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Forty-first session

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE NINETY-THIRD MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 2 December 1986, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. HENAR (Suriname)
(Vice-President)

later: Mr. CHOUDHURY (Bangladesh)
(President)

- Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples: [19] (continued)
- (a) Report of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples
 - (b) Report of the Secretary-General
 - (c) Draft resolutions
 - (d) Report of the Fifth Committee

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- Question of Palestine: [35] (continued)
 - (a) Report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People
 - (b) Report of the Secretary-General
 - (c) Draft resolutions

In the absence of the President, Mr. Henar (Suriname), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 19 (continued)

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES:

- (a) REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE SITUATION WITH REGARD TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES (A/41/23; A/AC.109/848-A/AC.109/857, A/AC.109/858 and Corr.1, A/AC.109/859-A/AC.109/868, A/AC.109/873 and Corr.1, A/AC.109/874 and Corr.1 and 2, A/AC.109/877 and Add.1)
- (b) REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/41/673)
- (c) DRAFT RESOLUTIONS (A/41/L.33 and Corr.2, A/41/L.36, A/41/L.37)
- (d) REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE (A/41/921)

The PRESIDENT: I shall now call on those representatives who wish to explain their vote after the voting on draft resolutions A/41/L.33 and Corr.2, A/41/L.36 and A/41/L.37.

Mr. KEISALO (Finland): I wish to make a brief explanation of vote concerning draft resolution L.33 and Corr.2. The commitments undertaken under the Charter are all of equal importance and must all be implemented fully and unambiguously.

The Finnish delegation's positive vote on draft resolution L.33 and Corr.2 should be seen as an expression of our unreserved support for Article 73 of the Charter and for the right of peoples to self-determination.

Mr. SVOBODA (Canada) (interpretation from French): While Canada did not participate directly in the work of the Special Committee of 24, our support for the objectives of Chapter XI of the Charter and of resolution 1514 (XV) is well established. Canada also supported resolution 1541 (XV) and continues to support

(Mr. Svoboda, Canada)

resolutions which call on Member States which administer dependent territories to co-operate fully with the Special Committee of 24 in discharging the functions entrusted to it by the General Assembly.

We also recognize, however, that some Member States do not accept that the General Assembly retains sole responsibility for determining whether or not an obligation to transmit information under Article 73 e has ceased. Moreover, Canada has traditionally abstained on resolutions which have sought to compel an administering Power, against its wishes, to transmit information under Article 73 e, unless there is sufficient evidence that the administering Power is seeking actively to frustrate or deny self-determination.

Canada has followed events in New Caledonia in recent years with interest and will continue to do so in the future. We understand the concerns expressed by the members of the South Pacific Forum that New Caledonia continue to progress towards the achievement of a full measure of self-government. That being said, we trust that the French Government will actively seek to ensure that the act of self-determination scheduled for 1987 provides a meaningful and representative basis for determining the course of New Caledonia's future political development. Pending the outcome of that process, Canada has abstained on this question.*

Mr. FISCHER (Austria): I wish to confine myself to explain the vote of the Austrian delegation on draft resolution A/41/L.36. Austria considers that the process of decolonization constitutes one of the outstanding achievements of the United Nations. Austria has therefore consistently supported the efforts of the United Nations in this regard.

*The President took the Chair.

(Mr. Fischer, Austria)

It is because of its sincere commitment to the process of decolonization and to the right of peoples to self-determination that Austria has supported draft resolution A/41/L.36. However, that should not be interpreted as approval of all the provisions contained in this text. We have reservations with regard to some of them. In particular, I should like to refer to operative paragraph 4 and emphasize that Austria understands that paragraph as referring exclusively to the struggle by peaceful means, as Austria, in accordance with the United Nations Charter, is firmly convinced that the necessary change should be brought about by peaceful means alone.

Mr. JACOBVITS de SZEGED (Netherlands): The importance of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, adopted by the General Assembly 26 years ago as resolution 1514 (XV), is best shown by the fact that since 1960 more than sixty sovereign States have become Members of the United Nations. The goal, set on that solemn occasion, to bring a speedy and unconditional end to colonialism in all its forms and manifestations, has now almost been attained. Most of the remaining Non-Self Governing Territories maintain their ties with the administering Powers in accordance with the democratically expressed wish of their inhabitants.

The major exception, however, is Namibia. The special session of the General Assembly in September and the debate in this Hall under agenda item 36 have confirmed the strong wish of the international community to bring the illegal occupation of Namibia by South Africa to an early end, thus allowing the Namibians to exercise their right to self-determination and, as the Declaration on the granting of independence puts it, by virtue of that right to freely determine their political status and to freely pursue their economic, social and cultural

(Mr. Jacobovits de Szeged,
Netherlands)

development. Without the implementation of resolutions 385 (1976) and 435 (1978) of the Security Council the decolonization process is not yet fully completed.

Underlining the importance my country attaches to the principles laid down in the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, I regret that the Netherlands could not support the two draft resolutions before us entitled "Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples" (A/41/L.36) and "Dissemination of Information on Decolonization" (A/41/L.37).

(Mr. Jacobovits de Szeged,
Netherlands)

We continue to have reservations on the unbalanced - often by implication - formulations of, in particular, operative paragraphs 2, 4, 7, 8 and 10 of draft resolution A/41/L.36, and on the fourth preambular paragraph, in which reference is made to resolution S-14/1, which relates to the question of Namibia and on which my delegation abstained, for the reasons explained when it was adopted. The main objection, however, concerns the unwarranted and unnecessary criticism of one Member State in the twelfth preambular paragraph and operative paragraph 13.

My delegation has reservations also on draft resolution A/41/L.37 and the report on the basis of which it is formulated and which is contained in document A/41/23 (Part II). Some of the recommendations in the report seek to divert the Special Committee from its proper task and to use the resources of the Organization for a campaign of selective criticism against one particular group of countries. Apart from that, owing to the current financial crisis of the United Nations my delegation has strong objections to sub-paragraphs (f) and (g) of operative paragraph 3, which are not in accordance with decision 40/472, adopted by the General Assembly in May this year on the basis of proposals made by the Secretary-General.

Let me turn, finally, to the question of New Caledonia. With due respect for the motives that have led the Pacific Forum countries to take the initiative for a discussion in the General Assembly, under agenda item 19, of the situation in regard to New Caledonia, my delegation is of the opinion that it is premature for the Assembly to express itself on that issue. We therefore voted against the draft resolution contained in document A/41/L.33.

The Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples will, at its next session, in February 1987, examine the question and report thereon to the General Assembly. The French Government will organize a referendum

(Mr. Jacobovits de Szeged,
Netherlands)

in its Territory of New Caledonia in December 1987, with a fair choice between total independence and a status of enlarged autonomy. The Netherlands Government has no reason to doubt that France will ensure that that referendum is held in a free and democratic manner.

Mr. STROMHOLM (Sweden): The principles of decolonization are set down in the Charter of the United Nations, in particular in Chapter XI. Sweden has consistently and actively supported the decolonization process and consequently gave its support to the basic resolutions on decolonization - 1514 (XV) and 1541 (XV). We believe, furthermore, that the United Nations has a special responsibility in the implementation of the so-called Declaration on decolonization.

In the light of the provisions of the Charter and of the resolutions just mentioned as well as Sweden's participation in the consensus decision by the Special Committee of 24 on this question, Sweden voted in favour of draft resolution A/41/L.33. The text upholds the right of all peoples in Non-Self-Governing Territories to self-determination and independence, established in General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV). On the other hand, the resolution does not prejudice the future status of New Caledonia, which must be decided upon freely by the people themselves. In that sense it is a procedural resolution and does not state any opinion on the decolonization process in New Caledonia.

At the same time, Sweden would have preferred the procedure opted for by the Special Committee of 24. That would have enabled the Committee to consider thoroughly all aspects of the question and consult the various parties concerned before presenting a full report to the Assembly. It is the sincere hope of my Government that the procedure now decided upon will not endanger fruitful and constructive co-operation between the administering Power concerned and the United Nations, which has an indispensable and legitimate role to play in this process.

Mr. BATLLE (Uruguay) (interpretation from Spanish): The delegation of Uruguay voted in favour of draft resolution A/41/L.33, in accordance with its traditional adherence to and defence of the principle of the self-determination of peoples. In our view, the resolution is procedural and does not prejudge any issue.

Our delegation regards as very important the statement made by the Government of France to the General Assembly that it is prepared to organize a referendum to ascertain the will of the people of New Caledonia. Our delegation feels that this fact in itself presupposes recognition of the existence of the issue in question, and thus France's aims and the commitments it has voluntarily undertaken would undoubtedly be strengthened - to its benefit - if the United Nations were duly informed of the conditions for the referendum, the way it was carried out and its results.

France, which at one time greatly contributed to our own attainment of independence, will certainly not act otherwise in this case.

Mr. ERKMENOGU (Turkey): My delegation voted in favour of the draft resolution in document A/41/L.36, concerning the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, in keeping with the Turkish Government's firm support for the efforts being exerted to ensure the total elimination of colonialism in the world today.

At the same time, I wish to place on record our reservation with regard to operative paragraph 10 of the resolution. We do not believe that this paragraph has been drafted in a sufficiently balanced manner.

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly has thus concluded its consideration of agenda item 19.

AGENDA ITEM 35 (continued)

QUESTION OF PALESTINE:

- (a) REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE EXERCISE OF THE INALIENABLE RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE (A/41/35)
- (b) REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/41/215)
- (c) DRAFT RESOLUTIONS (A/41/L.38 to A/41/L.41)

The PRESIDENT: I would remind representatives that the debate on this item was concluded at the 86th plenary meeting, held on Wednesday, 26 November 1986.

I shall now call on those representatives who wish to explain their votes before the voting on any or all of the four draft resolutions in documents A/41/L.38 to A/41/L.41. Representatives will also have an opportunity to explain their votes after all the voting has taken place.

I should like to remind the Assembly that, under rule 88 of the rules of procedure,

"The President shall not permit the proposer of a proposal or of an amendment to explain his vote on his own proposal or amendment".

I would also remind representatives that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. OKUN (United States of America): The United States will vote against draft resolution A/41/L.38, L.39 and L.40. They endorse work of two biased organs, the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and the Division for Palestinian Rights of the United Nations Secretariat. The partisan views of the Palestinian issue which they propagate serve only those who benefit from continuation of the Middle East dispute and the imposition of even greater suffering on the Palestinian people.

My delegation will also vote against draft resolution A/41/L.41, which calls once again for an international peace conference on the Middle East on the basis of the provisions of General Assembly resolution 38/58 C. While we recognize the positive efforts of the authors of the draft resolution to eschew the name-calling and rhetoric which have marred resolutions on this subject in the past, this does not alter our disagreement with the approach advocated by it.

The United States of America recognizes that the vast majority of those who support an international conference on the Middle East do so out of a desire to see a just and lasting peace in the region. We fully share aspirations for a just and durable settlement and the concern that has been repeatedly expressed in this debate by those who genuinely desire peace. At the same time it is clear that some who have spoken in this Assembly are not interested in peace but, rather, in prolonging the conflict.

My Government's opposition to an international conference, as envisaged in General Assembly resolution 38/58 C and endorsed again in this year's draft resolution, is based on several considerations. Above all, the resolution sets forth terms of reference for the conference that in reality seek to determine in advance the outcome of the conference. This is a prescription for failure; it is tantamount to imposing a settlement. My Government believes that there can be no peace in the Middle East without the full agreement of all parties to the dispute.

(Mr. Okun, United States)

The conference envisaged in this draft resolution will not allow for a constructive examination of the Middle East question; nor will such a conference provide a supportive international context for direct negotiations between the parties. Instead it would inevitably turn into a propaganda exercise which could only heighten tensions and retard the search for peace.

The United States is committed to seeking a comprehensive Middle East peace settlement based on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and on the Camp David framework. There is however no short-cut that can guarantee success. There is only the one difficult route which has yielded progress so far - direct negotiations between the parties. The United States for its part will continue to support those bilateral and international efforts which enhance the possibility of direct negotiations. It will oppose those which would put off the day when the parties to the conflict can sit down together to reach a mutually acceptable resolution of their differences. It is our hope that all concerned will recognize the need to transcend the limits of this annual debate and devote themselves to the real requirements of a viable and lasting political settlement.

Mr. BIRCH (United Kingdom): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the 12 member States of the European Community.

Our views on the subject of this debate were set out in full in our statement made on 25 November. In that statement we reaffirmed that we stand ready to do all within our power to contribute to a comprehensive, just and lasting peace achieved through peaceful negotiations.

The Twelve recognize that an International Peace Conference on the Middle East could make a major contribution to the achievement of a negotiated settlement. We believe that the principle and nature of such a conference need first to be agreed upon by the parties concerned. For this to happen the present gap between the

(Mr. Birch, United Kingdom)

parties would also clearly need to be narrowed. The same considerations apply to any form of preparatory committee. The Twelve wish to see all possible efforts made to bring the parties to negotiations and stand ready to provide assistance, in their collective or national capacities, in whatever way they can.

The Twelve welcome the fact that the draft resolution in document A/41/L.41 no longer contains a number of elements which we considered objectionable in the resolution on this subject last year. We appreciate the efforts that have been made; however there are still a number of elements which cause us difficulties. A particular difficulty concerns the call made in the draft for the convening of a predetermined form of international Conference. For negotiations to have any chance of success it is essential to avoid prejudging the form in which they may be held, which should be agreed upon by the parties directly concerned.

Finally, with regard to the draft resolutions contained in documents A/41/L.38, L.39 and L.40 - which remain largely unchanged from last year - the Twelve have previously made their positions known. In addition, we would prefer as a matter of principle that due account be taken of the financial difficulties currently facing the Organization in determining the tasks of the bodies concerned.

Mr. SVOBODA (Canada): Canada will abstain on draft resolution A/41/L.41, calling for the convening of an International Peace Conference on the Middle East. My delegation has changed from a negative vote for two reasons. First, we believe that recent events, notably the summit meetings that the former Israeli Prime Minister held with the President of Egypt, the King of Morocco and other world leaders, have given us some modest hope that the umbrella of an international peace Conference might, if properly prepared, be a mechanism by which concrete progress in the peace progress could be realized. We recognize fully, however, the efforts

(Mr. Svoboda, Canada)

that will need to be invested by the main parties directly involved to establish an appropriate negotiating format which would meet their concern and facilitate real progress towards a lasting peace in the region.

Secondly, Canada expresses its appreciation for the efforts that have been made in the wording of draft resolution A/41/L.41 to avoid this year the inclusion of extraneous elements and offensive language that were unacceptable to my delegation last year. Building on this positive dimension, we encourage interested parties to show the necessary flexibility and moderation essential to any sincere effort to find solutions to the problems of the Middle East.

The foregoing notwithstanding, my delegation none the less cannot fully endorse draft resolution A/41/L.41 as presented to us today. In particular, we retain serious reservations about certain of the provisions of resolution 38/58 C referred to in operative paragraph 3. Moreover, my delegation has practical concerns about the impartiality and effectiveness of a preparatory committee to be negotiated within the framework of the Security Council while two of that body's permanent members have either suspended or never established diplomatic relations with one of the States directly involved.

It is essential that there be - and Canada will continue to encourage - international support for direct negotiations between the parties to the dispute. In this context, I wish to make it very clear that Canada does not believe that an international conference is a substitute for such direct talks. It is our firm view that if there is to be an international framework it must be accepted by all concerned, including Israel, in order that that format will facilitate rather than hinder direct negotiations.

(Mr. Svoboda, Canada)

A just and durable settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict can be seen only as a primary objective of the community of nations. To be successful the efforts of the international community must, in our view, be fully consistent with Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), which are acknowledged internationally as the foundation of a comprehensive solution.

(Mr. Svoboda, Canada)

Those resolutions call for a reasonable balance of obligations on the parties involved. Together, they recognize the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force and call for Israel to withdraw from occupied territories. They require respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of every State in the area, including Israel, and stipulate the right of those States to live in peace within secure and internationally recognized boundaries.

Without the full application of these principles we cannot hope to achieve for the Middle East that just and lasting peace to which Canada remains committed. It is in the earnest hope of furthering this process and in recognition of the recent evolution of the situation in the region that my delegation has modified its position on the substance of what this year is draft resolution A/41/L.41. The position of my delegation on the other draft resolutions before us is well known. Our vote on draft resolutions A/41/L.38, L.39 and L.40 will be similar to that on the corresponding draft resolutions in previous years.

Mr. MAHBUBANI (Singapore): My delegation believes that the question of Palestine is at the core of the Middle East conflict. We will therefore vote in favour of the draft resolutions before the Assembly today, as we regard them as positive contributions to the search for a comprehensive political solution. My delegation is of the view that a just and durable solution of the question of Palestine must, at one and the same time, recognize the rights of the State of Israel. In this regard, we would suggest the exchange of recognition between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). In order to encourage Israel and the PLO to move in this direction, the international community should urge them to pursue a course of mutual accommodation and compromise. Those that continue to urge Israel not to have any dialogue with the PLO are not helping the process of mutual accommodation. On the other hand, those States which continue to

(Mr. Mahbubani, Singapore)

deny the right of Israel to exist are also not helping the cause of peace. My delegation therefore appeals to both Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization to recognize each other's legitimate rights.

My delegation supports the establishment of a Palestinian homeland in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and cannot accept the annexation of these territories by Israel. My delegation also fully supports the relevant resolutions of the Security Council, in particular resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), which established the fundamental basis for a genuine, stable and lasting peace in the Middle East.

The PRESIDENT: The General Assembly will now begin the voting process and take a decision on the various draft resolutions before it. In this connection, I have to announce that India and Bangladesh have become sponsors of draft resolutions A/41/L.38, L.39 and L.40, and India, Pakistan and Bangladesh have become sponsors of draft resolution A/41/L.41.

We turn first to draft resolution A/41/L.38. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Yemen, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gabon, German Democratic Republic, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Somalia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against: Israel, United States of America

Abstaining: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Costa Rica, Denmark, El Salvador, Finland, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Draft resolution A/41/L.38 was adopted by 121 votes to 2, with 21 abstentions

(resolution 41/43 A).*

*Subsequently the delegations of Comoros, Democratic Kampuchea, Gambia, Kenya, Panama and Vanuatu advised the Secretariat that they had intended to vote in favour.

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now vote on draft resolution

A/41/L.39. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Yemen, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Gabon, German Democratic Republic, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Somalia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against: Canada, Israel, United States of America

Abstaining: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Draft resolution A/41/L.39 was adopted by 125 votes to 3, with 18 abstentions

(resolution 41/43 B).*

*Subsequently the delegations of Comoros, Democratic Kampuchea, Gambia and Panama advised the Secretariat that they had intended to vote in favour.

The PRESIDENT: We turn now to draft resolution A/41/L.40. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Yemen, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Finland, Gabon, German Democratic Republic, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Somalia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against: Canada, Israel, United States of America

Abstaining: Australia, Belgium, Cameroon, Costa Rica, Denmark, El Salvador, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Saint Lucia, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Draft resolution A/41/L.40 was adopted by 124 votes to 3, with 19 abstentions

(resolution 41/43 C).*

*Subsequently the delegations of Comoros, Democratic Kampuchea, Gambia and Panama advised the Secretariat that they had intended to vote in favour.

The PRESIDENT: Finally, we turn to draft resolution A/41/L.41. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Yemen, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Finland, Gabon, German Democratic Republic, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Somalia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against: Antigua and Barbuda, Israel, United States of America

Abstaining: Australia, Belgium, Canada, Costa Rica, Denmark, El Salvador, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, Grenada, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Saint Lucia, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Draft resolution A/41/L.41 was adopted by 123 votes to 3, with 19 abstentions

(resolution 41/43 D).*

*Subsequently the delegations of Comoros, Democratic Kampuchea, Gambia and Panama advised the Secretariat that they had intended to vote in favour.

The PRESIDENT: I shall now call on representatives who have asked to speak in explanation of their votes.

Mr. KEISALO (Finland): The position of the Government of Finland on the question of Palestine is well-known and remains unchanged. It has been explained in our statements in the Plenary as well as in the Special Political Committee.

The resolutions just adopted unfortunately fail to represent the balance which my Government finds a prerequisite for a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement. My delegation therefore abstained on draft resolutions A/41/L.38 and A/41/L.39 and, while voting in favour of draft resolutions A/41/L.40 and A/41/L.41, did so with reservations. With particular reference to draft resolution A/41/L.41 it will be recalled that Finland participated in the International Conference on the Question of Palestine held in Geneva in 1983 and joined in the consensus on the final documents of that Conference. However, we did so with reservations, as contained in Annex V of the Report of the Conference, and in this connection I want to refer to those reservations.

Mr. HOSSEINI (Islamic Republic of Iran): My delegation voted in favour of draft resolution A/41/L.41. In explanation of vote I should like to say that my delegation is as a matter of principle opposed to any resolution or action which may directly or indirectly imply recognition of the Zionist base of terror occupying Palestine. However, it is also equally difficult for us to take a position which could be construed as weakening our overall support for our Palestinian brothers and as remaining aloof to the cause of Palestine. We therefore decided to vote in favour of draft resolution A/41/L.41, thus standing shoulder to shoulder with our Palestinian brothers.

Nevertheless, we must reiterate our reservations on those aspects of the resolution which lead to recognition of the Zionist base in Palestine, whether such a recognition be undertaken by Palestinians or others.

Mr. BERGH JOHANSEN (Norway): Norway supports the idea of an international peace conference on the Middle East as a framework for bringing about direct negotiations between the parties to the conflict. Such a conference must be based on the principles contained in Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973).

Furthermore, we should like to emphasize the importance of an early resumption of the peace process, and hope that this process will gain the necessary momentum and lead to a comprehensive, just and lasting political settlement in the region. However, the Norwegian Government is, for its part, willing to support any formula for negotiations which is acceptable to the parties themselves.

We have noted certain improvements in this year's text as compared with last year. However, there are still certain elements that cause us difficulties, and for these reasons Norway abstained on draft resolution A/41/L.41 on an international peace conference on the Middle East.

Mr. FARTAS (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (interpretation from Arabic): My delegation supports all the draft resolutions before us for we believe in the inalienable rights, imprescriptible for the Palestinians, namely the right to self-determination, the right to return home, and the right to build an autonomous and independent State on their national territory.

This is why my delegation would like note to be taken of its reservations regarding references in resolutions which might give rise to certain interpretations, either direct or indirect, to the effect that my country supports the de facto situation existing in Palestine.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ (Peru) (interpretation from Spanish): My delegation voted in favour of draft resolutions A/41/L.38, A/41/L.39, A/41/L.40, and A/41/L.41, in accordance with our policy on the question of Palestine.

(Mr. Rodriguez, Peru)

In the draft resolutions, reference is made to the Geneva Convention on Palestine and the Programme of Action for the Achievement of Palestinian Rights, as adopted on 7 December 1983 in Geneva.

In this respect, my delegation would like to reaffirm its statement in document A/CONF./114/42, entitled "Report of the International Conference on Palestine".

The PRESIDENT: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 3237 (XXIX) of 22 November 1974, I now call on the Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Mr. TERZI (Palestine Liberation Organization): If anything, the result of the vote, particularly on A/41/L.41 is very encouraging. The vote last year was 107 in favour; this year it is 123. We express our thanks to all those representatives who have voted in support of the move towards peace. This is very important. We, in the name of the Palestinian people, who are suffering day in and day out as a result of the obduracy of those who stand in the way of peace, only wish that they will be human again and will consider joining in the peace process.

We are delighted to see that the number of those who were reluctant last year has come down from 41 to 19. It is high time that all of the world community, all the Members of the United Nations, should join in the peace process, and that those raising obstacles should reconsider their position and should no longer be responsible before history for the perpetuation of bloodshed and violence.

The Assembly was told that an imposed settlement is not a required settlement, and it is not welcome here, and that is why they either hesitate or they vote against. Yet, in the same sense, they try to impose on us a settlement based exclusively on what they call United Nations Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), and the Camp David framework.

(Mr. Terzi, PLO)

In the first place they are being selective and they are forgetting the principles enshrined in the Charter. The Charter is not exclusively 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). They are selective by discriminating among the resolutions of the Security Council. What would become of the other resolutions of the Security Council that address and deal with the issue itself. And how can I explain the position of the representative of the Government of the United States of America when he says that the peace settlement could be based on 242 (1967), when the United States itself, in this very Assembly, has told us that 242 (1967) does not address the political dimension of the Palestinian problem.

(Mr. Terzi, PLO)

Who do we believe in the United States - those who spoke today or those who spoke a few years ago? Then, we are told that the best and only way to end the conflict is to have the parties to the conflict sit down together to reach a mutually acceptable resolution of their differences.

That is wonderful, but what does draft resolution A/41/L.41 contain if not provisions for an international peace conference? Does it not contain a call to the parties to the conflict to get together, under the auspices of the United Nations and in that body called the Security Council, which is entrusted with the maintenance of international peace and security. Does it not call upon them to sit there together instead of shooting it out, instead of even more bloodshed, to sit together in the Security Council Chamber? Does it not call upon the five permanent members of the Council to prepare themselves and to meet as a preparatory committee to carry out and discharge their duties in the maintenance of international peace and security?

It is in that way that we understand draft resolution A/41/L.41 that has just been adopted: as a call to the parties concerned. Of course, we can understand that they have not yet made up their minds about just who the parties to the conflict are, and I wish to assure them - as did the 123 Member States who have just clearly expressed themselves and including the 19 who expressed some hesitation - that the parties are, first and foremost, the Palestinian people, and the Palestinian people is represented by the Palestine Liberation Organization, both in the eyes of the Palestinians and in the eyes of the international community. Or are they thinking of imposing some other body to represent the Palestinians?

No. We are for peace. We are happy, and we shall consider as a major historic event the fact that the International Peace Conference on the Middle East,

(Mr. Terzi, PLO)

pursuant to General Assembly resolution 38/58 C, is receiving increasing support.

We trust that no further obstacles will be placed in the path of the

Secretary-General in his endeavours to convene that Conference.

The PRESIDENT: We have thus concluded our consideration of agenda item 35.

Before adjourning this meeting, I should like to announce that the vote on draft resolutions relating to agenda item 37, "The situation in the Middle East," will take place on Thursday, 4 December, at the end of the afternoon meeting, after consideration of the reports of the Third Committee.

The meeting rose at 4.15 p.m.