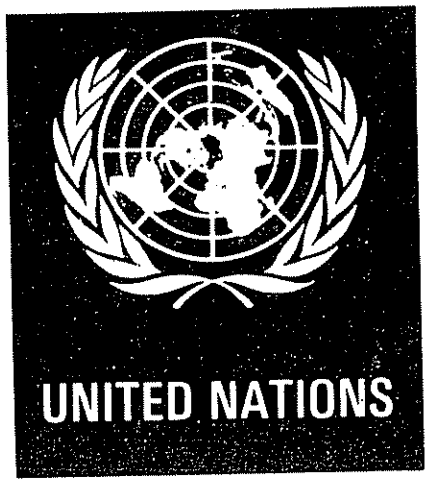

DIVISION FOR
PALESTINIAN RIGHTS

NINTH UNITED NATIONS NORTH AMERICAN SEMINAR ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE (THIRTY-THIRD UNITED NATIONS SEMINAR)

Theme: "Priorities for United Nations action"

United Nations Headquarters, New York

28-29 June 1993

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CONTENTS

Introduction

1. The Ninth United Nations North American Seminar on the Question of Palestine on the theme "Priorities for United Nations action" was held at United Nations Headquarters, New York, on 28 and 29 June 1993. The Seminar had been mandated by the General Assembly in its resolution 46/74 A of 11 December 1991.

2. H.E. Mr. Alcibiades Hidalgo Basulto (Cuba), Vice-Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, was Chairman and Rapporteur of the Seminar.

3. Three meetings were held, chaired by three moderators. Ten experts presented papers on the theme of the Seminar. Representatives of 43 Governments, 7 United Nations specialized agencies and bodies, 2 intergovernmental organizations, as well as 10 non-governmental organizations attended the meeting.

A. Opening statements

Statement by the Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations

4. Mr. Chinmaya R. Gharekhan, Under-Secretary-General and Special Political Adviser to the Secretary-General, stressed that the Seminar was held at a time of great importance for the future of Middle East peace efforts, efforts which the United Nations fully supported and to which the Secretary-General was ready to provide all possible assistance. At the same time, the situation on the ground continued to be volatile. The Secretary-General had expressed his deep concern at the increase in violent incidents in which a number of Palestinians and Israelis were killed and wounded in the occupied territories. He had deplored these acts of violence and appealed to all sides for restraint. Moreover, the deterioration of economic conditions resulting from Israel's decision to close off the occupied territories remained a matter of serious concern.

5. He said that in these circumstances, it was imperative that efforts be intensified in pursuit of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East, which would enable the Palestinian people to exercise its legitimate political rights, including self-determination. The negotiations which were launched at Madrid almost two years ago had been welcomed by the General Assembly as a significant step towards the achievement of peace and had heightened expectations that a solution to this prolonged and tragic conflict might be within reach. The Madrid process had received the support of the parties concerned and was taking place within the framework of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). Despite the obstacles and delays which had occurred, the negotiations had shown that a substantive dialogue between the parties was possible.

6. He continued that since autumn 1992, that process had been widened to include the United Nations as a full participant in the multilateral working groups on regional issues. Experts from a wide variety of United Nations agencies and programmes were actively engaged in this process. Moreover, the Secretary-General had repeatedly voiced his commitment to do everything possible to help in the peace efforts and his readiness to offer the services of the United Nations if requested by the parties.

7. He pointed out that the Secretary-General firmly believed that, pending a political settlement, it was necessary to ensure the safety and protection of the civilian population of the occupied territories in accordance with numerous Security Council resolutions which had affirmed the applicability of the Fourth Geneva Convention to the occupied Palestinian territories and had requested Israel to apply in full its provisions. In accordance with Security Council resolutions 681 (1990) and 799 (1992), the Secretary-General had made persistent efforts to persuade Israel to comply with its international obligations in this regard.

8. He said that in the light of the grave economic situation in the occupied territories, it was also clear that the current peace efforts should be accompanied by an effective role by the international community in providing the Palestinian people with the requisite assistance for the revival of its economy. It was essential to deal with the pressing, current needs, and at the same time to prepare the ground for a comprehensive programme for promoting the sustained development of the Palestinian economy. The Secretary-General had consistently endeavoured to mobilize the international community and the United Nations system as a whole to provide greater economic assistance to the occupied territories in order to improve the living conditions of the Palestinians and to lay the foundations for a more just and peaceful future. As indicated in the programme of the Seminar, the United Nations was concerned with the situation regarding human rights, economic development and the peace efforts.

Statement by the Chairman of the Seminar

9. H.E. Mr. Alcibiades Hidalgo Basulto, Vice-Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and Chairman of the Seminar, pointed out that at its last session, in adopting resolution 47/64 A of the General Assembly had affirmed that the United Nations had a permanent responsibility with respect to the question of Palestine, until it was resolved in all its aspects in a satisfactory manner in accordance with international legitimacy. The Committee considered that urgent and decisive action by the international community was required in three main areas the protection of the Palestinian people living under occupation, the revitalization and development of the Palestinian economy and the urgent quest for a political solution.

10. He emphasized that the Committee had welcomed the convening of the Madrid peace conference as an important step towards the achievement of a comprehensive peace based on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). These negotiations had shown conclusively that the question of Palestine was the core issue that needed to be addressed in efforts to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict and that the Palestinian people, through its recognized representatives, was a principal party in any negotiating process in that regard. It was clear that the parties concerned, and indeed the international community as a whole, must intensify their efforts to break through the impasse and advance towards a just settlement in accordance with United Nations resolutions. Only such a

settlement could in fact meet the needs and aspirations of all the people of the region and bring about a lasting peace. The Committee had repeatedly stressed the essential need for an active role of the United Nations, the Security Council and the Secretary-General for a successful outcome of the peace process.

11. He continued that, pending a sound political agreement, it was of the greatest importance that effective measures be taken to ensure the safety and protection of Palestinian civilians living under Israeli occupation, and to provide a coordinated and adequate economic and social assistance to them. The current peace efforts should be accompanied by sustained action to provide such assistance so as to heal the critical state of the various sectors of the Palestinian economy and to stem the rapid deterioration of the living conditions of the Palestinians under occupation. International economic assistance was required not only to ameliorate conditions but also and primarily in order to promote the independent development of the occupied territory. That need had become more obvious and acute since the beginning of the intifadah. Measures adopted by the Israeli authorities had increasingly stifled the Palestinian economy, which had also suffered from the adverse effects of the Gulf war. Despite heroic efforts by the Palestinian people to develop self-reliant institutions, the overall economic and social situation in the occupied territory had continued to deteriorate. Israeli measures, further aggravated by the recent prolonged closure of the occupied Palestinian territory, had considerably inhibited Palestinian economic development initiatives.

12. He stressed that the human rights situation in the occupied Palestinian territory had always been a matter of utmost concern to the Committee, and the United Nations as a whole had dealt with this issue. In the conclusions and recommendations of the North American Seminar on measures to enforce the Fourth Geneva Convention, participants had declared that it was the duty of the High Contracting Parties to ensure respect by Israel for the provisions of the Convention, which were minimum standards, and that falling below them was a breach of international law. In order to use the mechanisms contained in the Convention itself, participants had suggested that High Contracting Parties should utilize their consular presence more fully and effectively for monitoring purposes and that a United Nations monitoring organization should be established through which High Contracting Parties would carry out their responsibilities under article 1 of the Convention. Participants had recommended that the idea of seeking an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice on the matter should be developed. They had further recommended that the international NGO community should support concrete activities to ensure the protection of the Palestinian population.

Message from the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization

13. A message from H.E. Mr. Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), was read out by Mr. Nasser M. Al-Kidwa, Permanent Observer for Palestine to the United Nations. The message stressed that the parties concerned in the struggle in the Middle East must adhere to the resolutions adopted by the United Nations, in particular by the General Assembly and the Security Council, because they embodied the will of international legitimacy, which must be implemented for the sake of finding a peaceful and just solution to the question of Palestine and the Arab-Israeli conflict.

14. Referring to the Madrid peace process, the message said that although these rounds had so far not produced tangible results towards the transfer of authority to the Palestinian side and the attainment of the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people, including its right to return, its right to self-determination and its right to establish its independent State with Jerusalem as its capital, the PLO continued to hope that the principles and foundations on which this process rested would be adhered to. These principles included land for peace, the implementation of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and the achievement of the national political rights of the Palestinian people and the security of all States in the region, including Palestine and Israel.

15. The PLO agreed to participate in this peace process in spite of the unfair conditions placed on its participation. The message continued that Israel was placing obstacles in the way of the peace process and the negotiations by refusing to adhere to the authoritative basis of that process or to apply the principles and foundations on which it rested or to keep the undertakings that it had made in order to create a positive climate, such as the undertaking to implement resolution 799 (1992) for the return of the deportees. Furthermore, Israel, the occupying Power, was daily escalating the application of its "iron fist" policy in the occupied territories, in particular destroying and sealing houses, partitioning the occupied areas and isolating them one from another, in addition to isolating the Holy City of Jerusalem entirely from the other occupied areas in an attempt to consolidate its annexation. Then there was the continuation of land confiscation, the establishment of settlements, the defilement of the Islamic and Christian Holy Places, the daily violation of Palestinian human rights, resulting in the death or wounding of thousands, as well as the incarceration of thousands in Israeli prisons and detention centres. This policy had caused the deterioration of the economic, living and social conditions in the occupied territories, including Jerusalem, and a starvation point had been reached in Gaza. If continued, that situation would undermine the whole peace process.

16. The message emphasized that peace could only be achieved through the termination of the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian land and through the restoration to the Palestinian people of its inalienable national rights and the establishment of its independent State, with Jerusalem as its capital. The United Nations had an important and essential role to play in the peace process, in the maintenance of peace, security and stability in the region, in international supervision and relief and in economic and social development there.

B. Panel discussions

17. Three panels were established. The panels, their moderators and panellists were as follows:

Panel I. ***"The United Nations and the implementation of international human rights instruments and relevant Security Council resolutions"***

Moderator: Mr. Andrew Whitley
Executive Director, Middle East Watch

Speakers: Ms. Daphna Golan
B'Tselem, Israeli Information Centre for Human Rights
in the Occupied Territories

Mr. Muhammad Hallaj
Director, The Center for Policy Analysis on Palestine
Washington, D.C.

Ms. Lynn Welchmann
European Field Representative
Centre for Human Rights Enforcement

Panel II. ***"The United Nations and the promotion of the economic development of the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem"***

Moderator: Mr. S. Kazemi
Director, Special Unit (Palestinian People)
United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

Speakers: H.E. Mr. Alcibiades Hidalgo Basulto
Vice-Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People

Mr. Roger Guarda
Special Representative
United Nations Development Programme Office in Jerusalem

Ms. Lee O'Brien
Research Officer in the West Bank
United Nations Relief and Works Agency
for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

Mr. Ephraim Ahiram
Professor, Hebrew University

Mr. Fadle Naqib
Economist, Waterloo University
Ontario, Canada

Panel III. ***"The United Nations and the peace process"***

Moderator: Mr. Richard Curtiss
Executive Director, Washington Report

Speakers: Mr. Johan Nordenfelt
Director, Programmes against Apartheid
and for Palestinian Rights

Mr. Richard Curtiss
Executive Director, Washington Report

H.E. Mr. Nabil A. Elaraby
Permanent Representative of Egypt to the United Nations

Mr. Nabil Qassis
Vice-Chairman of the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks

Mr. Shibley Telhami
Associate Professor, Cornell University

Panel I

"The United Nations and the implementation of international human rights instruments and relevant Security Council resolutions"

18. **Mr. Muhammad Hallaj**, Director of the Center for Policy Analysis on Palestine in Washington, stressed at the outset that Israel's violations of human rights in the occupied territories were nowadays more universally understood and generally recognized. The myth of a humane, benevolent occupation had fallen. Describing Israel's record on human rights, he concluded that Israel was one of the major offenders against human rights in the world.

19. He expressed the view that Israel's violations of human rights were inherent in the expansionist and discriminatory nature of that State. Israel was the only State in the world in which citizenship and nationality did not coincide. Only Jews could be nationals and therefore full beneficiaries of the State. Israeli repression was indiscriminate and arbitrary. Oppression and violations of human rights were not only circumstantial but inherent in its nature; that was why Israel could be a democracy for Jews and a lethal tyranny for Arabs. The remedy lay in the termination of Israel's occupation of Arab lands which was not only necessary to end the Arab-Israeli conflict, but also essential to safeguarding the human rights of Palestinians and other Arabs under Israeli occupation.

20. He continued that it was unfortunate that the United States had chosen itself to be the general manager of the Arab-Israeli conflict. In his view, the United States was not an honest broker in the conflict and its monopoly of peacemaking was counter-productive. The manner in which the peace process was designed had been calculated to impede its progress and to prejudice its outcome. It had a number of built-in weaknesses, such as that the process was managed by a Power that could in no way be considered an impartial arbitrator; that it tolerated Israel's insistence that some issues were non-negotiable; and that the desired outcome of the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations was left without definition. While it was already obvious that it would be a long, drawn-out process, there were no

indications that the violations of Palestinian human rights would cease as long as they lived under Israeli jurisdiction. On the contrary, in order to pre-empt the process Israel had intensified its violations of Palestinian human rights since the peace talks had begun. Until the Palestinian people's right to self-determination was achieved, protection must be provided as follows: the occupied territories should be placed under United Nations trusteeship; United Nations observers should be stationed in the occupied Palestinian territories to monitor and to report on human rights violations; and the United Nations should use appropriate sanctions against offenders to deter violations of human rights.

21. In conclusion, he stressed that human rights should not be held hostage to the political purposes of the adversaries in the Arab-Israeli conflict. Israel's attempts to use human rights as a bargaining chip in the talks with the Arab parties violated its obligations under international law to respect those rights regardless of the political environment prevailing. The signatories to the Fourth Geneva Convention were obligated to ensure respect for the rights of civilians against infringement by other signatories. It was the legal obligation of the international community to afford the necessary protection needed while negotiations proceeded to reach agreements to terminate the occupation. The international community was now faced with the necessity of enforcement. He emphasized that international protection, enforced by sanctions when necessary, remained the only way. The political decision to exclude the United Nations from the Arab-Israeli peace process could not excuse the silence of the international community on the question of Palestinian human rights. Neither international law nor the relevant United Nations resolutions make respect for human rights contingent on political compromises or deals. He stressed that the international community shared, legally and morally, Israel's responsibility for the continued violations of Palestinian human rights.

22. **Ms. Lynn Welchmann**, European Field Representative for the Centre for Human Rights Enforcement, emphasized that the Palestinian population in the occupied territories was under the legal protection of the Fourth Geneva Convention, which guaranteed basic human rights of civilians in times of war or belligerent occupation. Owing to the refusal of successive Israeli Governments to apply the Convention in the territories, the civilian population of the occupied Palestinian territories could not benefit from this protection. She pointed out that primary responsibility for implementing international humanitarian law had been placed with individual States parties and their respective Governments. Final responsibility for ensuring respect for the law was placed with all States parties. The Convention relied on the duty of States not party to a conflict to ensure that the Convention was indeed respected by those of their co-Parties that were engaged in armed conflict or belligerent occupation. Therefore, Israel's co-Parties to the Convention remained individually and collectively responsible, under article 1, for ensuring that Israel apply the Convention in its entirety. She stressed that States had an international jurisdiction to be exercised in relation to breaches of the Geneva Conventions. There could be no claim of interference in domestic affairs. It was important not to allow States to obstruct or reject the implementation of the Fourth Geneva Convention in territories they had occupied in connection with armed conflicts in order to establish a much-needed line of defence against the illegal acquisition of territory by force.

23. She continued that in most cases when the Security Council had dealt with alleged violations of the Convention, it had reaffirmed its applicability and condemned the violations. Grave breaches of the Convention were the equivalent of war crimes. In another case where grave breaches had been reported the Council had set up a commission of experts to investigate the allegation and evaluate relevant information.

24. In the case of Palestine, however, the Council had not only refrained from enforcement action but had also avoided the use of the term "grave breaches" in describing such violations as deportations and killings in the occupied territories, which were, in fact, grave breaches. There had been references in some resolutions that appeared to break substantial new ground even though Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations had not been invoked. One example was resolution 681 (1990) which reiterated the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force and addressed Israel's refusal to accept the applicability of the Convention to its occupation. However, no political measures had been taken to implement resolution 681 (1990) in the build-up to the Madrid talks. After the mass deportation, resolution 799 (1992) did recall resolution 681 (1990) and forcefully called for the return of deportees. Israel, subsequently, offered to return a fraction of the deportees and to consider further repatriations at some future date, while continuing to claim its right to deport when it deemed such action necessary.

25. In the speaker's view, there was a general reluctance among Western States to take any action that was perceived as potentially harmful to the peace process, but the definition of what was considered harmful seemed to take the Israeli Government's point of view and included any action to force compliance with the Fourth Geneva Convention. She stressed that neither the protection of human rights nor a long-term, durable political settlement could be furthered by failing to set in the meantime as a non-negotiable objective full compliance by States with their obligations under existing international treaty law.

26. She concluded that the full human rights of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories could only be realized after an end to foreign occupation and the realization of self-determination and an adequate level of progress towards achieving the ability to be self-sustaining and economically secure. The States parties had to confront and put an end to violations of international humanitarian and human rights law by the occupying Power. There were various options for High Contracting Parties to the Convention to give substance to their calls on Israel to apply and comply with the Convention, and for the Security Council to assist the States parties in achieving that objective.

27. **Ms. Daphna Golan**, representative of B'Tselem, the Israeli Information Centre for Human Rights, referred to the mass deportation of 415 Palestinians by the Labor-Meretz Government and discussed the arguments used by Meretz to justify its support for this action. One argument, which she characterized as having a distinct colonialist flavour, was that it had been the Palestinians who had wanted the deportation since deporting members of Hamas would strengthen the PLO.

28. In 1993, after the killing of 15 Israelis, the Government had announced the closing of the territories. Closure meant that almost 2 million Palestinians were prevented from entering Israel, the centre of their economic, religious and educational life. No alternative job opportunities had been developed in the occupied territories.

29. Continuing, Ms. Golan said the second argument she had heard regarding the deportations -- that there was no other choice -- had three justifications: as long as there was occupation there would be human rights violations; the Jewish population was crying out for action; and that such action was the only way to continue the peace process. She wondered whether torture of Palestinians was a necessary part of the occupation. In 1991, her organization had published a report carrying detailed interviews with 41 Palestinian detainees, documenting their ill-treatment. The goal of the report was to expose the legal and social structure which allowed the use of torture. Palestinians were held for

15 days incommunicado; military judges and doctors cooperated with the system of deceit by pleading ignorance. As long as Israel permitted interrogators to impose what they called "moderate physical pressure", torture would continue.

30. Regarding the argument that the measures were justified because they helped to ensure the continuation of the peace process, she said it was based on the distorted logic that if the Government could show Israelis it was strong at home, it would be able to make concessions in Washington. That argument also assumed that Palestinians should be willing to pay the price to allow the peace talks to continue.

31. In conclusion, she expressed the hope that the peace talks would lead to the formation of an independent Palestinian State, a neighbour to Israel. She also hoped that the United Nations and the United States Government would do more to prevent violations of the rights of Palestinians.

32. The panel presentations were followed by a **discussion**, which focused on the relationship between promoting the peace process and guaranteeing human rights. It was said that although there was a working group on human rights in the bilateral talks, the way the issue was being dealt with was harmful and counter-productive. It deceived people into believing something was happening. Israel refused to deal with issues such as the demolition of houses and deportations; instead, it wanted the Palestinians to present individual cases of human rights violations.

33. The idea of placing human rights on the agenda of the multilateral peace talks was generally supported. It was suggested that the United Nations as a full participant in the multilateral talks could put forward that proposal. At the same time, participants stressed that including the human rights issue in the peace talks was insufficient. It must be included in any international discussion of the Middle East conflict. It was emphasized that the United Nations should ensure that human rights were protected independently of the peace process and that the States parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention should meet to discuss how to ensure its implementation. Consideration should be given to the idea, which had been presented at the 1992 Seminar, of establishing a working group of States to coordinate the enforcement of the Convention. It was also suggested that the Security Council could adopt a resolution under which a working group would be formed to review the human rights situation in the occupied territories or fact-finding missions would be mandated.

34. Referring to resolutions dealing with Iraq and those dealing with the Palestine question, some participants expressed concern about a double standard within the United Nations, which lessened the Organization's credibility. One participant drew attention to the problem posed by the killing of Palestinians by other Palestinians.

35. The participants also discussed the current United States policy towards the question of Palestine. It was felt that the United States Administration's decision to offer loan guarantees without tying them to human rights considerations represented a policy retreat. The view was expressed that the United States could not be considered an impartial mediator. It was suggested that since the current Administration did pride itself on being a strong protector of human rights, this presented a point for possible pressure.

Panel II

"The United Nations and the promotion of the economic development of the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem"

36. **H.E. Mr. Alcibiades Hidalgo Basulto**, Vice-Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and Chairman of the Seminar, reporting on the United Nations Seminar on Assistance to the Palestinian People held under the auspices of the Committee at the headquarters of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in Paris on 26 to 29 April 1993, emphasized that the Committee had long been concerned with the problem of how to promote the economic development of the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, as an essential prerequisite of the exercise of the right to self-determination, national independence and sovereignty, and the foundation for a just and lasting peace. The Committee had repeatedly called for an end to the Israeli policies and practices that prevented independent development and stifled existing economic activities, and had sought to mobilize international assistance to the Palestinian people, through the various seminars and NGO meetings held under its auspices.

37. The Seminar had provided a framework for an exchange of views on various aspects of assistance to the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and for sharing the experience gained by sectors of the international community in their efforts in this respect. Major categories of participants in the Seminar had been United Nations bodies and agencies already involved in projects in the occupied Palestinian territory, donor countries, regional organizations, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations active in the field, as well as Palestinian and other experts.

38. Concern had been expressed by many as to the multitude and magnitude of the problems, and hardships faced by the Palestinian people under occupation. The occupying Power was called upon to end violations of Palestinian rights and to respect its obligations under international instruments and United Nations resolutions. It was stressed that the international community should do its utmost to ensure protection of the Palestinian people living under occupation and that international assistance should be provided and targeted in such a way as to loosen the grip of occupation.

39. Experts participating in the Seminar had given a serious analysis of current and future needs and a number of constructive proposals had been made to meet the current emergency situation and to promote sustainable development during and after the transition period. Many participants had expressed the desire for more efficient coordination of activities among the various sectors of the international community, and between them and the Palestinian leadership, in order to better respond to the present and emerging needs.

40. He went on to say that the Seminar had showed a growing expectation by the international community that a threshold had been reached in the long history of the Palestine question, and that the Palestinian people would soon be able to take charge of its own future and to exercise its economic, as well as political decision-making. Participants had been of the view that a comprehensive Palestinian national development plan would be a major factor in achieving the independent development of the Palestinian people. They had stressed the need for undertaking

coordination between various donors and organizations and agencies of the United Nations system, and the Palestinian central authority.

41. Participants had been of the view that the international assistance programmes would be enhanced by greater and more effective coordination among organizations and agencies of the United Nations system and between them and other donors, and by the elaboration of an overall strategy framework to guide their work. Moreover, the Seminar had noted the experience of various organizations in the area of coordination and suggestions as to possible mechanisms made by speakers. There had been general agreement that this question needed urgently to be discussed further at an appropriate level by all concerned in order to develop ways of using the limited resources of the international community as efficiently as possible. The Committee had therefore been asked to recommend to the Secretary-General the convening of a meeting of representatives of organizations of the United Nations system, together with PLO officials, to consider appropriate mechanisms to coordinate and channel assistance and to decide on priorities.

42. In conclusion, he stressed that the Committee considered the seminar held in Paris an important new element in its programme of activities, and one which it would continue to emphasize in the future as an indispensable element for the successful outcome of the peace process.

43. **Mr. Roger Guarda**, Special Representative of the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Jerusalem, pointed out that the socio-economic development in the occupied territories was hampered by a hostile environment. Haphazard taxation putting entrepreneurs out of business, severe restrictions placed on the export of Palestinian goods and the totally free access to the Palestinian market for Israeli subsidized products were major obstacles to development. The lack of proper infrastructure, of a proper banking system, of operational agricultural extension services, of industrial advisory services and of technology information services were making a real expansion of the Palestinian economy virtually impossible. In these circumstances, the issue was not development but how to keep the Palestinian economy alive and how to help the Palestinians prepare themselves for the day a settlement would be reached.

44. He emphasized that the United Nations, owing to its political neutrality and worldwide experience in dealing with all possible political and economic systems, was the ideal partner for the Palestinian leadership in its crucial task. The United Nations should assign top priority to the provision of assistance in the areas of policy planning and formulation and public administration structure design. Moreover, in the area of human resources the United Nations should not limit its contribution to participating in training programmes, but should play a key role in the identification of training needs, in the formulation of a human resources development plan and in the mobilization of the financial resources necessary for its implementation. Not being linked to any particular educational system or institution, the United Nations had no vested interests and was ideally placed to assess the comparative advantages of all systems and institutions to meet specific needs in human resources development. The United Nations was also in the best position to mobilize and to help coordinate contributions from donor countries and organizations for the implementation of a human resources development plan.

45. He continued by saying that another area for United Nations assistance was in building infrastructure, since the occupying Power had done little to expand infrastructure since 1967 and the existing infrastructure had dramatically deteriorated. UNDP, the only United Nations development agency present in the occupied territories, had launched a major effort in the construction of basic social infrastructure in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. These efforts should continue and be expanded. The current closure of Israel to Palestinian workers presented an even greater need to build infrastructure in order to absorb usefully the excess labour force. UNDP was uniquely placed to assist the Palestinians in the preparation and implementation of an infrastructure development plan for the occupied territories. Such a plan would help reduce the glaring disparities between the urban and rural populations.

46. Another important area was the need to expand the economic base of the occupied territories. It was very important to have ready full feasibility studies on promising new production and business opportunities for the time when significant new business ventures would be possible. That should be preceded by a thorough analysis of the world market with a view to identifying specific niches suitable for Palestine, taking into account its natural resources and possible comparative advantages. The United Nations, having no economic interests of its own, having access to worldwide information on markets, on technology, on costs and prices, and being able to mobilize expertise from every part of the world, was the only donor which could objectively help the Palestinians to prepare a solid economic base for the future.

47. He also said that in the area of information regarding contemporary technologies the occupied territories lived in isolation. For example, without access to information on water resources and not knowing new approaches, the Palestinians would repeat other people's mistakes. Breaking their isolation was a role the United Nations was ideally suited for, and the entire system of specialized agencies could play a major part in that urgent task. The United Nations could also be of assistance in aid coordination and resource mobilization. UNDP was already engaged in promoting and facilitating the widest possible exchange of information between donors and in making that information available to the PLO and to all Palestinian institutions. As soon as a legitimate Government was installed, the United Nations, particularly UNDP, would be able to assess the specific external assistance needed to meet the goals of its development plan and to assist in mobilizing financial resources.

48. **Ms. Lee O'Brien**, Research Officer in the West Bank for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), focused her presentation on the current situation of the Palestinians in the occupied territory, and the implications of it for development and relief activities. She pointed out that since the closure of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, patterns of daily life has been overturned. Coming on the heels of the Gulf crisis and its impact on Palestinians, the closure had brought economic disaster by dividing the occupied territory into four isolated regions which were cut off from each other and from Israel, where tens of thousands of Palestinians had previously found jobs and markets. Local and international institutions serving the Palestinians from East Jerusalem, including UNRWA, had found themselves cut off from their clientele. During the first month of the closure, the loss of income of those who used to work in Israel had reached an estimated $2.7 million a day.

49. She continued by saying that the social and economic consequences were already evident in a dramatic decline in purchases of consumer goods, as well as of inputs for industry and agriculture, and a partial return to a barter economy. One immediate concern of UNRWA was the potential effect of a prolonged closure on health conditions, particularly of small children. Medical experts feared a rise in the incidence of growth retardation among children under three years of age. There would be more children suffering from malnutrition and there could be an increase in child deaths. In response to that concern, UNRWA had been carrying out food distribution, not only in refugee camps but also in towns and villages. However, UNRWA's donated food stocks were insufficient to meet the demand that would arise if the closure continued. She emphasized that it was difficult to believe that in the midst of a delicate peace process, UNRWA, which had evolved over the years into a general provider of quasi-governmental services such as education and health care, should once again have to plan for possible relief operations on a huge scale.

50. Despite a significant expansion of UNRWA services over the past five years, the socio-economic conditions in the occupied territory were rapidly deteriorating, which made UNRWA's services to relieve hardship even more vital. With needs rising so fast as to risk outstripping the resources available, there was a profound sense of unease about the future. Current conditions in the occupied territory called for maintaining a balance between meeting emergency needs for income support, basic needs for education, health and social services and the ongoing structural needs for hospital care, environmental health and job creation. UNRWA was doing its best to meet rapidly expanding emergency and basic needs while keeping sight of the importance of addressing structural needs for the socio-economic advancement of Palestinians in the occupied territory.

51. **Mr. Ephraim Ahiram**, Fellow at the Leonard Davis Institute for International Relations at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, said that the rehabilitation of Palestinian refugees would be a unique opportunity to remould the economy of the occupied territories. The refugees required a comprehensive infrastructure, including sewage systems, water supply, roads, communications and electricity. One of the main aims would be to erect decent housing. The effort would be very costly, from $10 billion to $15 billion within 10 years, he estimated. He felt that funds would be forthcoming from a number of sources, including the European Community, Japan, the Arab Gulf States, the United States, the United Nations, the World Bank and Israel. Thus, the rehabilitation of refugees would give the Palestinian economy a tremendous boost. The build-up of the economy should start in the period of autonomy, so that when the time of self-determination arrived, the Palestinian economy would be far beyond the starting point.

52. He pointed out that because of the extreme smallness of the Palestinian economy, it would be able to develop and achieve sustained economic growth only if it became an export- oriented economy. If refugee rehabilitation was used as a springboard for establishing industries, it might be a good breeding ground for export industries. Since the Palestinian territories had very little experience in industrial production, he believed the mixed policy of import substitution leading to export orientation was the right course. Palestinians would not be able to substitute all imports. Therefore, foreign exporters should be convinced, wherever possible, to establish factories in the Palestinian territories which would employ and train local labour. Also, joint ventures between Palestinians and foreign firms should be encouraged.

53. He continued by saying that there were four main economic branches which were important for the Palestinian economy. Tourism had the best prospects and could be the main earner of foreign currency. Industry should be regarded as the main promise for the future. Agriculture might be valuable in the short run but should not be regarded as the main generator of economic development. Construction would have a boom in the first years of rehabilitation of refugees and of infrastructure development. The Palestinians would have to develop industries that could serve mainly the Gulf States and some of North Africa. Those industries included prefabricated housing, furniture, diamond cutting, electronic chips and Arabic computer software, among others. In Gaza, the main project should be a deep-water seaport to which oil could be transferred from the Red Sea ports of Saudi Arabia, through an existing pipeline. That would make it possible to establish a petrochemical industry in Gaza.

54. He stressed that all options for economic relations would be open when an independent Palestinian State was established. Those options included complete severance of trade relations; regular relations between neighbouring countries; a free trade area; economic union, and monetary union. It was not political solutions that dictated economic relationships, but the resolution of the people as to what they preferred. He believed that economic relations should be based on the free movement of goods and the abolition of non-tariff measures, with protection for Palestinian infant industries, free movement of labour within mutual agreed limits and free movement of capital, with every party having its own currency. The Israelis and Palestinians, and possibly the Jordanians, should establish joint ventures in industry and, perhaps, even in agriculture. All parties concerned would benefit and Palestinians would acquire know-how. Such relations between the Israelis, Palestinians and Jordanians could eventually bring about some kind of a Middle Eastern common market, which would have the advantage of a much bigger market through the inclusion of the Gulf States.

55. **Mr. Fadle Naqib**, economist at Waterloo University, Canada, mentioned that his paper drew upon a contribution he had made to a study prepared by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) on a "Quantitative Framework for the Future Prospects of the Palestinian People". He described the political economy of the Israeli occupation and said that the Israeli policy in the occupied territories could be summarized as the relentless coordination of economic, political and military efforts to force a drastic and irreversible change in demography and land ownership to destroy the Arab character of the territories. The policy of "open bridges" allowed Palestinians in the territories to work in Israel and in the Arab world and caused an impressive rate of income growth shown in Israeli accounts, at the same time distorting the human capital base of the territories. The policy of "communal stagnation" led to the confiscation and expropriation of land and the transfer of the Palestinian water supply to Israel, the prevention of the development of a viable financial sector capable of channelling savings into productive investments, the subjugation of Palestinian agriculture to the requirements of the Israeli markets and the transformation of the Palestinian economy into subservient industries catering to the needs of Israeli industries.

56. He pointed out that the fundamental characteristic of the Palestinian economy under occupation was the continuous erosion of its production base, and the ever increasing dependence on income generated by Palestinians living outside the territories. He appreciated the role of the intifadah in stopping these two trends and moving the Palestinian economy towards the direction of using its labour surplus as an engine of its own growth. For example, intifadah initiatives had met with some success in expanding agricultural output and employment. These achievements, even

though limited in scope, demonstrated the responsiveness of the Palestinian economy to positive efforts directed at stopping the Israeli exploitation. A complete stop could not be achieved before the Palestinian economy was capable of absorbing all its labour surplus. He then presented a model to underscore the severity of those problems and gave a rough estimate of the outside resources needed to assist the Palestinian economy in overcoming its weakness and starting on the road to self-sustained growth. Using some reasonable assumptions, the model predicted a need of $5 billion to $7 billion of outside resources and no less than 20 years to achieve that goal.

57. In conclusion, he stressed the magnitude of the challenge confronting the Palestinian economy. Meeting that challenge required the reassertion of Palestinian control over its own economic policies and considerable research to design a set of optimal policies for comprehensive development. Three major problems were facing the Palestinian economy: unemployment, the imbalance between investment and savings and the trade deficit. To deal with them, it was important that investment in job-creating projects be given priority over other projects, that saving should be encouraged and consumption discouraged and that an export-oriented development strategy with outward-oriented exchange rate should be adopted. Finally, before implementing these policies, huge public expenditures had to be directed towards building the infrastructure. In that respect, financing from external resources was very important in the early stages, before the economy was capable of generating financing through taxation.

58. In the **discussion** that ensued, participants expressed the view that in order to stem further deterioration of the economy and ensure its sustained growth and development, action could and should be taken prior to any breakthrough in the ongoing peace negotiations. To this effect, there must be a clear understanding about the areas that needed urgent attention, such as food and medical supplies, utilities, labour absorption and income-generation activities, and those aimed at long-term development, such as the building-up of physical and institutional infrastructures, structural transformation of the economy and diversification of production, including import substitution and export promotion. It was stated that the Palestinian people must be allowed to exercise full control and management over its natural resources without any restrictions and that all military orders and administrative restrictions imposed on the Palestinian economy must be rescinded.

59. Concern was expressed regarding the efficiency of existing Palestinian institutions, especially in the health and education sectors. It was pointed out that the problem of factionalism and competition for donor support between them made it difficult to focus on priorities. As a result, donors were reluctant to finance the running costs of such institutions and targeted the resources available for the development of new institutions, but not for keeping the existing ones running. It was stressed that the United Nations could assist in promoting coordination among the existing institutions, thus increasing the effectiveness of their performance.

60. The necessity of introducing incentives to encourage employment was strongly stressed. It was important that investment policies should take this goal into consideration. For example, where production capacities existed along with some raw materials, it should be feasible to import the raw materials lacking domestically instead of importing the finished products. This would promote the comparative advantage of the domestic economy, generate employment and increase income. However, it was important not to pursue an employment-generating policy at any cost, i.e., bearing in mind its implications for prices, balance of payments and exports potentials.

61. With regard to the involvement of the World Bank in the revival and development of the West Bank and Gaza Strip economy, reference was made to its recommendation for the large-scale expenditures needed to support the sustained economic growth of these areas. It was pointed out that since the World Bank could not deal directly with a non-member, an appropriate coordination mechanism might be needed should the Bank be able to contribute towards these expenditures. The view was expressed that UNDP could provide much of the logistical support for a World Bank initiated programme.

62. It was emphasized that the organizations of the United Nations system had a crucial role to play in the revival and sustained development of the Palestinian economy. To this effect, it was necessary to reach a consensus on the priorities for action and to determine the areas in which to concentrate, bearing in mind the recommendations made at the Seminar on assistance to the Palestinian people held in Paris on 26 to 29 April 1993.

Panel III

"The United Nations and the peace process"

63. **Mr. Johan Nordenfelt**, Director of Programmes against Apartheid and for Palestinian Rights, Department of Political Affairs, said that United Nations involvement in the peace process had begun with the Madrid peace talks in 1991 and the Organization had come to play a significant role in that framework. The General Assembly, in December 1991, had welcomed the convening of the Madrid conference as a significant step toward the establishment of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace. Throughout 1992, the Secretary-General had had intensive contacts with the concerned parties and co-sponsors of the peace process, which had resulted in an invitation to the United Nations to participate in the multilateral talks as a "full extra-regional participant". Later in 1992, the General Assembly had again welcomed the Madrid process and expressed the need for the United Nations to play a more active and expanded role.

64. He pointed out that the United Nations' participation in the multilateral working groups was conducted primarily on the expert level, drawing on the expertise of such agencies and programmes as UNDP, UNRWA, the United Nations Environment Programme, the International Labour Organisation and the International Atomic Energy Agency. It was closely guided, supervised and coordinated by the Secretary-General's representative, Mr. Chinmaya R: Gharekhan. He described a number of concrete suggestions, projects and activities initiated by the Organization in the working groups on water, regional economic development, refugees, and the environment. He added that another important aspect of the multilateral talks was the discussion of new concepts for regional cooperation in the Middle East. The United Nations had made practical suggestions in that area. In addition, the Secretary-General and his representative also followed the bilateral negotiations closely and were in direct contact with the parties and the co-sponsors. The Secretary-General had made it clear on numerous occasions that he stands ready to offer the services of the United Nations in reaching and implementing eventual agreements, if requested by the parties.

65. **H.E. Mr. Nabil A. Elaraby**, Permanent Representative of Egypt to the United Nations, put the issue in its historical context and said that the Arab-Israeli conflict was the first real problem that confronted the United Nations, beginning in 1947 and lasting until today. Two United Nations resolutions governed the conflict as it existed today: General Assembly resolution 181 (II) of 29 November 1947 which partitioned Palestine and Security Council resolution 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967, calling for the withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the 1967 war. Those resolutions and resolution 338 (1973) constituted the basis for the ongoing peace process and demonstrated its link to the United Nations. He emphasized that the United Nations embodied the international legitimacy for any peace efforts. Even when negotiations were carried on outside the United Nations, the Organization always had a role to play.

66. He continued by saying that the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty was based fully on Security Council resolution 242 (1967) and its correct interpretation. Its elements were the withdrawal from occupied land, the dismantling of settlements and the observation of its implementation by United Nations peace-keeping forces.

67. With respect to the potential United Nations role in the peace process, he said it was expected that the Organization would contribute in the same way it had in the past, with peace-keeping forces, an early warning system and other similar mechanisms. An intensification of the peace talks was required, and third-party involvement necessary. Any proposals, however, had to be well anchored in the rules of international law and international legitimacy. Regardless of the current situation, there was no other alternative but to try to involve the United Nations increasingly in the peace negotiations.

68. **Mr. Richard H. Curtiss**, Executive Director of "Washington Report", pointed out that with the change in the United States Administration, the current Middle East peace process had bogged down. Outlines of possible Israeli settlements with Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and Jordan were clear, but none could be concluded in the absence of an Israeli settlement with the Palestinians. The parties to the Israeli-Palestinian dispute were far apart, without agreement even as to which territories were in contention. At the heart of the disagreement was the status of Jerusalem, with no mutually acceptable agreement possible without international intervention and supervision of the terms of the final treaty.

69. He further said that United States actions on this problem were inconsistent with its own policy. It considered Israel an occupying Power in the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem, a status Israel did not acknowledge. Yet the United States declined to act on its own policy. That American paralysis resulted from the intrusion of domestic politics into United States foreign policy. That intrusion was manifested clearly in tensions between the legislative and executive branches, and even tensions within both the State Department and the White House. The resulting United States inaction was providing opportunities for extremist elements within Israel, and among the Arab States, to stake out positions that made a final land-for-peace settlement even more difficult to attain.

70. He stressed that to avoid further erosion of gains already made, it was time for the United States to hand back to the United Nations primary responsibility for dealing with this problem, and for the United States to support the efforts of the international community in this respect. It was time, as well, for all Members of the United Nations to contribute towards a solution of this problem by initiating firm international action to protect the human rights of the Palestinians and others under

Israeli occupation. Individual Members of the United Nations also could facilitate a settlement by making it clear that they would not be parties to any agreement not in accordance with the provision in Security Council resolution 242 (1967) and in the Charter of the United Nations barring the acquisition of territory by force.

71. Such actions, by the United States and by all States Members of the United Nations, were in the best interests of the parties to the dispute, Arabs and Israelis. They also were in accordance with the expressed interests of all in reaching a prompt, lasting and internationally guaranteed settlement to a problem which had created instability throughout the Middle East for more than two generations.

72. **Mr. Nabil A. Qassis,** Vice-Chairman of the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks, stressed at the outset that almost 20 months had passed since the current peace process had begun. The United Nations had been made to stand aside in the current efforts to resolve the long-standing conflict between the Israelis and the Palestinians. The basis for the ongoing negotiations were resolutions passed by the United Nations, yet, the Organization was not allowed a role in bringing them to bear.

73. He pointed out that the Palestinians were very much concerned for the integrity of the process because of the continuing Israeli settlement activity in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, which was incompatible with the peace process. The status of the territories as occupied was settled in 1967 upon the adoption of Security Council resolution 242 (1967). A basic provision was the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war. The United Nations had affirmed in numerous resolutions the status of these territories as occupied and that the Fourth Geneva Convention applied there. But Israel not only had refused to cease settlement activities but was intensifying them. The size of settlements since the start of the Madrid process had increased by about 40 per cent. That had created an immense obstacle in the negotiations.

74. He continued by saying that the issue of Jerusalem could not be put aside or excluded from the negotiations. Israel had recently imposed restrictions that had separated East Jerusalem from the rest of the occupied Palestinian territory. These restrictions as well as the deportation of the more than 400 Palestinians to southern Lebanon were serious obstacles to the peace negotiations. These talks could not progress while Israel persisted in its disregard of the terms of reference. All proposals or steps made during the current negotiations must be in line with the provisions and principles of resolution 242 (1967). There was a need for an authoritative, collective, fair and precise interpretation of the resolutions that form the basis for the negotiations and a binding mechanism for their implementation. The Security Council was best qualified to come up with such an interpretation and to supervise the implementation. The international community had a duty to ensure that Israel complied with international humanitarian law and the principles of Security Council resolution 242 (1967).

75. **Mr. Shibley Telhami,** Associate Professor of Government at Cornell University, stressed the need to focus the discussion regarding United Nations participation in the peace process on what could be accomplished. One had to look at the realities of power in order to know what was likely to work. United Nations principles had to be reconciled with realities in the Middle East. In his view, the real question was the link between the United States and the United Nations in the Palestinian question. There was a view that international organizations were instruments of policy for powerful members like the United States, which he considered an extreme interpretation. It ignored subtleties

that were windows of opportunity for change. The coalition that had emerged in the Gulf war was a reflection of American interests. However, there were also unintended consequences, since the American public expected the use of international organizations as instruments of policy. That meant the United States must be sensitive about going against the norms of the United Nations.

76. He pointed out that the resolutions passed on the question of Palestine during the Gulf war reflected the new sensitivity of the United States towards the United Nations. Similarly, another sign of change was that the United States had not used its veto since the end of the cold war. Regarding the current Administration, he said that while he agreed that it obviously favored Israel, it philosophically had a liberal agenda which included reducing the use of unilateral force and promoting democracy and human rights. Therefore, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict would stand out as a philosophical anomaly and would have to be addressed. The sharper the tension became between the United States commitment to the United Nations and its attitude towards the Palestinian conflict, the more it would do to reduce that tension. Once progress was made in the peace process, the United States would put more emphasis on the role of the United Nations.

77. He continued by saying that United Nations resolutions contained the parameters for negotiations and would have an even greater impact in the future. In a post-cold-war order, decisions and actions by the United Nations would be relevant in shaping American public attitudes. In the Middle East conflict, the United Nations could have an important role to play in Palestinian security arrangements during a transitional phase. The United Nations should prepare itself for playing a larger role, once a peace agreement was reached.

78. The discussion focused mainly on the approach of the new United States Administration towards the peace talks. It was mentioned that the Administration had no set foreign policy agenda. The guiding slogans, such as reduced militarism and increased respect for human rights, had not been moulded into a useful policy. A clear deviation from this philosophy was seen in the policy towards the Middle East. The extent to which the Administration could continue to live with the situation in the occupied Palestinian territory without it being resolved remained the question. The justification of Israel as a strategic ally no longer existed. That created room to manoeuvre, opportunities for change. After the end of the cold war, United States public opinion was guided by slogans. The state of the economy made the public unsupportive of unilateral intervention and guided United States foreign policy towards multilateral channels.

79. It was questioned whether a true opportunity for resolving the issue really existed. The Arab side, including the Palestinians, had demonstrated a willingness to come to a settlement, which the Israeli Government had not. Many obstacles stood in the way of a solution. The Palestinians had made a great effort and kept returning to the negotiations hoping there would be movement towards a resolution. The view was expressed that it might be time to end the current process.

80. Participants stressed that a policy of more active involvement of the United Nations should focus on human rights, development and security-related issues. The United Nations could play an important role in seeking and implementing agreements to resolve the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians.

C. Closing session

81. **Mr. M. Nasser Al-Kidwa**, Permanent Observer for Palestine to the United Nations, emphasized that the United Nations had a special responsibility towards the Palestinian people. The Organization should be more involved in all aspects of the Palestine question - human rights, the economic situation of the occupied Palestinian territory and the political settlement of the problem.

82. **H.E. Mr. Alcibiades Hidalgo Basulto**, Vice-Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and Chairman of the Seminar, in his concluding remarks pointed out that the three topics which were addressed by the Seminar - human rights, economic development, and the peace process - were closely interlinked and represented the main areas of concern of the United Nations with regard to the question of Palestine.

83. Participants had expressed very strong views about the human rights situation in the occupied Palestinian territory. Israeli violations of the human rights of Palestinians had been condemned internationally and inside Israel alike; yet the international community had been unable so far to obtain the adoption of effective international measures to ensure the physical protection of Palestinians under occupation and to guarantee respect of their rights in accordance with international law. Israel had continued to reject the jurisdiction of the international community with regard to its treatment of Palestinians and to ignore all the appeals and resolutions. He expressed the hope that the Seminar would have made a contribution to the international thinking and policy-making in this regard.

84. He continued by saying that in the course of the Seminar serious analyses of current and future economic needs had been presented as well as constructive proposals to meet the current emergency situation and to promote sustainable development during and after the transition period. He called on the international donor community and organizations of the United Nations system to formulate their activities in the light of the Palestine development programme and in cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization, the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. He fully supported efforts for more efficient coordination of activities among the various sectors of the international community, and between them and the Palestinian leadership, in order to better respond to the existing needs.

85. He said that the panel on the peace process had clearly pointed out the chances and the risks of the current peace talks. Participants had stressed the importance of an active role of the United Nations, the Security Council and the Secretary-General, for a successful outcome of the peace process. The Committee had welcomed the current negotiating process and the fact that it was based on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and on the "land for peace" formula. Although disappointed by the lack of progress thus far, the Committee continued to hope that wisdom and statesmanship, and the desire for peace so prevalent among both Palestinians and Israelis, would in time make it possible to overcome the difficulties and advance towards the realization of the long-standing objective of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

86. He concluded by saying that the Committee would continue to do its utmost to remind the world community of the continued suffering of the Palestinian people who had now lived under military occupation for 26 years. The Committee would continue to explore avenues for strengthening international action to end the suffering and restore respect for fundamental human rights in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem. The Committee was convinced that action in this regard would not only ameliorate the general situation and alleviate the harsh socio-economic conditions, it would also facilitate the peace process and reconciliation between the two peoples.

Annex

List of participants

Experts

Mr. Ephraim Ahiram
Mr. Richard Curtiss
H.E. Mr. Nabil A. Elaraby
Ms. Daphna Golan
Mr. Muhammad Hallaj
Mr. Fadle Naqib
Mr. Nabil Qassis
Mr. Shibley Telhami
Ms. Lynn Welchman
Mr. Andrew Whitley

Governments

Afghanistan	H.E. Mr. Ravan Farhadi Permanent Representative
Algeria	Mr. Kheireddine Ramoul First Secretary
Bahrain	H.E. Mr. Muhamad Abdul Ghaffar Permanent Representative
	Mr. Saeed Al-Faihani First Secretary
	Mr. Ebrahim Al-Dosari Third Secretary
	Mr. Ahmed Al-Dosari Third Secretary
Bangladesh	Mr. Ismat Jahan First Secretary
Belarus	Mr. Nikolai Lepeshko Second Secretary

Belgium	Mrs. Jana Zikmundova First Secretary
Benin	Mr. Georges Abiodun Whannou Minister Counsellor
Burkina Faso	Mr. Mamadou Serme First Counsellor
Colombia	Ms. Claudia Castro Adviser
Cuba	H.E. Mr. Alcibiades Hidalgo Basulto Permanent Representative
	Mr. Abelardo Moreno Fernandez Counsellor
Ecuador	Ms. Jenny Almeida de Ribadeneira Counsellor
Egypt	H.E. Mr. Nabil Elaraby Permanent Representative to the United Nations
Guyana	Ms. Jennifer Wills First Secretary
India	Mrs. Mitra Vasisht Counsellor
Indonesia	Mr. Abdul Nasier Minister Counsellor
	Mr. Eddy Setiabudhi Third Secretary
Iraq	Mr. Qasim A. Shakir Counsellor
Jordan	Mr. Fuad Bataineh Minister Plenipotentiary
Lao People's Democratic Republic	Mrs. Kanika Phommachanh Minister Counsellor
Lebanon	Mr. Nouhad Mahmoud Counsellor

Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Ibrahim Abdlaziz Omar Minister Counsellor
	Mr. Omar Jelban Counsellor
Madagascar	Mr. Raymond Raoelina Minister Plenipotentiary
Malaysia	Mr. Zainal Abidin Ahmad Second Secretary
Mali	Mr. Cheick Diarra First Counsellor
Malta	Mr. Ivan Fsadni Charge d'affaires, a.i.
Mauritania	Mr. Mohammed Ould Mohamed Lemine First Counsellor
Mexico	Ms. Marta Pena Third Secretary
Morocco	Ms. Yamina Akhamlich Bennani Counsellor
	Mr. El Amrani Abdelhakim First Secretary
Niger	Mr. Abdou Abarry Counsellor
Pakistan	Mr. Athar Mahmood Counsellor
Peru	H.E. Mr. Fernando Guillén Permanent Representative
	Ms. Ana Pena Third Secretary
Poland	Mr. Bazteh Pawlah Trainee
Romania	Mr. Ioan Barac Minister Counsellor

Saudi Arabia	Mr. Abdulrahman Alrassi Second Secretary
	Mr. Abdullah Al-Jawini Researcher
Senegal	Mr. Seydina Omar Diop First Counsellor
Sierra Leone	Mr. A. Dennis Turay Third Secretary
Spain	Mr. Juan Jose Urtasun Counsellor
Swaziland	Mr. Joel M. Nhleko First Secretary
Sweden	Ms. Lena Sundh Counsellor
Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Mohammad Shaheed First Secretary
Tunisia	Mr. Othman Jerandi Counsellor
Turkey	Mr. Hayati Guven Counsellor
Ukraine	Mr. Victor Andriyaka Second Secretary
Viet Nam	Mr. Hoang Thi Cu First Secretary

United Nations specialized agencies and bodies

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)	Mr. Frederick H. Welbgen Senior Liaison Officer FAO Liaison Office, New York
International Labour Organisation (ILO)	Mr. George Minet Deputy Director ILO Liaison Office in New York

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)	Mr. Shamsuzzakir Kazemi Chief, Special Economic Unit, Palais des Nations, Geneva
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	Mr. Roger Guarda Special Representative of the Administrator in the Occupied Territories
United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)	Mr. H. Stephen Halloway, Director, New York Office
	Mrs. Aurora Rodriguez Information Officer New York Office
	Ms. Lisa Feder Intern
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)	Mrs. Neh Dukuly-Tolbert Senior Liaison Officer
United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)	Ms. Lee O'Brien, Research Officer (UNRWA)

Intergovernmental organizations

League of Arab States	H.E. Mr. Mahmoud Aboul Nasr Permanent Observer
Organization of the Islamic Conference	Mr. Mohammad Peyrovi Deputy Permanent Observer

Other organizations having received a standing invitation to participate in the sessions and the work of the General Assembly as observers and maintaining permanent offices at Headquarters

Palestine	Mr. Nasser Al-Kidwa Permanent Observer to the United Nations
	Mr. Riyad H. Mansour Deputy Permanent Observer

Non-governmental organizations

American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee	Mr. Larry Ekin
American Educational Trust	Mr. Richard H. Curtiss Mrs. Donna Bourne Curtiss
American Neturei Karta	Ms. Hariett Karchmer
Center for Human Rights Enforcement	Ms. Melissa Phillips United States Field Representative
Centre for Democracy and Human Rights	Mr. Jerry Kazenel
National Committee for Independent Political Action	Mr. Irving Beinin
Palestinian Mother and Childcare Society	Ms. Leila Jammal
Policy Research Institute	Ms. Irene Anne Jillson
Presbyterian Church United States of America	Mr. Victor Makari Ms. Roula Al-Khourie Ms. Thea Halo
World Vision United States of America	Mr. Jerry Levin

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