



General Assembly    Security Council

Distr.  
GENERAL

A/37/457  
S/15403  
20 September 1982  
ENGLISH  
ORIGINAL: RUSSIAN

GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
Thirty-seventh session  
Items 31 and 34 of the provisional agenda\*  
QUESTION OF PALESTINE  
THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

SECURITY COUNCIL  
Thirty-seventh year

Letter dated 17 September 1982 from the Chargé d'Affaires a.i. of  
the Permanent Mission of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics  
to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you the text of a speech by L. I. Brezhnev, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, made on 15 September 1982 in the Kremlin at a dinner in honour of A. N. Mohammed, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Yemen Socialist Party, Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme People's Council and Prime Minister of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, during his official visit of friendship to the USSR.

I would request you to circulate the text of L. I. Brezhnev's speech as an official document of the General Assembly, under items 31 and 34 of the provisional agenda, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) R. OVINNIKOV  
Acting Permanent Representative of  
the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to  
the United Nations

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ANNEX

Speech given by L. I. Brezhnev at a dinner in honour of A. N. Mohammed

Moscow, 15 September 1982 (TASS). Today in the Kremlin, L. I. Brezhnev spoke at a dinner in honour of A. N. Mohammed, who is here on an official visit of friendship.

"First of all, may I express the warm feelings which the people of the Soviet Union have for the friendly people of Democratic Yemen, its leadership, and for you, dear Comrade Mohammed," L. I. Brezhnev said.

I think we can say with satisfaction that the relationship between our countries, between the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Yemen Socialist Party, is one of true friendship and fraternal solidarity, of broad co-operation and effective interaction. And the latest talks have again firmly underlined how similar and close our opinions and assessments are regarding both questions of bilateral relations and basic foreign policy issues.

Naturally, the extremely dangerous situation in the Middle East was central to our discussions. The Israeli aggressor has finally revealed its predatory nature for all the world to see. Never before has an invader acted so cynically, violating the integrity of a sovereign country, methodically committing mass murder of Palestinians and Lebanese, and brazenly flouting the generally accepted norms of international law and the decisions of the United Nations Security Council.

During the bloody war, the essence of United States policy in the Middle East was also revealed in the clearest of terms. Not only did the United States make no attempt to restrain the Israeli aggressor; it actually delivered Lebanon into the hands of Israel. As a result, the Israelis have occupied a considerable portion of Lebanon, killing tens of thousands of people and leaving hundreds of thousands of peaceful inhabitants homeless.

And all this time in Washington, where they are so fond of all sorts of 'sanctions' and 'punishments', there was not a single word of condemnation addressed to the aggressor, much less any concrete measures to curtail its actions.

It is still too early to say the final word about the tragedy which is taking place in Lebanon. Even today, however, we can with confidence conclude that, at the walls of Beirut and in the hills of Lebanon, Israel and its American sponsors have, as a result of the bravery and steadfastness of the Palestinians, Lebanese and Syrians, suffered a resounding political and moral defeat.

They did not succeed, either by fire or sword, in erasing the Palestinian question, in making it no longer an issue. On the contrary, the heroism of the Palestinians in the struggle against an enemy which far surpassed them in strength has immeasurably increased the authority and the political influence of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

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Washington is now in a hurry to consign this bloody tragedy to oblivion and to pretend that it is endeavouring to find a solution to the Middle East problem. But the very basis of the United States proposals is faulty. They deny the right of the Palestinians to self-determination and to the establishment of their own state and reduce the whole 'solution' to promises of 'administrative autonomy' for the Palestinians under the full control of Israel. They do not include a single mention of PLO, the only legitimate representative of the Arab people of Palestine.

In this regard, in opposing the creation by the Palestinians of their own State, the Washington administration also brings into question the legal basis for the existence of Israel. The United Nations decision adopted in 1947 provided for the creation of two sovereign States - Arab and Jewish - in the former mandated Territory of Palestine. No one revoked or can revoke that decision. It would be rash to consider that only that part of the decision which relates to the establishment of a Jewish State can be implemented and that the part dealing with the establishment of a Palestinian Arab State can be ignored forever.

If one seriously speaks about some sort of movement towards a settlement in the Middle East, it is necessary first of all to force the aggressors to leave Lebanon, renounce their acts of banditry and cease their provocation against Syria. We would advise Israel to come to its senses and stop playing with fire. The patience of the world community is not unlimited.

It is our firm belief that a just and lasting peace in the Middle East can and should be based on the following principles, which are in accordance with both the general norms of international law and the concrete decisions of the United Nations Security Council and General Assembly on this question.

First, the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of foreign territories by aggression must be strictly observed. This means that all the territories occupied by Israel since 1967 - the Golan Heights, the West Bank of the Jordan, the Gaza Strip and the Lebanese territories - must be returned to the Arabs. The borders between Israel and its Arab neighbours must be declared inviolable.

Secondly, the inalienable right of the Arab people of Palestine to self-determination and to the establishment of their own independent State in the Palestinian territories which will be freed from Israeli occupation - the West Bank of the Jordan and the Gaza Strip - must be guaranteed in practice. Palestinian refugees must be granted the opportunity, provided for in United Nations decisions, to return to their homes or receive compensation for properties which they left.

Thirdly, the eastern part of Jerusalem, which was occupied by Israel in 1967 and where one of the main Moslem Holy Places is situated, must be returned to the Arabs and become an integral part of the Palestinian State. The freedom of access of the faithful to the Holy Places of the three religions must be guaranteed throughout Jerusalem.

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Fourthly, the right of all States in the region to security, independent existence and development must, of course, be guaranteed on a basis of complete reciprocity, because one cannot guarantee the security of some while disregarding that of others.

Fifthly, the state of war must be ended and peace must be established between the Arab States and Israel. This means that all parties to the conflict, including Israel and the Palestinian State, must undertake to respect each other's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity and to settle any disputes which may arise by peaceful means, through negotiations.

Sixthly, international guarantees for the settlement must be worked out and adopted; for example, the permanent members of the Security Council or the Council as a whole could assume the role of guarantors.

Such a comprehensive, truly just and lasting settlement can be worked out and implemented only through collective efforts, with the participation of all interested parties - among which, of course, must certainly be PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Arab people of Palestine.

Our proposal for convening an international conference on the Middle East, which has received widespread support, including the support of Democratic Yemen, makes provision for just such a means of settlement.

I should particularly like to say that, under the present circumstances, the unity of all Arab States in the struggle against the Israeli invaders is more important than ever. This unity is as essential to the Arabs as the air they breathe and the water they drink. The stronger and more dependable this unity is, the quicker the schemes of the imperialists in the Middle East will be foiled.

The Conference of Arab Heads of State and Government ended recently. The declaration which was issued summarizing its work reflected legitimate concern and indignation at Israel's aggression in Lebanon and its continuing occupation of Arab lands. We view as positive the principles adopted by the Conference for resolving the Palestinian problem and bringing about a general Middle East settlement. They do not differ in any way from what the Soviet Union has been struggling for for many years, as I have briefly described it.

In conclusion, L. I. Brezhnev wished his Yemeni friends further success in developing Democratic Yemen along the lines of socialism and the struggle for peace and progress, and proposed toasts to the health of A. N. Mohammed, to the friendship of the two parties and countries and to a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

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