincidence that we have come to address this solemn meeting in solidarity with the people of Palestine. We have done so because of the similarity between the tragic history of the Namibian people and that of the Palestinian people, the commonness of the brutal enemies we are fighting against and the commonness of the objectives and aspirations of our dispossessed peoples and our countries by the illegal Zionist and racist régimes in Tel Aviv and Pretoria, respectively. All that makes our solidarity necessary and a matter of principle.

For many years now, the Zionist régime in Tel Aviv has been allowed to continue subjecting the people of Palestine to untold sufferings. Many Palestinians have lost their lives as a result of bombardments and have been annihilated in refugee camps, through the use of all types of destructive weapons. Thousands of men, women, children and old people have been forced to leave their beloved land and become strangers in foreign lands.

The continued Israeli military occupation of Palestine and other Arab territories, the annexation of parts of the occupied territories, the establishment of new settlements and the imposition of Israeli laws continue to be a threat not only to the peoples of the Middle East but also to international peace and security.

The just and heroic struggle being waged by the people of Palestine is our own struggle. Just as the people of Palestine are denied its inalienable rights to self-determination by Zionist Israel, so the people of Namibia continue to be subjected to untold suffering, brutal killing, torture, abduction and all sorts of fascist acts of repression by the racist régime of South Africa.

Namibians and Palestinians share the tragic history of human rights violations, oppression and exploitation of both their natural and their human resources. The hardships and sufferings our two nations have endured over decades deserve more serious attention and efforts by the international community.

The international community has been alerted, on many occasions, to the increasing military, economic and nuclear collaboration between Zionist Israel and the racist régime in Pretoria. The two racist and fascist régimes have been allowed to continue this heinous practice for far too long.

Israel provides the racist régime of South Africa with all types of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear technology. It also trains racist soldiers and provides mercenaries to kill and murder innocent civilians not only in Namibia but in the region of southern Africa as a whole.

Also worth mentioning is the United States Administration and its direct involvement in the suffering of our peoples by collaborating with the two régimes, thus delaying our independence. It is shameful for the administration of a big country such as the United States, which advocates justice and democracy elsewhere, to be involved in the brutalization of our innocent peoples, whose demands are only freedom and self-determination.

Of late, the Reagan Administration is trying to silence the voice of the people of Palestine in its decision to close the Palestine Information Office in Washington. We strongly believe that this and other attempts to close the Permanent Observer Mission of the PLO to the United Nations, and to restrict the movements of the representatives of the African National Congress and SWAPO should be denounced and condemned. We call upon this Committee and the United Nations as a whole to address this question very seriously, because if this campaign against the peoples is allowed to take place it will create a dangerous precedent, denying the rights of oppressed peoples elsewhere to have their voices heard and to be represented in the Organization or be heard by the international public. We therefore call upon the United Nations and this Committee in particular to defend the right of the people of Palestine in its legitimate demands for self-determination and national independence. We strongly condemn such hypocritical double standards and outright disregard of the aspirations of peoples to its basic and fundamental rights.

The international community should, sooner rather than later, find a just solution to the Palestinian problem in order to put an end to the sufferings of the Palestinian people. It is in this regard that SWAPO fully supports the holding of an International Conference on the Middle East, with the full participation of the PLO. We believe that any solution to the Palestinian problem that excludes the participation of the PLO, the sole authentic representative of the Palestinian people, will not achieve lasting peace in the region.

We demand the imposition of comprehensive mandatory sanctions against the two racist régimes for their intransigence and the threat they pose to peace and security in the Middle East and in southern Africa.

Those who, because of their selfish economic interests, side and collaborate with these racist régimes must remember that the history of mankind has shown that no amount of repression, collaboration or distortion will prevent the peoples from attaining freedom and justice. It is a matter of time.

The struggle of the Palestinian people is just. Therefore it must be fully supported. Let the Palestinian people be allowed to return to its land and be given a chance to live in peace. National independence is its birthright.

In conclusion, we once again express our solidarity with the people of Palestine and its vanguard leadership, the PLO, its sole authentic representative, in its struggle for self-determination and national independence.

I. Statements/Messages from non-governmental organizations

INTERNATIONAL CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR
NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE

Mr. Donald Betz, Chairman

[Original: English]

For the third year in succession, it is my honour and privilege to deliver this message on behalf of the International Co-ordinating Committee for Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) on the Question of Palestine (ICCP). My colleagues from ICCP are addressing similar gatherings at United Nations facilities at both Geneva and Vienna. I thank the Committee for this opportunity to speak on behalf of NGOs everywhere that are pursuing peace with justice in the Middle East based on the self-determination of the Palestinian people.

This has been an extraordinary year for our work. Nineteen eighty-seven had been designated by NGOs as the Year of the Palestinian People. It has been commemorated in many different ways throughout the world. From special posters to cultural exhibits, from essay contest to formal conferences, this special focus on the legacy of the Palestinian people has been taken up by hundreds of NGOs around the globe. ICCP collaborated with NGOs in many areas to assist them with projects. ICCP was particularly instrumental in organizing tours of Palestinian women, first in Europe, and later in North America. ICCP worked with NGOs in Israel and the occupied territories to convene an important regional gathering there. This year a special meeting of European NGOs was successfully undertaken at Geneva solely by ICCP and the European NGO Co-ordinating Committee.

At the centre of much of this increased co-ordination and effectiveness has been the ICCP liaison office at Geneva. You may recall that the NGOs that attended the International Meeting on the Question of Palestine, held in Vienna from 2 to 4 July 1986, directed ICCP to explore ways and means to establish such a liaison office as a vital co-ordinating mechanism in the NGO movement. The office has been functioning for 15 months now and has proven its value many times. Our principal problems remain manpower and financing. But the office's relevance and importance are self-demonstrating. The office received a unanimous expression of confidence from NGOs at the latest United Nations International NGO Meeting. The essential work of the ICCP Geneva liaison office must continue. We again request that the United Nations, through this esteemed Committee and the Division for Palestinian Rights, extend all possible assistance to these non-governmental co-ordinating efforts.

ICCP-United Nations co-operation in 1987 took place at many levels and in many locales. The Committee initiated its NGO regional symposia in 1987 with the Asian meeting convened in New Delhi from 8 to 10 June. It had been two years since the first United Nations-sponsored Asian symposia were held. The attending organizations were primarily from India but others attended from China, Mongolia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Japan. The two-day symposium adopted a perceptive statement on the importance of peace in the Middle East and participants rededicated themselves to organizing the region in order to undertake more effective networking activities.

By early summer the North American Regional NGO Symposium on the Question of Palestine gathered together 75 organizations representing a variety of important North American constituents. Their deliberations produced new programmes for action to hold tours of Palestinian women through the continent and actively to oppose attempts to close the Palestine Information Office in Washington.

The emphasis in North America was on workshops and they produced an ambitious list of proposed projects for the coming year. The newly-selected North American Co-ordinating Committee (NACC) reflects the diversity of North American NGOs working together on this issue. New organizations are being attracted to this mobilizing effort and in the process are becoming familiar with the efforts undertaken by the United Nations on this issue.

The highlight of this year's NGO activities was the series of events that commenced at Geneva on 3 September and concluded on 9 September. ICCP and the European Co-ordinating Committee co-produced an exemplary European symposium convened at the World Council of Churches headquarters. The entire programme was designed, financed and executed by NGOs and ICCP. The meeting was attended by 70 European organizations from all parts of the continent. The evaluations were very positive. It is imperative that European NGOs meet annually under United Nations auspices so that the co-ordination realized by the European Co-ordinating Committee, in voluntary co-operation with ICCP, can be reinforced and new directions discussed.

ICCP co-operated with the Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRSC) to mount an extensive display of Palestinian culture and crafts during and after the mentioned meetings. In addition, an important programme on health conditions was presented to over 100 interested organizations by PRSC and it included moving presentations by Dr. Pauline Cutting and Dr. Swee Ang, doctors who offered their services to Palestinian men, women and children in the camps of Lebanon. We all emerged from those programmes more determined than ever to redouble our efforts on behalf of these people who pass unnoticed in the West.

ICCP preparations for the Fourth United Nations International NGO Meeting held in Geneva also included an exhibit of contemporary Palestinian art and films shown on successive nights at a Geneva cinema. ICCP attempted to present a comprehensive portrait of a vibrant, industrious people - the Palestinians. In this way, ICCP, through the indefatigable efforts of its Executive Director and selected members of the Board of Directors, set the stage for the largest international NGO conference ever held on the question of Palestine.

Over 200 NGOs, including 26 representing Israeli peace groups, came to Geneva from the 4 corners of the globe. The highlight of the formal sessions was the presence and comments made by the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), Yassir Arafat. The large hall at the Palais des Nations was overflowing with participants, reporters and others wanting to hear Chairman Arafat. He did not disappoint them but raised many important issues that were retold and interpreted by journalists and political analysts alike.

He was particularly commentary of the work undertaken by NGOs everywhere as co-ordinated through ICCP. It was the clearest expression to date that the initiatives of the co-ordinated NGO network were recognized as central to any sustained global effort to secure a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

This encouragement of NGO efforts did not pass unnoticed, but fortified us to augment our endeavours.

The Geneva meeting's final Declaration re-emphasized the unanimous commitment to the convening of the International Peace Conference that includes the PLO as a full participant and as outlined in United Nations General Assembly resolution 38/58 C as the most credible avenue to the peace process in the Middle East. The NGOs deplored the oppressive conditions that are part of the daily life of Palestinians in the occupied territories and devised fresh ideas on how to bring these matters to the attention of people and Governments of conscience. These efforts contributed to the recent decision by the European Parliament to deplore the administrative detention of Feisal Hussein of the Arab Studies Society in East Jerusalem. Our work should focus brilliant light on this and other matters of grave concern to the thousands who live under occupation or in conditions of extreme vulnerability in the camps in Lebanon.

In planning the United Nations-NGO activities for the coming biennium, we must strive to involve NGOs from around the globe, including the underrepresented regions of Africa, Latin America and Oceania. Formats should be designed which increase NGO contacts during the meeting so that vital networking can be accomplished and common projects launched. This type of activity demands that sessions be so allocated as the agenda is being prepared. The result will be more interest and more participation by **non-governmental** groups from every region.

The outreach to new regions and NGOs cannot be over-emphasized. During 1987, ICCP undertook a special mission to Japan following the Asian Regional NGO Symposium held in New Delhi. ICCP delegation met with dozens of NGOs representing virtually every facet of Japanese society. The interest in the work of the United Nations and ICCP on behalf of the Palestinian people was very well received. We discovered many Japanese groups labouring on this issue. Our visit was widely covered by the Japanese press and has resulted in a Japanese NGO representative on ICCP and the important initiation of a Japanese co-ordinating committee.

What we cannot overlook is the essential, human dimension of the issues before us. Beyond the resolutions, the conferences, the political maneuverings, are hundreds of thousands of people, the Palestinian people, who have been consistently denied the fundamental human need of a homeland, a passport, a recognized identity. Many have tried to ignore them, absorb them, deport them, obliterate them. But the very injustice of the issue, coupled with political and growing public moral support, has demanded that this question, this aspiration, these people, not be forgotten. More people know about the question of Palestine worldwide today than ten years ago and, far more than 40 years ago.

This attempt to secure a just solution to the protracted denial of Palestinian rights was dealt a sharp blow in the United States this year by the Reagan Administration and Congress through their nefarious plan to close Palestinian offices in Washington and New York. It is ironic that the method used finally to deny the American public access to Palestinian perspective on the issue at hand included elevating that status of the Palestine Information Office to an official diplomatic entity, and then shutting it down through State Department action. For a brief moment, a few seconds perhaps, the United States Government was recognizing the PLO and the Palestinian people. It lasted just long enough to utilize existing legal regulations that justify the closure of such legations.

These blatant moves against the PLO and the Palestinians are decisively affected by current United States electoral politics. They are prime matters of concern for NACC and the hundreds of NGOs in the United States and Canada. Such actions should not, must not and has not gone unchallenged. In North America, the people themselves are an integral part of the system of check and balances designed to curb excesses and misguided policies pursued by elected officials. The NGO community can be a potent agent in reminding people of this responsibility and in mobilizing them for effective, co-ordinated, purposeful action.

ICCP is deeply involved in a number of projects that emanated from the fourth International Meeting. The European and North American regional committees have also been directed by their constituent NGOs meeting this year to pursue co-ordinated courses of action. All are striving to involve new groups who have not been involved before. We are faced with the importance of planning long-term projects while responding to immediate, emergency human rights abuses and other actions that demand immediate, focused response by the NGO community. We have found the liaison office using modern communications technology to be adept at handling such crises. Communication is further affected by the periodic publication of ICCP newsletters that include information about the latest initiatives undertaken by the most active members of the world-wide NGO community.

We fully realize that many of these activities would never have been launched without the interest, support and guidance that has been provided by the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and the Division for Palestinian Rights since the convening of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine in 1983. We are grateful for your interest in and encouragement of our work. We look to even closer co-ordination of our efforts in all their phases so we will achieve our shared objectives.

Despite the continuing obstacles deployed in our path by the formidable forces opposed to our work, it is amazing how the network has expanded and how many people are aware of these global efforts. We are all learning how to disseminate our objectives and programme more persuasively. Co-ordination has become a prime asset.

We need no greater incentive to bolster our efforts than to recall that winter, another winter, is coming to the Palestinians living in the rubble called camps in Lebanon. The people of the occupied territories are entering their twenty-first year of military rule with no constitutional safeguards to protect them from the imposition of arbitrary power by the military and armed civilian occupiers, whether it be the closing of a university, the demolition of homes, the uprooting of trees or the confiscation of land, the precious land. New generations are being born into the roles of occupiers and occupied. These are not political abstractions, but people, in ever growing numbers.

The key to a successful, international campaign on the question of Palestine is to focus incessantly on the people, real people, Palestinian people. Every decision-maker should be graphically reminded that people's lives are held in the balance. It is easy to justify actions that affect abstractions; it is infinitely more difficult if the problem has an infant's face, if it is reflected in a mother's determination to protect her children, in a man's demand to provide for his family in his own country, governed by laws he or his representatives helped to formulate.

ICCP and the NGO network is dedicated to presenting the question of Palestine as a fundamental issue of human rights, rights of a people, but also of individual persons. We must set the parameters of the global agenda on this issue, not the opposition. If this can be done, perceptions will change and coalitions of decent people, from every crevice of this earth, will shout for change, for the restoration of essential human rights. And no Power or concert of Powers would be able to resist this historical demonstration of the popular will. They will yield to the universal demand to do what is decent and right.

ICCP, the regional co-ordinating committees and the global NGO network is dedicated to this most worthy enterprise.

AFRO-ASIAN PEOPLE'S SOLIDARITY ORGANIZATION

Mr. Nouri Abdel Razzak, Secretary-General

[Original: English]

1. Message to Mr. Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization

We send you and the heroic people of Palestine our absolute solidarity and complete support on the fortieth anniversary of the division of Palestine, the dispersion of its people and their replacement by immigrants from all over the world by the force of arms.

The struggle of the Palestinian people since 29 November 1947 against zionism and colonialism in all its forms did not relent or weaken, remaining steadfast in the face of conspiracies to usurp Palestinian territory and abolish its national identity.

The just struggle of the Palestinian people receives the most widespread support from world public opinion, foremost from the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organization (AAPSO), for the restoration of its legitimate national rights which include self-determination, return and the establishment of an independent national Palestinian State on its own territory.

Our belief is firm that a just and permanent peace in the Middle East will be realized through the holding of an International Conference under the auspices of the United Nations, attended by all the concerned parties, including the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, and with the participation of the five permanent members of the Security Council, under the auspices of the United Nations.

2. Message to Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, Secretary-General of the United Nations

The Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organization (AAPSO) wishes to declare its absolute support and complete solidarity with the struggle of the Palestinian people on the occasion of the Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.

Great pains have befallen the people of Palestine and much blood has been spilled by their people since 29 November 1947, as well as during the past 40 years while Israel is still denying the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and engaging in cruel terrorist practices extending to the physical liquidation of that people and exposing peace in the region as well as in the entire world to the greatest danger.

AAPSO believes that a durable and just peace may be achieved only by Israel's withdrawal from all the Occupied Territories and the holding of an International Peace Conference under the auspices of the United Nations attended by all the parties to the conflict, including the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and the five permanent members of the Security Council.

We highly appreciate the role of the United Nations and thank the Secretary-General in that respect.

ASSOCIATION DES ETUDES INTERNATIONALES

Mr. Rachid Driss, President

[Original: French]

Observing an annual Palestine Day is definitely an initiative that does the United Nations credit.

In so doing, the Organization applies balm to the deep wounds in the body of a battered people, trapped into bearing a burden of misfortune which it shrugs off with an energy and faith no longer in dispute. But alas, the observance of Palestine Day has become just one more anniversary among others, many others, each sadder and more painful than the next.

On this commemorative Day, therefore, the conscience of the world needs to remind itself of the nightmarish procession of tragedies which incessantly haunt the minds of thousands of victims asking for no more than the recognition of their inalienable right to self-determination and legitimate return to a homeland appallingly ravaged by an occupier hitherto deaf to all exhortations, whatever their source.

Stateless, often misunderstood, sometimes scorned, the Palestinians have no option but to endure their trials and try to withstand them in a world still loath to grant them the little they seek: justice.

It will soon be 70 years that Palestinian flesh and blood have been the unhappy subjects of a tragedy written for them by others. Seventy years since, on 2 November 1917, the Balfour Declaration rang the passing bell for the Palestinians by stating that "His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people ...". Seventy years since that same Declaration maintained that "... nothing shall be done which may prejudice the existing civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine". A praiseworthy ambition but one which, even today, is no more than a pious hope, leaving the wandering Palestinian as the main and only victim.

Alive to the misfortune of the Palestinian people, the United Nations tried to redress the injustice through the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 181 (II) of 29 November 1947, the "partition resolution", acknowledging and granting the Palestinian people the right to a free and independent State. Forty years have passed and that State has still not seen the light of day, although the State of Israel, recognized in the same resolution, is continually expanding at the expense of its Jordanian, Syrian and Lebanese neighbours.

The thrice-holy city of Jerusalem which, again according to the same resolution, should enjoy international status, today bears the yoke of force.

The six-day war in 1967 resulted in the occupation of vast areas of Egyptian, Jordanian and Syrian territory. Although the United Nations Security Council decided in resolution 242 (1967) that the Israeli forces should withdraw, 20 years later Israel still occupies both banks of the Jordan and the Golan, thus flaunting the rule of international law.

Already 20 years have passed since that same resolution called for a just settlement to the problem of Palestinian refugees in the spirit of the unanimously adopted resolution 194 (III) of 11 December 1948, which stipulated that refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbours should be permitted to do so. Not only has no Palestinian since recovered so much as a morsel of a home unjustly wrested from him by force, but thousands of other Palestinians still devoted to their native soil have had in turn to abandon their homes and belongings to escape increasingly humiliating and inhuman repression.

So the observance of Palestine Day is one more anniversary to add to the many sad anniversaries of a people who wants nothing more than its due and undeniable right.

What sad anniversaries for the Palestinian people; what dire threats to the peace of this planet!

The Palestinians, and all those justice- and peace-loving people helplessly watching the unfolding of a tragedy which threatens to overwhelm them in a sudden conflagration with unforeseeable repercussions, can do no more than hope that one day soon there will be an International Conference, to bring renewed hope to a people who have lain cursed by misfortune for almost three quarters of a century and to allow the world a way out of a heartrending, haunting predicament.

COMMITTEE OF YOUTH ORGANIZATION OF THE USSR

Iu. Zaitzev, Vice-Chairman

[Original: English]

On this day, so memorable for the entire Arab national liberation movement, we pay tribute to the heroic struggle of the Arab people of Palestine engaged in a long and persistent combat for its legitimate national rights.

The Palestinian people enjoys the full support of the peoples of the Soviet Union and other Socialist countries and of all democratic, peace-loving forces.

The main reason for this continuation of the conflict situation in the region of the Middle East and for the sufferings of the Palestinian people is the expansionist policy of the Israeli rulers supported by Washington who use regional conflicts to manipulate the level of tension and confrontation. The Soviet public firmly denounces the obstructionist stand of the United States and Israel which is hampering a peaceful settlement in the Middle East.

We are deeply convinced that a sine qua non for the cessation of the tragedy of the Palestinian people is the establishment of a just and comprehensive peace in this region, with one of its main elements being the withdrawal of the Israeli troops from the territories occupied since 1967, implementation of the legitimate rights of the Arab people of Palestine, including its right to self-determination and to the creation of its own independent State.

The main way to resolve all matters of the settlement lies through the convening of an authoritative International Peace Conference on the Middle East with equal participation of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) which is the sole legitimate representative of the Arab people of Palestine.

True to the principles of international solidarity, the Soviet people will continue their support of the friendly Palestinian people in its just struggle for the implementation of its national aspirations.

POLISH COMMITTEE FOR SOLIDARITY WITH THE
PEOPLES OF ASIA, AFRICA AND LATIN AMERICA

Mr. Jerzy Markiewicz, Secretary-General

[Original: English]

This year, the International Day of Solidarity coincides with the fortieth anniversary of General Assembly resolution 181 (II) which provided for the establishment of a Jewish State and an Arab State in Palestine with Jerusalem under international control. Unfortunately the resolution has been only partially implemented. The Palestinian people has been deprived of its homes and homeland, and has been forced to leave for neighbouring Arab countries and live in refugee camps in miserable, inhuman conditions.

The Polish Committee for Solidarity with the Peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America firmly supports the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to self-determination and establishment of its own independent State. We fully adhere to the General Assembly resolutions supporting the Palestinian people, especially resolution 38/58 C on the convening of an International Peace Conference, with the participation of the permanent members of the United Nations Security Council and all parties concerned, including the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) with equal rights and on equal footing. We are following with great attention and admiration the enormous work carried out by the Committee on the

Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and the Division for Palestinian Rights. We fully support this activity and act together with the international non-governmental organization movement for mobilization of world public opinion for the right and just solution of the Palestinian problem. We hold the view that 40 years of wars, tragedies and deprivation of the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights is too long a period and must be ended immediately. We hope that the fortieth anniversary of the resolution on the partition of Palestine will also mark the beginning of peace negotiations and will start the preparation of an International Conference on the Middle East with the participation of the permanent members of the Security Council and all other interested parties including the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. We believe that the just cause of the Palestinians will win.

SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE OF THE GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

Mr. Kurt Seibt, Representative

[Original: German]

The community of non-governmental organizations declared this year the International Year of Palestine because a number of major anniversaries fall this year with specific relevance for the Palestinian people. This was a special occasion for the Solidarity Committee of the German Democratic Republic to step up a wide range of campaigns in order to reaffirm our firm solidarity with the Palestinian people.

We were particularly gratified to welcome in the German Democratic Republic H.E. Mr. David Karran, Deputy Permanent Representative of Guyana to the United Nations, who represented the Committee working under your chairmanship at a solidarity function which the Solidarity Committee of the German Democratic Republic has organized on 5 June this year to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the Israeli aggression.

On 30 November 1987, the Solidarity Committee and the National Front of the German Democratic Republic, an umbrella organization of all political parties and mass organizations in this country, will jointly organize a mass rally at the Technical University of Dresden to commemorate the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. We intend to invite to this major event the ambassadors accredited to the German Democratic Republic of all countries which are represented in the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.

During the International Year of Palestine, the Solidarity Committee of the German Democratic Republic has carried out, supported and sponsored a wide range of activities, a few of which I would like to bring to your notice:

(a) Sixty-two Palestinians were invited to the German Democratic Republic to attend courses at universities, technical colleges and vocational training centres;

(b) Wounded and sick Palestinians received medical treatment in hospitals in the German Democratic Republic;

(c) Fifty Palestinian children spent their holidays in the German Democratic Republic;

(d) Calendars and depictions of Palestinian art were published in the German Democratic Republic;

(e) A children's book about Palestine was published;

(f) A Palestine poster was printed in the German Democratic Republic;

(g) A theoretical symposium was held at the Humboldt University in Berlin on the subject "20 years of Israeli occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip";

(h) It participated in the fourth international meeting and the second European meeting of non-governmental organizations on the question of Palestine at Geneva in September 1987;

(i) It participated in the work of the European NGO Co-ordinating Committee on the Question of Palestine;

(j) It disseminated the resolutions of the seventeenth meeting of the Palestinian National Council in Algiers in the mass media of the German Democratic Republic.

The Solidarity Committee of the German Democratic Republic renders its active support to all initiatives and collective efforts conducive to bringing about a just and durable solution of the Middle East conflict and its central issue, the question of Palestine.

In our view, an appropriate way towards such a solution would be the convening of an International Peace Conference on the Middle East under the auspices of the United Nations and with the participation of all the parties concerned, including the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

We emphatically condemn the policies of aggression, occupation and annexation pursued by Israel against its Arab neighbours and particularly the Palestinian people and which are tolerated or even supported by certain States. It is these policies that are the true reason of the unsolved Middle East conflict and cause the sufferings of the Palestinian people.

I wish to assure you of the determination of the Solidarity Committee of the German Democratic Republic to continue its efforts at the national and international level to promote progress in the resolution of the Palestinian issue. Its activities will be in full accordance with the pertinent resolutions of the United Nations and in particular with General Assembly resolution 38/58 C.

WORLD FEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS

Mr. Ibrahim Zakaria, General Secretary

[Original: English]

On the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) reiterates, on behalf of its 214 million members from all continents and social systems, its firm solidarity with the just struggle of the Palestinian workers and people under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), its sole legitimate representative, for the achievement of its inalienable national rights, including the right to self-determination, the right to return to its homeland and the right to establish an independent State on its own homeland.

WFTU is deeply shocked by the present situation which is marked by heightened campaigns of repression and terror waged by the Israeli occupation authorities against the Palestinian people. This ruthless policy consists, in particular, of the expropriation of land, the extension of colonial settlements, the expulsion of Arab citizens from their homes in the occupied territories, the closure of universities and trade union offices, the arrest of trade unionists, the systematic violation of trade union freedoms and the use of the most severe methods of exploitation and discrimination against Arab workers.

WFTU condemns the ongoing Israeli aggression against Arab States and peoples, especially the Palestinian people, and calls for the immediate withdrawal of the Israeli occupation troops from all Arab territories occupied since 1967 and the implementation of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people.

WFTU actively continues to mobilize workers and trade unions the world over for a just solution to the Middle East conflict that would guarantee a lasting and just peace and the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people.

WFTU fully supports the convening of an International Peace Conference on the Middle East under the auspices of the United Nations, with the participation on an equal footing of all concerned parties, including the PLO, as the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

WFTU appreciates the efforts of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People to implement the resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly calling for a just solution to the question of Palestine.

On the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, WFTU has called on workers and trade unions in all countries, irrespective of affiliation, to intensify further their campaign of solidarity with the Palestinian workers and people to bring about a just and lasting peace in the Middle East and guarantee the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including its right to return to its homeland, to self-determination and the establishment of its independent sovereign State on its own homeland.

J. Concluding statements

MR. FAROUK KADDOUMI, MEMBER OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
OF THE PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION

[Original: Arabic]

I have the honour, at the conclusion of this International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, of expressing to this Committee our deep satisfaction and gratitude for its support for our cause. The unshakable positions of principle which have been expressed by you, Sir, in your statement, and the messages addressed by the heads of States and rulers of friendly countries constitute the best proof that victory for our just cause is inevitable, because our Palestinian people is looking to you in friendship and brotherliness. It is proud of your friendship and the sincerity of your positions.

We reaffirm now to our dear and sincere friends that we appreciate their positions and consider them an essential factor in our struggle to move forward in the realization of our aspirations and our dreams for the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East region.

This manifestation today has comforted us and confirmed the rightness of our hope in the United Nations and its ability to contribute effectively and to help the peoples struggling to recover their national rights, their right to freedom, independence and progress. However strong colonialism and aggression may be, however oppressive colonialism may be, those forces cannot halt the march of the peoples of the world towards liberation, nor can they prevent those peoples from fighting with determination to recover their rights and to build a future for themselves, free of any and all foreign intervention.

The peoples of the world will never bow to the logic of domination and aggression. The peoples of the world will resist and make all the necessary sacrifices.

Our people is one of those peoples that will carry the banner of victory to the very ramparts of Jerusalem, the capital of the Palestinian State, which will be established. We are fighting for a just cause. We are struggling to recover our legitimate rights. You are all behind us in our struggle for our rights, for the right, for justice and peace. Peace cannot be established throughout the world while there are still peoples suffering from oppression in the world, peoples that have lost their sovereignty and independence. The peoples of southern Africa - of South Africa and Namibia - and the Palestinian people are together in the vanguard of mankind's march forward. Let us use every means in the struggle to put an end to injustice and occupation, as well as to colonialism, racism and zionism. Peace and justice shall reign in those countries. Our war is a just war. It is not directed against anyone or anything other than wrong, injustice, occupation and oppression in all its forms. Through people's struggle, and however much time that struggle may require, our people will eventually triumph.

The United Nations will remain a solid foundation for the protection of our small peoples. This Organization will defend them, and that is why we place great hopes in it. We are extremely grateful for, and admire, the efforts of the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, to make the United Nations

resolutions a living reality. The oppressed peoples of the world trust that the actions of this Organization will continue to be a strong tool, a solid means of bringing about freedom and safeguarding peace and security throughout the world.

I say to our dear friends that we shall remain true to the principles of this Organization and we shall remain loyal and committed to its resolutions. Let us struggle with determination and strength to make a reality of those resolutions.

We once again express our great appreciation for the efforts of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. We should also like to thank our friend, Mr. Massamba Sarré for his ceaseless efforts and the efforts of the members of the Committee. We should also like to thank Mr. Joseph Reed, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations, and all those who work in the Division for Palestinian Rights, particularly Mr. Naseem Mirza, Director of the Division, for their praiseworthy and extremely valuable efforts.

H.E. MR. MASSAMBA SARRE, CHAIRMAN OF THE
COMMITTEE ON THE EXERCISE OF THE INALIENABLE
RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

[Original: French]

As has been observed, today's ceremonies were more than symbolic. They demonstrated an attitude of heart, soul and mind; they demonstrated confidence, especially in the United Nations and in what it can do to enable peace to reign in the Middle East and the Palestinian people to regain its inalienable right to self-determination and independence. We are pleased to note that there was a consensus at our meetings that there should be no delay in convening the International Peace Conference on the Middle East. To achieve that we have had for several years to exert persuasion and make compromises to make all sides accept the idea as the most appropriate and timely way to restore peace to the Middle East. In other words, with perseverance and faith, any difficulty can be overcome.

With respect to the Palestinian question, we are glad to be able to say that we are on the right road, and that with patience and, especially, faith and determination, we shall be able to reach our ultimate goal of establishing peace in the Middle East through the realization of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. The members of the Committee have been much encouraged by the statements we heard today from the Secretary-General, the guardian of the values of the United Nations, from the President of the General Assembly, representative and custodian of the world's conscience, and from the President of the Security Council, guarantor of international peace and security. We are glad to be able to affirm that with the assistance of all, working together as a team, we shall spare no effort. A faithful, determined team is beginning to form around the guidelines, purposes and principles of the Charter and the Organization.

As our work comes to an end for today, I wish on behalf of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and in my own name to express our gratitude for the understanding and encouragement we have received from all. To be sure, we all know we must work to achieve our lofty purpose: the defence of the just cause of restoring the rights of the Palestinian people.

It gives me pleasure to pay tribute to the staff of the Division for Palestinian Rights; with selflessness and devotion they have done everything to facilitate our task. We thank those who made today's special meetings possible, including those who devotedly work behind the scenes.

If maintained, the path we have blazed today, the flame we have lit today, will be decisive in progress towards the goal we are pursuing: the exercise by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights.

I reaffirm that this Committee will spare no effort to achieve that goal.

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