

EIGHTEENTH UNITED NATIONS SEMINAR ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE

Theme: "The Inalienable rights of the Palestinian people"

Palacio de las Convenciones,
Havana, Cuba
15-17 December 1987

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INTRODUCTION

1. The Eighteenth United Nations Seminar on the Question of Palestine, entitled "The inalienable rights of the Palestinian people", was held at the Palacio de las Convenciones in Havana, Cuba, from 15 to 17 December 1987, in accordance with the terms of General Assembly resolution 40/96 B of 12 December 1985.

2. The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People was represented by a delegation consisting of Mr. Massamba Sarré (Senegal), Chairman of the Committee, head of the delegation; Mr. Alberto Velazco-San José (Cuba); Mr. Pramathesh Rath (India); and Mr. Zehdi L. Terzi (Palestine Liberation Organization). Mr. Massamba Sarré was Chairman and Mr. Pramathesh Rath, Rapporteur of the Seminar.

3. Four meetings were held and 17 panelists presented papers on selected aspects of the question of Palestine. In addition, representatives of 26 Governments, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), 2 United Nations organs, 4 United Nations programmes and specialized agencies, 2 national liberation organizations, as well as observers of 17 non-governmental organizations attended the Seminar.

I. OPENING STATEMENTS

4. The opening session of the Seminar was attended by Mr. Jorge Risquet, Member of the Politburo and the Secretariat, Chief of the General Department for External Relations of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba. The Seminar was addressed by Mr. Isidoro Malmierca Peoli, Minister of External Relations of Cuba. In his statement he emphasized that the cause which was the motive of the Seminar was undoubtedly the epicentre of what was traditionally known as the Middle East crisis or the situation in the Middle East. The theft of land and of its State from the Palestinian people by the colonial Power and the creation and establishment of the Zionist State had given rise to a conflict which went back four decades and, despite the heroic efforts of its people and the international solidarity and support that had been forthcoming, still continued today.

5. The United States of America, in pursuit of its policy of control and hegemony over that strategic region of the world, had lent decisive and firm support and assistance to the monster created by the former metropolis. It was the United States which really controlled and made use of the Zionist State of Israel. For years, it had given that State all the financial, scientific and technical, economic and military support required to strengthen Zionism in the Arab and Palestinian lands.

6. The past 20 years had been of significant importance for the organization, struggle and international recognition of the just cause of the Palestinian people. The PLO had been recognized as the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people; the international community had understood and condemned the historic injustice of the creation of the Zionist State at the expense of the just rights of the Palestinian people; the Palestinian combatants had fought heroic battles and those 20 years had shown that the Palestinian identity could not be destroyed.

7. Cuba's position was well known. Cuba had been and would continue to be a brother in the Palestinian people's struggle and combat. Cuba had expressed and would continue to express its international solidarity with the Palestinian combatants in bringing to fruition the just aspirations of that people. The Cuban position had been proclaimed at the Eighth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, when the Head of State of Cuba had declared in Zimbabwe that a comprehensive, just and durable solution to the situation in the Middle East could not be achieved without the total and unconditional withdrawal of Israel from all Palestinian and other Arab territories it had occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem, and the regaining and exercise in Palestine of the legitimate and inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to return to its home, the right to self-determination without external interference, the right to national independence as well as the right to establish a sovereign independent State in Palestine.

8. Cuba noted with joy and hope that there was a reappearing trend to create new conditions for resuming the path towards détente. The agreements signed between President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev to limit short- and medium-range nuclear missiles, and the possibility of reaching other agreements to stop the arms race, were firm bases for that hope. Although it had not yet taken shape, there was a sense of quest for balanced negotiations and mutual respect for problems which had threatened peace and

security both regionally and internationally.

9. It was Washington - in complicity with Tel Aviv, as had been shown on innumerable occasions - that was blocking the efforts of the United Nations to solve the Palestinian problem. That aggressive and irrational attitude of United States imperialism in ignoring the Palestinian cause had become even more evident recently, when the United States Senate adopted Amendment No. 940, which made unlawful the establishment and maintenance of the offices of the PLO in the United States. The United States Administration was trying to ignore the fact that the Observer Mission of the PLO to the United Nations was present in the United States in accordance with General Assembly resolution 3237 (XXIX) of 22 November 1974, and on the basis of the agreement between the host country and the United Nations.

10. Cuba was convinced of the need to hold the International Peace Conference on the Middle East under United Nations auspices, in which all parties involved, in particular the PLO, would participate on an equal footing. That would contribute to the quest for a just, comprehensive and durable solution to the question of Palestine. Cuba supported the holding of that Conference, as reflected in General Assembly resolutions 38/58 C and 41/43 D. It was the duty of all, and of the United Nations system, particularly its Secretary-General, to continue struggling to ensure that the International Peace Conference on the Middle East was held, but under conditions which truly promoted a definitive solution of the question of Palestine, establishing a just and lasting peace in this highly important region of the world.

11. Israel and its strategic allies, the United States imperialists, had failed in their attempts to destroy the forces of the Palestinian resistance, but they had not halted their continual acts of aggression and the fact had to be decried that the Zionist State was concentrating its armoured vehicles and its special military units in southern Lebanon, apparently as a preparatory measure for another invasion of that country. It was reported that Israeli military activities against Lebanon had already begun. There had been new massacres of the Palestinian people, which continued to exacerbate the situation in the region, and fully justified the meeting currently being held by the United Nations Security Council. The Security Council should make every effort and full use of the Charter of the United Nations in order to put an end to the causes of the Arab-Israeli conflict so that the occupied lands of Palestine could enjoy the freedom which would permit the emergence of a sovereign and independent Palestinian State.

12. The opening session was also addressed by Mr. Naseem Mirza, Chief, Division for Palestinian Rights, on behalf of the Secretary-General. In welcoming the participants, he noted that the convening of the Seminar was symbolic of the great importance which the United Nations attached 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.

13. The United Nations had been involved in that problem for 40 years and had devoted to it more time and more attention than to any other international issue. In that context, the role of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People since its establishment in 1975 had been of great significance in terms of sensitizing international public opinion to the plight of the Palestinian people and developing action proposals to bring about a just solution.

14. The continuing and persistent efforts of the United Nations had, over the past years, produced a wide measure of agreement on the elements to be included in a comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict, namely: the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Arab territories occupied since 1967; respect for and acknowledgement of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of all 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 the right to self-determination. In that context, the question of Jerusalem remained of primary importance.

15. In the search for a solution, the International Conference on the Question of Palestine held at Geneva in 1983, had called for the convening of an international peace conference on the Middle East and had spelled out its guidelines as well as determined the participants. That proposal had been endorsed by the General Assembly in resolution 38/58 C of 13 December 1983 and at each session since then. The recent debates in the Assembly had confirmed the overwhelming sentiment in favour of a just solution of that long-standing conflict voiced by all the participants and the great preoccupation with which they viewed the continuation of the current dangerous stalemate in the region.

16. Despite the long-standing United Nations involvement in the question of Palestine, the numerous resolutions adopted by both the Security Council and the General Assembly, the people of the area had experienced constant suffering and five major wars. At the core of that conflict was the plight of the Palestinian people, most of whom lived under occupation or in exile.

17. The United Nations continued to do all it could to assist the Palestinian people. Since 1950, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, under very difficult conditions, had provided shelter, food, and especially medical and essential educational services to Palestine refugees, who numbered more than 2 million. Other United Nations agencies also provided economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people; particular mention should be made of the capital and technical assistance programme undertaken in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip through the United Nations Development Programme.

18. The United Nations retained a primary responsibility to continue to strive for a solution of the Palestinian question and the Secretary-General remained determined to persevere in his search for a negotiated peace in the Middle East which would ensure justice for all peoples in the region. The Seminar could do much to help in that effort.

19. Mr. Massamba Sarré, welcoming the participants, recalled that 1987 marked a number of anniversaries which had affected the fate of Palestine and its people. Seventy years ago, the eventful Balfour Declaration had been adopted promising to establish a homeland in Palestine for the Jewish people, ignoring the fundamental and inalienable rights of the Palestinians. Forty years ago, the General Assembly had adopted resolution 181 (II) calling for partition of Palestine into two States and assigning a special status to Jerusalem. Only one of those two States, Israel, had come into being. The Palestinian State still remained to come into existence. 1987 also marked the twentieth anniversary of the 1967 war in the Middle East which had resulted in the occupation by Israel, *inter alia*, of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem and Gaza, as well as the Golan Heights. Five years had passed since the massacre of the Palestinians at Sabra and Shatila refugee camps in Lebanon.

20. For 70 years, the beautiful land of Palestine, revered by three great religions of the world, had seen no peace. Conflicts and wars had erupted and the cycle of violence continued to mount. A whole people, Palestinians, had been uprooted from their hearths and homes and existed in exile, in refugee camps or under occupation.

21. For 40 years, the United Nations had continued its tireless efforts to bring about a just and lasting peace to the Middle East. As a part of that effort, the United Nations had established, in 1976, the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. In the discharge of its functions, the Committee, in 1976, had formulated a set of recommendations which included a two-stage plan for the return of the Palestinians to their homes and property, a time-table for the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the occupied territories, and endorsement of the inherent right of the Palestinians to self-determination, national independence and sovereignty. By its resolution 31/20 of 24 November 1976, the General Assembly had endorsed the recommendations of the Committee "as a basis for the solution of the question of Palestine". Those recommendations had been endorsed every year since 1976 by the Assembly with an ever-increasing vote. However, those recommendations could not be implemented since the Security Council had not been able to adopt them.

22. The Committee had continued its efforts at the United Nations and through other forums to mobilize world public opinion in support of the Palestinian cause and for the achievement of a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East. To that end, it had organized, since 1980, a number of seminars and symposia as well as international meetings of non-governmental organizations. Under its guidance a number of studies and publications on different aspects of the question of Palestine had been prepared and issued. Journalists encounters had also been held. Since 1978, on 29 November each year, the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People had been solemnly observed. The Governments and the peoples of Latin American countries had contributed significantly to the Committee's efforts at the United Nations and other forums.

23. The conditions in the occupied Palestinian territories continued to worsen. Israel continued to establish settlements in the occupied Arab territories in violation of the Geneva Convention and of United Nations resolutions. Israel also persisted in its policy of confiscating Arab-owned lands and diverting precious water resources from Palestinian to Israeli use. The "iron-fist" policy continued to be imposed. The situation remained grave and tense.

24. The International Conference on the Question of Palestine, which was held at Geneva in 1983 with the participation of 117 States and 20 observer States as well as 100 non-governmental organizations, recommended that an international peace conference on the Middle East should be convened under the auspices of the United Nations with the participation of all parties to the Arab-Israeli conflict, including the United States of America, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and other concerned States, as well as the PLO, on an equal footing with other parties. That recommendation was adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 38/58 C and, for the past four years, the Assembly had repeated its request for convening the Conference in accordance with the guidelines and participation laid down in its resolution 38/58 C.

25. The Secretary-General of the United Nations had stated in his latest report to the General Assembly and the Security

Council that the gaps between the parties remained wide as regards procedural aspects but that those gaps were not insurmountable. The major obstacle was, as the Secretary-General stated, "the inability of the Government of Israel as a whole to agree on the principle of an international conference under United Nations auspices".

26. The Secretary-General had expressed his determination to continue his efforts towards the convening of the Conference. The General Assembly in its latest resolution 42/66 D of 2 December 1987 had called, once again, for the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East in conformity with the provisions of resolution 38/58 C. The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People would continue its efforts towards convening that Conference particularly through mobilization of public opinion and Government support in all regions of the world.

27. Mr. Imad Jada'a, Ambassador of the PLO to Cuba, conveyed a message from Mr. Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the PLO. In that message it was stressed that at the time the Seminar was being held, the Zionist enemy was stepping up its acts of repression against the Palestinian people under Israeli occupation. Those aggressive practices reflected the racist Zionist policies which constituted a negation of the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people in its homeland.

28. The Government of the Zionist enemy was pursuing the "iron-fist" policy, which involved stepping up the campaigns of repression, collective imprisonment, confiscation of land and the sources of water, destruction of houses, forced emigration of the citizens, deportation of the fighters from their homeland, encouragement for gangs of terrorist settlers by financing and arming them to carry out their terrorist operations against the holy places in Jerusalem, Hebron and Bethlehem and against the sons of the Palestinian people in their towns, villages and camps, in order to sow terror in their midst and compel them to leave their homeland. That policy was reflected also in the construction of Jewish settlements in the Palestinian people's land and in the demographic changes in the occupied zones.

29. Those aggressive and indiscriminate practices had been condemned by United Nations resolutions and by international conventions. In the face of that policy and practice of aggression, the Palestinian people rose as a giant, firm in its resistance through the continual popular uprisings which took the form of demonstrations by the people, strikes and protests, and of all forms of popular struggle, including military resistance against the occupier. In that struggle, the Palestinian people was reflecting its deep-seated national unity, centred wholly around the PLO as its sole and legitimate representative, and reflecting also its firm conviction of the justice of its cause and of its inalienable national rights in its homeland, as well as its rejection of the aggressive and indiscriminate policies pursued by the enemy.

30. The Palestinian people's desire for peace was reflected in the resolutions of the Eighteenth Session of the Palestine National Council, which called for the holding of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East on the basis of General Assembly resolutions 38/58 C and 41/43 D, with the participation of the five permanent members of the Security Council and all the parties to the conflict in the Middle East, including the PLO on an equal footing with the other parties.

31. There was a world consensus concerning the need to hold the International Peace Conference, in the belief that it was the only way to ensure a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the regional and international areas. That consensus had been expressed, inter alia, in resolutions of the Arab Summit Conference, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the Organization of African Unity, as well as by the countries of the socialist community, the European Common Market, the Socialist International, China and others. Only the United States Administration and Israel were opposed to that international consensus; Israel would be unable to oppose that international consensus without the continued support which it received from the United States at all levels - military, economic, financial, political and diplomatic.

32. Mr. Ammar Amari (Tunisia), representing the Special Committee on the Situation with Regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, emphasized that the situation in the Middle East continued to constitute a crisis with an explosive potential, seriously endangering international peace and security. Outside the framework of a just solution to the Palestinian problem, no durable solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict could be found. A comprehensive settlement covering all aspects of the Middle East crisis could not possibly be conceived without the involvement of the Palestinian people.

33. The people of Palestine had for too long been deprived of its fundamental and inalienable right to determine its destiny; it had for too long been subjected to cruel repressive measures. One heard more often of vociferous and opprobrious condemnation of the breach of human rights to freedom of movement, and yet so little was said of the suffering Palestinians, who were prohibited even from re-entering what used to be their towns and their homes, as their country had been taken away from them. The Palestinian people had to be given the opportunity to exercise forthwith its inalienable right to self-determination, including the right to establish an independent State.

34. Over the years, the General Assembly had set out in no uncertain terms the course of action to be taken as a first step towards the resolution of the situation in the area: the convocation of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East. It was encouraging to note that a growing measure of support existed for the convening of that Conference, under the auspices of the United Nations, to serve as a negotiating basis towards a comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

35. While increasing world-wide support for and deeper understanding of the Palestinian cause was to be continuously sought, concerted action had to be taken at the same time, to persuade the supporters of Israel to compel it to respond to the will of the international community on the question of Palestine.

36. It had to be impressed upon Israel that the acquisition of territory by force contravened all norms of international conduct; that its armed aggression and other repressive measures would not be tolerated any longer; that time was overdue for the establishment of an independent Palestinian State; and that the PLO had to be involved in any comprehensive negotiations to that end.

37. The Special Committee attached 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. The Special Committee was profoundly aware of the power of an alert and informed world public opinion in the struggle for human rights and against injustice in all its forms.

38. Mr. Nasreldin A. M. Idries (Sudan), representing the Special Committee against Apartheid, stated that in support of the exercise of the Palestinian people's inalienable and legitimate rights, the Special Committee against Apartheid had, on every occasion, joined in the efforts of the United Nations and the international community. The Committee had given unequivocal support to the Palestinian people's struggle carried out under the leadership of the representative of the Palestine people. The Committee supported the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and statehood.

39. The root cause of the plight of the Palestinian people was the denial of its right to self-determination, as it was with the plight of the black majority in South Africa. Both problems, Palestine as well as apartheid, had confronted the United Nations virtually since its inception.

40. The need for the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East under the auspices of the United Nations, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 38/58 C, was obvious. All parties concerned, including the PLO, had to be able to participate in the Conference on an equal footing. It was encouraging to note that the Extraordinary Arab Summit Conference, held at Amman in November 1987, had supported the convening of the International Peace Conference.

41. The international community had to do its utmost to extend all possible diplomatic and material support to the struggling Palestinian people. In that connection, attention was drawn to the efforts in the United States Congress to close the PLO Observer Mission to the United Nations in New York. The Observer Mission existed by virtue of a General Assembly resolution, was invited by the United Nations and was covered by the Headquarters Agreement. It was very regrettable that the United States, while expressing broadly full dedication to freedom and self-determination of peoples, was attempting to silence the representatives of the Palestinian people struggling for its self-determination and an independent Palestinian State.

42. Mr. Helmut Angula, Permanent Observer of the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) to the United Nations, stated that the peoples of Namibia and Palestine shared common misfortunes. Those two countries were the only remaining former League of Nations Mandate territories being denied the inalienable right to determine their own destiny. Like the people of Palestine, whose land had been handed over by the British to the Zionist usurpers, the people of Namibia had been sold down the drain by the British to whom the League Mandate was conferred, to the Union of South Africa, of which today's apartheid Republic was the heir. Above all, the two people were victims of the most vicious forms of racial discrimination - apartheid and Zionism.

43. Israel had used every means at her disposal to dispossess and drive out the Palestinians from their homeland. She had engaged in the most flagrant violations of international law, and specifically the Geneva Convention of 1949. All of those had been accompanied by administrative, economic and other measures designed to strengthen Israeli control over the occupied territories. In the Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon, at Beirut and near Tyre, the Palestinians had been subjected to such merciless Israeli attacks, including 22 air raids in 1987 alone.

44. The two pariah Pretoria/Tel Aviv regimes were international outcasts born out of British wedlock. As such they had found it convenient to form a politico-military alliance supported by United States imperialism. In their division of labour, Israel was the

policeman of the Middle East, while South Africa performed the same function in respect of southern Africa, both areas of great strategic importance to imperialism in terms of the sea lanes as well as abundant natural resources.

Israel had come to play the role of an intermediary between South Africa and the United States. South Africa had often asked Israel to use its influence in the United States. In return, Israeli Government officials, including cabinet ministers, continued to visit South Africa.

SWAPO was dismayed by the insensitivity of Israel's leaders. SWAPO could not help but condemn in the strongest terms Israel's continued occupation of the Arab territories and its obstructionist policy which impeded the establishment of a Palestinian homeland, where the people of Palestine would be allowed to exercise its inalienable right.

At the 4th meeting, Mr. Stanley Manana, Representative of the ANC to Cuba also addressed the Seminar.

The Seminar received messages of support from Mr. Clodomiro Almeyda, former Vice-President of Chile and Secretary-General of the Socialist Party of Chile and from the Arab Union of Cuba of the city of Ciego de Avila.

The Seminar adopted messages to Mr. Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the PLO (annex I), to Mr. Alexander M. Belonogov, President of the Security Council (annex II), and to Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, Secretary-General of the United Nations (annex III). It also adopted a motion of thanks to the Government and the people of Cuba (annex IV).

II. PANEL DISCUSSION

Three panels were established. These panels and their panelists were as follows:

Panel I "The International Peace Conference on the Middle East, in accordance with United Nations General Assembly resolution 38/58 C, the need for such a conference and efforts and prospects to promote a successful outcome, and benefits thereof":

Mr. Shafiq Al-Hout (Palestinian), Mr. Mr. Tillo Declerq (Belgium), Mr. Miklós Endreffy (Hungary), Prof. Eduardo Kronfly (Colombia), Mr. Jorge Manfugas (Cuba), Mr. Paul McCloskey (United States), Dr. Mattiyahu Peled (Israel), Prof. Gabriel Pérez Tarrau (Cuba).

Panel II "The Question of Palestine and Latin American/Caribbean public opinion":

Mrs. Irma Caceres Pérez (Cuba), Mr. Roberto Garcia (Nicaragua), Mr. Alvaro Menendez Franco (Panama), Mr. Ruben Montedónico (Mexico), Mr. Juan Pereira Fiorilo (Bolivia), Deputy Henry Rondinel Cornejo (Peru), Mr. Juan Sanchez (Cuba), Mr. Carlos Alberto Torrenco (Argentina).

Panel III "The Role of the Palestine Liberation Organization":

Prof. Fouad Moughrabi (Palestinian).

The expert members of the three panels agreed on summaries of the presentations and the discussions on the three topics. The Seminar decided to include those summaries in the report.

Panel I: "The International Peace Conference on the Middle East, in accordance with United Nations General Assembly resolution 38/58 C, the need for such a conference and efforts and prospects to promote a successful outcome, and benefits thereof"

The year 1987 had marked a whole series of commemorative dates of events which had exerted an influence on the genesis and the course of the Middle East conflict. It was the ninetieth anniversary of the birth of Zionism as an ideology; 70 years had gone by since the Balfour Declaration, 20 years had elapsed since the six-day war in the Middle East, and 5 years since Israel's invasion of Lebanon; it also marked the fortieth anniversary of General Assembly resolution 181 (II) on the partition of Palestine.

The critical situation in the Middle East continued to deteriorate. The lack of any real progress in the efforts to achieve peace made the situation in the Middle East a potential threat to international peace and security. The situation in the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied by Israel was tense. The effort to destroy Palestinian culture and to deny that it ever existed continued. Military violence of a greater dimension threatened the region.

Reliance on force as a means of settling the conflict had proved to be a total failure. New flare-ups would have the most serious consequences both for the peoples of the region and for the world as a whole. There was a real opportunity to engage in serious efforts to achieve peace in the Middle East, and the international community should do its best to ensure that that opportunity was not missed.

At the heart of the problem was the question of Palestine, a just solution of which presupposed the restoration of the national rights of the Palestinian people, including its right to return, its right to self-determination without external interference and its right to establish its own independent State in Palestine. The restoration of justice and legality with regard to the Palestinian people and Israel's withdrawal from the occupied territories, including Jerusalem, constituted the principal conditions for the normalization of the overall situation in the Middle East, the elimination of that extreme hot-bed of international tension and the establishment of peace and security in the region. No force could eradicate from the hearts and minds of the people suffering from dispersion, homelessness and refugee conditions the aspiration to become free and independent. In the case of the Palestinian people, the assumption that it could be absorbed into the neighbouring Arab countries and would forego the attachment to its homeland had proved to be totally false. The Palestinian people had fought valiantly for the restoration of its rights and thereby had kept the Palestinian issue alive. Its struggle had resulted in international recognition and in the adoption, by the General Assembly of the United Nations, of resolutions reaffirming the inalienable rights of the people of Palestine.

The question of Palestine had been inseparably linked with the activities of the United Nations. On 29 November 1947, resolution 181 (II) had been adopted by the General Assembly, by which the British Mandate was to end, and two States, one Arab and one Jewish, were to be established. Jerusalem was to be a corpus separatum under a special international regime. Economic unity and safeguard of the fundamental rights were to be ensured. That resolution had been implemented only as far as the creation of the State of Israel was concerned.

On 10 November 1975, the General Assembly had established the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. In its recommendations, repeatedly approved by the General Assembly since 1976, the Committee had laid down a programme which would give effect to the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. As was known, the position of the United States had prevented the Security Council from following up these recommendations.

The International Conference on the Question of Palestine, held at Geneva from 29 August to 7 September 1983, had adopted a declaration and a programme of action. The Geneva Declaration listed the major guiding principles which should govern any concerted international action for the purpose of resolving the question of Palestine. In order to give effect to those guidelines, it was essential for the International Peace Conference on the Middle East to be convened, with the aim of negotiating and finalizing a comprehensive, just and lasting solution of the Arab-Israeli conflict. It was agreed that the International Peace Conference on the Middle East had to be convened under the auspices of the United Nations, with the equal participation of all parties directly involved, including the PLO, as well as the United States, the USSR and other concerned States.

General Assembly resolution 38/58 C, adopted on 13 December 1983, which called for the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East had been recognized since then, and all through the years that followed, as the most balanced and practical resolution for the solution of the Middle East conflict and the question of Palestine, through peaceful negotiations between the parties involved in the conflict.

The General Assembly, at its thirty-ninth, fortieth, forty-first and forty-second sessions, had reaffirmed its endorsement of the call for the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East and reiterated its conviction that such a step would constitute a major contribution towards the achievement of a just, comprehensive and lasting solution of the Arab-Israeli conflict through the collective efforts of all parties concerned.

There had been numerous attempts at solving the conflict. The fact that it still existed was living proof that those attempts had been unsuccessful. That was especially true of bilateral agreements, which had not brought the settlement of the core issue in the Middle East, the question of Palestine, any closer.

The vast majority of States as well as major intergovernmental organizations, including the PLO, Arab States, the USSR and other socialist countries, China, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the European Community, the Scandinavian countries, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries' Committee of Nine on Palestine, had expressed their strong support for the holding of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East and for the establishment of a preparatory committee within the framework of the Security Council, with the participation of its permanent members. Support for the convening of the Conference had also been voiced by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) dedicated to peace and justice in the Middle East.

The Seminar viewed with appreciation the positive role played by the PLO and its active contribution in all endeavours and efforts to achieve a peaceful settlement within the framework of the United Nations and particularly its support for the Conference.

The Eighteen Session of the Palestine National Council, held at Algiers from 20 to 25 April 1987, had supported the

convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East within the framework of the United Nations and under its auspices, with the participation of the permanent members of the Security Council and the concerned parties, including the PLO on an equal footing with the other parties. The session had also supported the establishment of a preparatory committee within the Security Council.

65. The Arab States in their Summit Conference held at Amman, in November 1987, had endorsed a resolution confirming their readiness to accept such a Conference under the auspices of the United Nations, and on the political bases that guarantee the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, whose sole and legitimate representative was the PLO.

66. The need for peace was obvious and its advantages were beyond any doubt. It was clear that achieving it was possible under the present circumstances only by means of the International Peace Conference. It was therefore imperative that all efforts should be made to persuade the United States and Israel to remove their objection to it and co-operate with the vast majority of the international community in implementing the General Assembly resolution calling for that Conference. The view was expressed that the reason Israel and the United States objected to the proposition of the International Peace Conference as defined by the General Assembly was that it provided for the participation therein of the PLO. The Israeli Government realized fully well that PLO participation in the Conference would mean that some very fundamental problems would have to be discussed, including those of Palestinian self-determination and the resettlement of Palestinian refugees. In all its manoeuvres regarding the procedures of the peace process in Israel, it was guided by the desire to avoid, at all costs, discussing those two problems.

67. The present position of the Israeli Government was to obstruct the road to peace. It was therefore utilizing two main strategies to avoid the establishment of peace in the region. First, it conducted a policy of active belligerency towards its neighbours, demonstrating its preference for violence to any other means of dealing with situations inherent in the present unsettled state of affairs. The other strategy was that of suppressing any manifestation in the occupied territories of support for a political settlement of the conflict.

68. However, one had to recognize the fact that there were people in Israel who clearly saw the dangers involved in the continued occupation of Palestinian and other Arab territories, in the denial of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. The people in Israel who saw the problems that way could become partners in the search for a just and lasting peace in the Middle East through the convening of the International Peace Conference. Their position could be strengthened by proper actions of all those who were in favour of the convening of the Conference.

69. The position of the United States could be summed up in three points: 1) their insistence on excluding the USSR from future negotiations dealing with the Middle East conflict; 2) their continued refusal to acknowledge the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and, in particular, its right to establish its own State; 3) their determination to maintain Israel's military superiority in the Middle East as a guarantee for the preservation of United States' interests in the region. It was within that context that one had to assess the practices of the United States Administration against the PLO, and its persistent effort to liquidate it as a political body. The closing of the PLO Information Office in Washington and the recent Congressional Act adopted by the Conference Committee, which described the PLO as a terrorist organization and called for the punishment of any person furthering the interests of the PLO in the United States, were nothing but an example of those hostile, biased and short-sighted practices.

70. The view was expressed that the power of the Jewish community in the United States had thus far prevented the United States Administration from putting sufficiently meaningful pressure on Israel to require Israel's agreement to participate in the proposed International Peace Conference. Jewish political power in the United States political processes continued to be almost absolute. At the present time, on the battlefield of public opinion in the United States, the single greatest educational factor to move public opinion towards justice for the Palestinians would be the demand that Israel, not just the PLO, accept Security Council resolution 242 (1967) and withdrew from the West Bank, the Golan Heights, Gaza and East Jerusalem, as resolution 242 (1967) required.

71. Recent times had seen an intensification of the international campaign for the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East as a peaceful alternative for arriving at an acceptable solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict. It was emphasized however that beginning in April 1987, there seemed to be a tendency to circumvent General Assembly resolution 38/58 C and substitute it with a procedure which would have left the permanent members of the United Nations and the PLO outside the peace process. The nature of the alternative procedure had never been clearly described but the most frequent description of it was that of an "international opening" or an "international umbrella", which would either signal the beginning or shelter the process of bilateral negotiations between Israel and Jordan aiming at resolving the question of Palestine. But those campaigns and conspiracies to oust the PLO from the peace process had failed to achieve the sought results.

Panel II: "The question of Palestine and Latin American/Caribbean public opinion"

72. The question of Palestine and the Arab-Israeli conflict had remained in the forefront of international public opinion as one of the major issues faced by the world. The reason for the intense preoccupation of the international community with that question were the moral and ethical issues it raised in regard to the use of force and military power to deprive a whole people of its inalienable rights and its land and the wars that it had caused in the region, the threat it posed to world peace and the instability which it sustained in an extremely sensitive region of the world.

73. During the discussion on that subject, it was stated that the development of informed public opinion on any issue or set of issues was rarely an easy or automatic process. It was indisputably a necessary task in the context of the question of Palestine where the rights of a people were being systematically denied. It was also difficult to discuss Latin American/Caribbean public opinion in general as a region for a variety of reasons. In that region, there were more urgent problems, such as those of lack of resources, external debt, and economic and social development.

74. It was agreed that, generally speaking, public opinion was becoming an increasingly important factor in influencing the formation of national policies on international and regional issues and, in particular, on issues of international peace and security. Public opinion, therefore, had to be mobilized to strengthen the voice of reason, justice and objectivity in world affairs with a view to making the world safer to the benefit of mankind.

75. The international system of information, generally dominated by the Western media, played an important role in the formation of public opinion. It emphasized division among the Palestinians, internal conflict and "Arab terrorism" and reported less frequently what was happening within the occupied Arab territories, the daily oppression and life under occupation and the consequences of the implementation of the policy of settlements. The influence of the Jewish lobby as well as specific interest groups in most of the countries in the region was apparent. Public opinion in Latin America, as elsewhere, needed a clearer presentation of the question of Palestine in order to encourage positive attitudes and to strengthen the support of the legitimate struggle of the Palestinian people.

76. It was recalled that, generally, Latin America countries were favourably disposed towards the International Peace Conference on the Middle East and that their support should be used to assist in removing the remaining obstacles in the path of convening the Conference. It was particularly emphasized that more objective information was needed on the activities to convene the International Peace Conference on the Middle East in conformity with United Nations resolutions, so that Latin American/Caribbean public opinion could play a forceful role in contributing to the initiation of a process leading to a solution to the conflict.

77. The point was also made that particular attention should henceforth be directed towards forces that were still not sufficiently supportive of the just cause of the Palestinian people so as to correct the misperception and distortion on the question of Palestine and its root causes.

78. It was explained and recalled that among Latin American members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, there had been support for the struggle of the Palestinian people from the earliest stages and that specific attention had been paid to the question of Palestine and to solidarity with the Palestinian people. That support had been based on the fundamental and universal principles of peace, freedom, independence, justice and respect for human rights upheld by the Movement.

79. It was important that the media should play a more responsive role in providing a more balanced reporting on the Middle East and, in particular, on the plight of the Palestinians. Institutions such as universities, colleges, research institutes, churches and other religious establishments as well as national and international NGOs had a crucial role to play in the formation of public opinion. Those institutions and organizations had to be urged to give wider coverage and more balanced treatment to the question of Palestine.

80. Seminars and symposia organized by the United Nations were a pressing necessity for the Latin American region. Through those means the public could be sensitized. Special consideration had also to be given to wider observance of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, which had been established by General Assembly resolution 34/65 D to be observed on 29 November each year, and the occasion had to be taken to give maximum coverage to the question of Palestine.

81. Every effort had to be made to step up the widespread dissemination of information, as one of the major contributions to the achievement of a just solution of the problem of Palestine on the basis of the attainment of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people in Palestine. The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and the United Nations Division for Palestinian Rights had an important role in such dissemination of information. Furthermore, the United Nations Department of Public Information was requested to make every effort to ensure that accurate information on the question of Palestine received the widest possible dissemination.

Panel III: "The Role of the Palestine Liberation Organization"

82. Historically, the PLO had achieved the important task of articulating for the dismembered Palestinian community a sense of identity and nationhood. That had been no small accomplishment given the historical reality that grew out of the 1948-1949 period. Those events formed part of a repository of events and cognitions that went into a collective memory. In essence, therefore, the PLO had become the guardian of the collective memory of the Palestinians in much the same way that the African National Congress guarded the collective memory of the African people living under apartheid.
83. The constituting elements of that collective memory were as follows: first, there was the experience of exile; second, there was the reality of life under military occupation, the feeling of being a refugee in one's own country. A proud people was turned into a despised minority in its own country. One segment of the Palestinian people had experienced those conditions from 1948 on. Those are the people, mostly in the Galilee, who had stayed behind. The media called them Israeli Arabs; they called themselves Palestinians and they identified themselves with other Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza, and in exile. Those under occupation from 1967 on were still experiencing the trials of military occupation and daily racist abuse. For many of those people, there was, in addition to the experience of jail, torture, death, and destruction, the loss of land and the alienation of having moved from peasants rooted to their lands to wage-earners in the Israeli service sector. This alienation derived from the loss of autonomy, or self-determination -- meaning control over one's own destiny and one's own life. In the third place, many Palestinians outside of their historic homeland (exiled in the Arab countries or beyond) had experienced death and destruction as well as abuses verging on racist treatment. No one could ignore the massacres of Palestinians in the Beirut camps in September 1982, or the continuing siege and constant bombing of those and other Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon.
84. The historical record showed, rather convincingly, that the aim of Zionism as a settler movement, and later of the State of Israel, had been to deny the legitimacy of Palestinian nationalism.
85. The PLO, reflecting popular Palestinian sentiment, had always affirmed the unity (the indivisibility) of the Palestinian people. That meant that all Palestinians, wherever they were, constituted a national unit. The key operative word which represented for most Palestinians their historic reaction to attempts at their elimination (both physically and nationally-politically) is Sumud. In Arabic that word meant steadfastness, doggedness, standing fast, clinging to one's country and one's land, building homes, having children. Resolutions of the Palestine National Council always included that word.
86. The PLO had been able to extend financial assistance to a variety of institutions in the occupied areas -- health centres, hospitals, schools and universities, social work centres, economic institutions, farmers, contractors, educators, artists, and trade unions. The purpose was to develop the necessary infrastructure to enable the Palestinians to maintain their steadfastness (Sumud).
87. The Economic Department of the PLO, also known as Samed (steadfast), had the following objectives, in addition to supporting the steadfastness of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories. Samed trained the children of martyrs and provided them job opportunities. It provided jobs for the Palestinians in the refugee camps. Samed had been trying to establish the nucleus of an industrial and agricultural infrastructure, including agricultural development projects in various countries.
88. The PLO had succeeded, often against severe odds, in establishing the nucleus of a State for a people in exile. Educational, social, health, and cultural needs were met. The most successful had been the Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS) which was in charge of the health care system of the Palestinians. PRCS operated 13 major hospitals, nearly 100 clinics, a nursing school, and day-care centres.
89. Attempts to bury Palestinian identity and to turn the Palestinians into quiescent, nearly invisible people, had failed. They had become instead the only force willing to challenge Israeli attempts at hegemony. The PLO had followed a multi-track policy with the following objectives: (a) to solidify the national identity of the scattered Palestinian community by establishing new and important links between all Palestinians; (b) to resist Israeli occupation in the West Bank and Gaza and to militarily harass the Zionist State in order to raise the cost of occupation; and (c) to pursue an aggressive international effort designed to enlist international support for the principle of self-determination and for the right of the Palestinians to choose their own representatives.
90. Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon had been designed to resolve the problem finally by completely destroying all PLO institutions in Lebanon, inflicting such a devastating defeat that the people in the West Bank and Gaza would be demoralized and accept any solution offered to them. Those efforts had failed, confirming once again the impossibility of resolving the problem in Israel's favour through military means. The PLO had left Lebanon but it had survived and it was indeed back in Lebanon, despite Israeli and non-Israeli efforts at preventing its return. Efforts at psychological warfare launched by Israel, the United States, and others had equally failed.
91. Internationally, the PLO had 85 standing representations (embassies, offices) in various countries and it was accredited to more than 108 States. The PLO had been unanimously recognized as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people by the Arab States at the Rabat Summit Conference in 1974. It was similarly recognized by the Organization of African Unity, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the Organization of the Islamic Conference, and it had observer status at the United Nations.
92. On the basis of the resolutions of the Eighteenth Session of the Palestine National Council, held at Algiers from 20 to 26 April 1987, the following conclusions might be drawn:
- (a) The language of Palestinian political discourse was secular, free of divine promises, sacred covenants, and destinies. Religious language infused Israeli political rhetoric as well as the rhetoric of a number of States in the region. The Palestinians had anchored their claims to the struggle for human rights and for national liberation. They stood on the side of those who struggled for freedom and oppression. Israel, on the other hand, stood on the side of those who wished to perpetuate oppression - in South Africa, in Central America and elsewhere;
- (b) The politics of exclusion or negation that had historically characterized Zionism as a settler movement were countered by politics of affirmation. Israel refused to discuss peace with the PLO - it wanted to choose among the Palestinians under occupation those it thought could be valid representatives of their people. That simply meant that Israel refused to acknowledge the reality of Palestinian nationalism and wanted to find a settlement which ignored the national rights of the Palestinians. By contrast, the PLO had made it clear that it could participate in negotiations as an equal partner, on the basis of all United Nations resolutions relevant to the Palestine question. The Palestinians wanted to live in peace as free men and women, in their own land. Those principles represented the absolute minimum for them: (i) the right to self-determination, including the right to establish its own sovereign State on their own soil with Jerusalem as its capital; (ii) the right to be represented by people of their own choosing, in this case, the PLO; and (iii) the right of refugees to return or to be compensated;
- (c) Historically, the Palestinians had affirmed their right to exist through rebellion and resistance. That rebellion had deep roots in their history and it included various forms of struggle - armed resistance, civil disobedience, non-co-operation with the occupier, and Sumud. The total Palestinian population consisted of nearly 4.7 million individuals. Eliminating 4.7 million Palestinians from the scene was impossible, subjugating them was even more difficult. Resistance would continue and it would evolve, assuming new forms and adopting new methods;
- (d) An international consensus had evolved on the question of Palestine, in response to the energetic diplomacy of the PLO, the steadfastness of the Palestinian people under severe conditions, and the clarification of issues surrounding that historic conflict. That consensus included, in addition to a majority of the developed countries, significant segments of public opinion in the United States and even in Israel. In the United States, the Government lagged behind its own public on that and on other questions. Indeed the United States Government reflected an extremely narrow view -- that of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (known as the pro-Israel lobby) which reflected the most intransigent views of important segments of the Israeli establishment. Frequently, the United States and Israel, alone, stood opposed in international forums, to the will of the majority of nations. The assistance of socialist countries had enabled the Palestinians to withstand the assault against them.
- ### III. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
93. The Seminar recalled that the year 1987 marked a number of anniversaries of significant events in the history of the Palestinian people in its struggle to attain its legitimate and inalienable rights. It was the seventieth anniversary of the Balfour Declaration, the fortieth anniversary of the adoption of General Assembly resolution 181 (II), the twentieth anniversary of the 1967 war and the fifth anniversary of the Israeli invasion and occupation of Lebanese territory and the massacre of Palestinians at the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps.
94. The Seminar expressed its deep concern over the present dangerous situation in the Middle East which posed a serious threat to international peace and security. In the nuclear age it was necessary for international relations to be restructured so that confrontation was replaced by co-operation, and conflict situations were resolved through peaceful political means and not through military actions.
95. The Seminar was profoundly convinced that the vital interests of all peoples of the region, as well as the interests of international peace and security, could only be secured through the attainment of a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement, on the

basis of relevant United Nations resolutions and under its auspices, of the Arab-Israeli conflict of which the question -of Palestine was the core.

96. The Seminar was aware that while strenuous attempts had been made to find a solution to the Middle East conflict, the situation in the region remained intractable. It was further aggravated by Israel's actions in the occupied Arab territories. The inalienable rights of the Palestinian people continued to be undermined. Israel continued its policies of illegally maintaining and expanding Jewish settlements as well as confiscating Arab-owned lands and diverting scarce water resources to its own use in the occupied Palestinian and Arab territories. The "iron-fist" policy of Israel had further stifled all forms of political, cultural, social and economic expressions of the Palestinian people. Israel continued to strengthen its control over most aspects of life, with the objective of obstructing a self-sustained development of the Palestinians in the occupied territories by turning those territories into a dependent entity with the aim of their final absorption and annexation. Such policies were in violation of United Nations resolutions, the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and other norms of international law and exacerbated tension in the area, thus hindering attempts to find a peaceful solution to the question of Palestine.

97. The Seminar affirmed that the denial of the exercise of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people remained the core of the conflict in the Middle East and that a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the region could not be achieved without the full exercise of those rights, including the rights to return, to self-determination and to statehood, and without the complete withdrawal of Israel from Palestinian and Arab territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem. It further affirmed that the PLO was the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. It invited Governments which had not yet done so to accord recognition of the PLO as such.

98. The Seminar unanimously concluded that the way to establish a just and lasting peace in the Middle East was by convening the International Peace Conference on the Middle East, under the auspices of the United Nations and with the participation of all parties to the conflict, including the PLO on an equal footing, as well as the United States and the Soviet Union and other concerned States, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 38/58 C. The Seminar was convinced that partial and piecemeal solutions would ignore the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict and were not conducive to a comprehensive settlement. The need was stressed for a comprehensive attempt at establishing a just and lasting peace in the Middle East through the International Peace Conference in accordance with United Nations resolution 38/58 C. The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People had an important role to play in promoting the convening of the Conference.

99. The Seminar was of the view that, during 1987, international understanding of the question of Palestine and support for the attainment and exercise by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights had continued to grow. At the same time, in the region, tension and violence had continued to mount, with tragic consequences. The Seminar considered that the present situation demanded renewed and intensified collective international efforts aimed at reaching a comprehensive, just and lasting solution. Urgent positive action by the Security Council was required on the recommendations formulated by the Committee in its first report, submitted in 1976 and endorsed by the General Assembly, as well as the recommendations adopted by the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, held at Geneva in 1983. The peaceful solution of this long-standing conflict and the attainment of justice and security for all, based on the exercise by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights, remained a primary and urgent responsibility of the United Nations.

100. The Seminar took note with appreciation of the efforts of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People to secure universal recognition of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, and of its recommendations for ensuring the exercise by the Palestinian people of those rights. The Seminar also noted with satisfaction the increased support at the United Nations for the programme of action undertaken by the Committee. It urged the international community to sustain and strengthen its support for the Committee's activities and endeavours, in particular its efforts for facilitating the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East and the establishment of a preparatory committee within the framework of the Security Council, with the participation of its permanent members.

101. The Seminar expressed its grateful appreciation for the efforts undertaken by the Secretary-General of the United Nations with a view to convening the International Peace Conference on the Middle East. In this regard the Seminar took note of his report (A/42/714-S/19249) and expressed full support for his intention to maintain his special efforts and continue to explore with the parties ways of advancing the process. The Secretary-General, in his report, had stated that "the inability of the Government of Israel as a whole to agree to the principle of an international conference under United Nations auspices" remained a major obstacle. The Seminar concluded that the Government of Israel, along with the Government of the United States, opposed compliance with General Assembly resolution 38/58 C. In that context, the Seminar urged the Governments of Israel and the United States to reconsider their negative attitudes towards the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East.

102. The Seminar was of the view that the recent adoption of Amendment No. 940 by the United States Senate making unlawful the establishment and maintenance of offices of the PLO in the United States ignored the fact that the PLO Observer Mission to the United Nations was present in accordance with General Assembly resolution 3237 (XXIX) of 22 November 1974. Furthermore, that legislation was contrary to the Headquarters Agreement between the host country and the United Nations. The Seminar was also of the view that the closure of the PLO Observer Mission to the United Nations would mean the elimination of an important institution contributing to the search for peace in the Middle East.

103. The Seminar expressed its strong protest against the reported Israeli military actions against Lebanon as well as the new wave of oppression of Palestinians in the occupied territories. It demanded that those actions should cease immediately and requested the Security Council to undertake every effort under the Charter of the United Nations in order to put an end to the causes of violence and the use of force.

104. The Seminar appealed to the members of the Security Council and in particular to its permanent members, in exercising their responsibilities for the maintenance of international peace and security, to make every effort to convene the International Peace Conference on the Middle East without further delay.

105. The Seminar viewed the results of the Eighteenth Session of the Palestine National Council, held in April 1987 at Algiers, as a significant contribution to achieving a just solution to the question of Palestine and resolving the plight of the Palestinian people. The Seminar welcomed in particular the unequivocal support of the PLO for the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East in accordance with General Assembly resolution 38/58 C.

106. The Seminar recalled with appreciation the support that Governments and peoples of Latin America had extended at the United Nations and in other forums to the Palestinian cause and for the achievement of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. It agreed that efforts should be continued and intensified to mobilize the official and public opinion in the Latin American region, as well as in other regions of the world, especially through the use of the media and activities of non-governmental organizations. The United Nations should undertake additional efforts to disseminate factual and up-to-date information on the question of Palestine, the plight of Palestinians under occupation or in exile, and the measures required to be taken for the achievement of a just solution to the question of Palestine on the basis of the attainment by the Palestinian people in Palestine of its inalienable rights. The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and the Division for Palestinian Rights had an important role in the dissemination of such information. Moreover, the United Nations Department of Public Information should make every effort to ensure that accurate information on the question of Palestine received the widest possible dissemination and should ensure adequate representation of Latin American journalists in its annual fact-finding missions to the Middle East.

107. It was important that governmental media and international news agencies should play a more objective role in providing balanced reporting on the Middle East and, in particular, on the plight of the Palestinian people. The Seminar emphasized that intergovernmental organizations, institutions such as universities, colleges, research institutes, churches and other religious establishments as well as national and international non-governmental organizations, had a crucial role to play in the formation of public opinion, especially in the United States and Israel. Those institutions should be encouraged to give wider coverage and objective treatment to the question of Palestine.

MESSAGE FROM THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE SEMINAR TO
THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

We, the participants in the Eighteenth United Nations Seminar on the Question of Palestine, being held in Havana, Cuba, wish to express our profound appreciation for your kind message conveyed to the Seminar by your representative, Mr. Naseem Mirza, Chief, Division for Palestinian Rights. We have learnt the news of the latest Israeli military activities against Lebanon and the Palestinian people. We strongly protest against these Israeli military actions as well as against Israeli acts of oppression and harassment against Palestinians in the occupied territories. We urge you, Mr. Secretary-General, to assist in bringing about the immediate cessation of these acts and to intensify your efforts with a view to convening the International Peace Conference on the Middle East as the most suitable means to achieve a just, comprehensive and lasting settlement of the Middle East conflict and its core, the question of Palestine.

Annex II

MESSAGE FROM THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE SEMINAR TO
THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

We, the participants in the Eighteenth United Nations Seminar on the Question of Palestine, being held in Havana, Cuba, express our strongest protest against the increasing use of military force by the Israeli Government against the Palestinian people in the occupied territories engaged in the struggle to secure the exercise of its inalienable rights. We have learnt the news of the latest Israeli military activities in Lebanon directed against the Lebanese as well as the Palestinian people. We expect the Security Council to act promptly to stop this Israeli policy of military intervention and oppression of Palestinians. We consider it necessary that the underlying causes of the tense situation should be removed through the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East for achieving a just, comprehensive and lasting settlement of the Middle East conflict and its core, the question of Palestine. We would appreciate if this message could be brought to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

Annex III

MESSAGE FROM THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE SEMINAR TO
THE CHAIRMAN OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE
PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION

We, the participants in the Eighteenth United Nations Seminar on the Question of Palestine, being held in Havana, Cuba, wish to express our sincere appreciation for your kind and inspiring message conveyed to the Seminar at its opening session. We are considering at this Seminar ways and means to promote the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East and to mobilize Latin American/Caribbean public opinion in support of the exercise of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. We protest strongly against the latest wave of oppression and subjugation waged by Israeli authorities against the Palestinian people in the occupied territories and the reported Israeli military action against Lebanon. We have conveyed these sentiments to the President of the United Nations Security Council and the Secretary-General. We convey to you and to the Palestinian people our greetings and our pledge of full support and solidarity in your heroic struggle to secure your inalienable rights.

Annex IV

MOTION OF THANKS

The participants in the Eighteenth United Nations Seminar on the Question of Palestine, being held from 15-17 December 1987 in Havana, Cuba, wish to convey their profound thanks to the people and Government of Cuba for providing a venue for this Seminar and the excellent arrangements made, which greatly contributed to its success. They also express their sincere thanks for the generous hospitality extended to them.

The participants in the Seminar wish to express their particular appreciation to H.E. Mr. Jorge Risquet, Member of the Politburo and the Secretariat, Chief of the General Department of External Relations of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba, for his personal interest in the Seminar. They also wish to express their gratitude to H.E. Mr. Isidoro Malmierca Peoli, Minister for External Relations of Cuba, for his significant contribution to the Seminar. The participants in the Seminar express their appreciation to the people and Government of Cuba for their consistent support for and solidarity with the just struggle of the Palestinian people under the leadership of the PLO, its sole legitimate representative, for the exercise of its inalienable national rights in Palestine.

Annex V

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS AND OBSERVERS

Mr. Massamba SARRE
Permanent Representative of Senegal to the United Nations, Chairman of the Committee

Mr. Alberto VELAZCO-SAN JOSE
Deputy Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations

Mr. Pramethesh RATH

Counsellor, Permanent Mission of India to the United Nations

Mr. Zehdi L. TERZI
Permanent Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization to the United Nations

Seminar panelists

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Irma CACERES PEREZ (Cuba)
Tillo DECLERQ (Belgium)
Miklós ENDREFFY (Hungary)
Roberto GARCIA (Nicaragua)
Eduardo KRONFLY (Colombia)
Jorge MANFUGAS (Cuba)
Paul MCCLOSKEY (United States)
Alvaro MENENDEZ FRANCO (Panama)
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Member States

Afghanistan
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Ambassador to Cuba

Algeria
H.E. Mr. Hocine Zatout
Ambassador to Cuba

Mr. Soufiana Mimouni
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Mr. Raúl Roa Kouri
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Mr. José Perez Novoa
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Mr. Eumelio Caballero
Director, Non-Aligned Movement Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Mr. Ulises Estrada
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Mr. Reynaldo Gonzalez
Vice-President, Cuban Institute for Friendship with Peoples

Mr. Neurys Vernier
Vice-Chief, General Department Central Committee

Mr. José Arbesú
Vice-Chief, America Department Central Committee

Mr. Ernesto Gómez Abascal
Chief of Section, General Department
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Mr. Ramón Ferro
Chief, Department of International Relations National Assembly

Mr. Frank Ortíz
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Mr. Mario García
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Mr. Luis Gonzales Marturelos
Minister Counsellor

Czechoslovakia
Mr. Zdenek Smrkovsky
Ambassador to Cuba

Democratic Yemen
H.E. Mr. Abdulrahman Mohamad
Ambassador to Cuba

Egypt
H.E. Mr. Mohamed Abbouda
Ambassador to Cuba

Mr. Fouad Cherif
Embassy in Havana

German Democratic Republic
Mr. Jorgen Veit
Third Secretary, Embassy in Havana

Ghana
H.E. Mr. Kojo Amoo-Gottfried
Ambassador to Cuba

Mr. James Allotey
First Secretary, Embassy in Havana

Guinea
Mr. Cheik Alouseny Conde
First Secretary, Embassy in Havana

India
H.E. Mr. Madhau Mangalmurti
Ambassador to Cuba

Iran (Islamic Republic of)
Mr. Mohammad Hamzeh
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Lao People's Democratic Republic
Mr. Somlith Khantivong Embassy in Havana

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Mr. Solomon Omojokun
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Mrs. Marcela de Ruiz
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Philippines
H.E. Mrs. Ophelia Gonzales
Ambassador to Cuba

Mrs. Erlinda Basilio
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Poland
Ms. Marzena Pawlowska
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Mr. Janusz Seczys
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Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
Mr. Yuri Nosenko
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Mr. Nikolay Babich
Second Secretary, Embassy in Havana

Mr. Ovanes Arutiunian, Embassy in Havana

Venezuela
Mr. Rafael A. Capriles R.
Embassy in Havana

Viet Nam
Mr. Xuan Phong Nguyen
Counsellor, Embassy in Havana

Yugoslavia
Mr. Milorad Ivanovic
Embassy in Havana

Non-member States represented by observers

Democratic People's Republic of Korea
Mr. Che Byonk Ik Counsellor
Embassy in Havana

Mr. Che Sung Jyon
Embassy in Havana

Republic of Korea
H.E. Mr. Eui Sok Chai
Ambassador, Deputy Permanent Observer to the United Nations

Mr. Hwan Bok Cho
First Secretary
Embassy in Mexico City

United Nations organs

Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

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