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President: Mr. Gaston THORN
(Luxembourg).

AGENDA ITEM 27

Question of Palestine: report of the Secretary-General
(continued)

1. Mr. GURINOVICH (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) (*interpretation from Russian*): The dominant feature of the development of the international situation in recent years has been detente. That has been made strikingly evident so far as the European continent is concerned by the results of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe.

2. But peace is indivisible, and the States of the Socialist community proceed from the premise that, in addition to strengthening a stable peace on one continent, one must increase the efforts to dispel the threatening clouds hanging over other continents. A general and guaranteed peace is unthinkable without the elimination of the hotbeds of military tension created by imperialism and without recognition of and respect for the right of each people to independence and self-determination. In the struggle for such a peace the peoples have to overcome the stubborn resistance of the aggressive forces of imperialism and Faction.

3. All that is brought to mind by the continuation of the dangerous situation in the Middle East, where the key problems remain unsolved. To this very day Israeli troops continue to occupy Arab lands. The legitimate national rights of the Arab people of Palestine, including the right to the creation of an independent Palestinian State, are being violated. There is no agreement on guaranteeing the independent existence and development of all the States in that region.

4. It appears that everyone agrees that the Middle East needs a stable and just peace and that all the peoples of that region have an inalienable right to the enjoyment of the benefits of peace.

5. But if that is to be achieved, those who determine Israel's policies must make one decision: that Israel must abandon its plans to appropriate foreign lands; that it must recognize the right of the Arab people of Palestine to create their own State. Whether or not there will be a settlement depends on whether Israel abandons its predatory territorial ambitions and shows

some readiness to live with the Arab peoples-to use the words of the Charter of the United Nations-"in peace with one another as good neighbours".

6. So far, however, it can only be noted that Israel's policy is based on annexationist territorial ambitions and the non-recognition of the national rights of the Arab people of Palestine. The Israeli aggressors' grabbing of territory has been accompanied by the eviction of the Arabs by force, using the most barbarous methods. These people, who have been driven away from their lands, have the same right to their national homeland as do all other peoples.

7. The Israeli leaders are very fond of saying that whatever Israel is doing is being done to ensure the "security" of its boundaries. But that is not a new thesis: it has been used by all aggressors, including the Hitlerite Fascists. Israel has no right to claim something that does not belong to it, someone else's territory.

8. If the leading circles of Israel were to be guided, not by a thirst for the conquest of foreign lands, but by the real wish to ensure the peaceful prerequisites for the existence and development of the Israeli State, it would be very simple to achieve that: they would simply have to abandon their plans for the annexation of foreign lands, leave those lands and adopt the course of peace with the Arab States and the Arab people of Palestine. They would also have to accept the wise truth that only peace and co-operation with neighbours can create safe boundaries. The boundaries become safe when they are recognized by everyone. If boundaries are established by war and aggression against neighbours, by grabbing foreign territory, by violating the rights of other peoples, they cannot be safe. This should be clear to all, and this includes the present rulers of Israel and those who support them.

9. In recent years there has been some withdrawal of Israeli troops from the occupied Arab territories; but the steps taken, which are very slow and intermittent, do not bring closer the solution of the Middle East problem as a whole and they do not lead to ensuring the legitimate national rights of the Arab people of Palestine. It is appropriate here to quote the statement of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sudan, Mr. Ahmed, who, speaking in the general debate at this session of the General Assembly, said:

"... it has taken the Israelis eight years to withdraw 10 miles from Sinai; now they want five more years to withdraw 20 miles. The calculation they have been making leads to a despairing conclusion: if this rate is going to set the standard, it will take the Israelis 50 years to hand over Sinai." [2368th meeting, para. 169.]

How much time will Israel need to get out of all the territories which it grabbed in 1967?

10. Such a policy on the part of Israel is obviously predicated on the premise that the Arab people, as time goes by, will forget their legitimate demands; if such naive hopes do exist, those who harbour them are certainly mistaken.

11. History has clearly shown that partial measures cannot resolve a fundamental problem, have not lessened the tensions in the Middle East, and have not given the peoples of that region either a stable peace or a guaranteed security.

12. The delegation of the Byelorussian SSR is firmly convinced that the interests of peace and security in the Middle East dictate the absolute need for a speedy and radical settlement of the crisis situation in the Middle East on the basis of the well-known decisions of the Security Council and of the General Assembly, with the participation of all the parties concerned. A genuine settlement of this problem is possible through the solution of the key issues: the withdrawal of Israeli troops from all the Arab territories occupied in 1967; ensuring the legitimate national rights of the Arab people of Palestine, including the right to the creation of the independent Palestine State; guarantees of the rights of all the States and peoples of this region to an independent existence and development.

13. All these important questions should be considered and resolved within the framework of the special machinery called upon to work to institute a just peace in the Middle East, namely, the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East, which, in our view, must resume its work and in which the Palestine Liberation Organization [PLO] should also participate on an equal footing.

14. The task of bringing about a just settlement in the Middle East is a task to which the United Nations is contributing very usefully, as is evidenced by the discussions of the Middle East question in the Security Council and the question of Palestine in the General Assembly. The speech that the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the PLO, Yasser Arafat, made last year,⁷ and the resolutions adopted at the twenty-ninth session, which confirmed the inalienable rights of the Palestine people, and the other measures which are mentioned, in particular, in the Secretary-General's report in document A/10265—all these are contributions to the mobilization of world opinion in the effort to support the just cause of the Palestinian people and of all the Arab peoples. No matter what offending statements addressed to the people of Palestine and the PLO the Israeli representatives indulge in, they will not alter this; the time will come when justice will finally triumph. Moreover, the people of Israel themselves are not interested in living eternally in a country which has been turned into military camp.

15. From the very outset, the Byelorussian SSR and the other countries of the Socialist community took the side of the just struggle against the Israeli aggressors. We have consistently defended the **just cause** of the Arab people both in the Security Council and at the sessions of the General Assembly.

16. The delegation of the Byelorussian SSR believes that the United Nations must **find** a way to compel Israel to carry out General Assembly resolution 3236 (XXIX), which confirms the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people in Palestine, including the right

to self-determination without external interference, the right to national independence and sovereignty, and the inalienable right of the Palestinians to return to their homes and property.

17. It is also necessary to stress that, in considering the situation in the Middle East, the Soviet Union and the other countries of the Socialist community support the unity and solidarity of all the peace-loving forces and feel that it is necessary to avoid any steps that would impede this and would only play into the hands of the aggressors and those who protect them.

18. The Byelorussian SSR will continue consistently to support the Arab countries that are the victims of aggression, the Arab people of Palestine, who are waging a struggle for their legitimate national rights, and all the forces in the Arab world that oppose imperialism and neo-colonialism. We are prepared to contribute actively to the implementation of a just and stable peace in the Middle East and the solution of the Palestine problem in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the well-known resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly.

19. **Mr. JAMAL (Qatar)** (*interpretation from Arabic*): The historic decision taken by the General Assembly at its twenty-ninth session was a decisive step in the history of the consideration of the question of Palestine by the United Nations; I mean, in particular, the reinstitution of the question of Palestine as a separate and independent item on the agenda with all its implications and full importance and in all its dimensions, followed by the invitation extended to the PLO to participate in the deliberations of the General Assembly [*resolution 3210 (XXIX)*] as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

20. The question of Palestine was placed in the correct framework when the Arab Palestinian people became a direct and immediate factor in the resolutions that would be drafted and adopted. Undoubtedly, consideration of the Palestinian question in so far as it refers to the national rights of the Palestinian people has entered a new stage and is now based on the international legitimacy of the Palestinian people themselves.

21. In our contemporary history there are continuous efforts to abolish and eliminate racism in all its forms and to liquidate colonialism wherever it may **be**. These efforts move steadily towards their noble aim, the achievement of independence, freedom and a decent life for the peoples still suffering from the brutality and exploitation of the imperialists and colonialists. The legal precepts and rules concerning the right of peoples to sovereignty and to self-determination have put down strong roots and have been consolidated and strengthened.

22. Nevertheless, the history of Palestine and the Palestinian people constitute deviations from this movement of history. At a time when many people have achieved their independence and freedom, and when colonialism is declining and collapsing before the march of the national liberation movements, we find that the Palestinian people are subjected to one of the worst types of colonialism: namely, the Zionist settler colonialism, which, not satisfied with simply depriving the Palestinian people of their right to **self-determina-**

tion, in fact uprooted them by means of terrorism from their land and their territories. The events and facts of the history of Palestine prove this very clearly.

23. A study of the facts of Zionist colonialism and its expansionist and violent terrorist nature demonstrates even more clearly the extent to which the Palestinian people have been deprived of their national and basic rights, particularly their right to self-determination and to return to their homeland.

24. It is well known that the world Zionist movement and its tool, Israel, constitute a great danger, not only to the future of the Palestinian people but also to world peace and security. That movement, in its essence and nature, is a colonialist, aggressive movement which from its establishment intended to seize the land of Palestine in order to set up a racist, imperialist, settler Zionist State based on the destruction of the Palestinian Arab people and their genuine and inalienable right to sovereignty over their land and homeland and to a decent and free life.

25. This movement, with all its resources and influence in the centres of political, financial and propaganda power and in alliance with the imperialist Powers of the world, was able to set up and establish the State of Israel in 1948, to supply it with all kinds of capacity and facilities and to mobilize for it all the means of consolidation and unlimited aid. Israel continued to usurp the land of Palestine and to occupy it, dispersing the people and oppressing those who remained.

26. That aggression expanded to the occupation of other parts of neighbouring Arab countries and to continued aggression against and coercion and oppression of their peoples, even in the refugee camps in which they are forced to live.

27. Israel, and behind it world Zionism, is not satisfied with usurping the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and repeated and increasing aggression against the Arab States. In fact it has also caused injury to all human, religious and historic values. It has defied world public opinion and violated and defied the principles of the United Nations and human rights, as can be seen from the arrogance and intransigence with which it has rejected and refused to respect the successive resolutions in which the United Nations and its various organs have denounced and condemned it.

28. Thus it has become a danger not only to the Middle East area but also to the entire world community and to the just peace to which we all aspire. We cannot comprehend the nature of this aggression, the usurpation to which it led and its present and future dangers unless we understand the roots of the Zionist movement, its ideology and its ambitions, and follow up the various stages which were planned and implemented in establishing Israel, consolidating its influence and expanding its area, as well as the various forces and resources which were mobilized for its expansion and to increase its domination.

29. Zionism, with its political aspects and its Jewish national nature is no more than an organized world Political movement based on various concepts, religious, historical and colonialist. It is a movement with European roots which was established and prospered in European nationalism in the nineteenth century and was largely influenced by the nationalism that

prevailed in Europe at that time. It was born in the last decade of the nineteenth century when European expansion in the world reached its summit and was characterized by rivalry in achieving greater spheres of influence, particularly in Africa and Asia. Undoubtedly, modern political Zionism, by adopting the new Jewish nationalism, is totally different from all the types of nationalism that were seen in the nineteenth century; **zionism** is an imitation of those types of nationalism from the point of view of the basis on which it was established, which had never before been available to the Jews of the world.

30. It is well known that most European nationalist movements, and particularly Balkan nationalism, based their political struggle to achieve sovereignty and independence on well-established national foundations. Those movements had national entities before they started to demand political sovereignty and a national State. The peoples who looked forward to national sovereignty lived in an area of land, a particular territory, a national homeland, and they spoke one language; in addition, they had other common factors, which fused and forged their national political character and their nationalism. But Jewish nationalism is rather a fad or a fashion that has tried to follow in the footsteps of European nationalism without the basic factors on which it should be established.

31. The Jews, who are spread throughout the world, belong to a particular religious sect and to various nationalities. Judaism, in its essence, is a world religion, tied to Palestine, like all other world religions, by links of origin; but Judaism is not restricted to Palestine.

32. The Jewish national cause propagated by world **zionism** is built on fallacies and allegations with regard to history and fact and on recourse to supplication and entreaty so that they could demand Palestine as a national homeland for all the Jews 2,000 years after the ancient Jews left that area.

33. Needless to say, there is no historical link between the ancient Hebrews and the various separate Jewish ethnic groups living in every part of the world. Religious belief cannot make the Jews a nation, nor can Judaism assume the characteristics of nationhood.

34. The non-Zionist Jews admit that the bond that links them is purely religious; it is not national, as **zionism** alleges. In 1878, at the time the Zionist movement was born, Herman Olar, a great English rabbi stated:

"Since the Roman invasion of Palestine the Jews have not constituted a political society. 'We, the Jews, belong politically to the countries in which we live. We are British or French or German only. Of course, we have our particular religious beliefs and faith, **but** we are not different in this from the other nationals who have other faiths. We participate with them in the prosperity of the homeland that embraces us, and we, like the other nationals of that nation, have rights and duties similar to theirs."

That concept was also affirmed by the well-known Jewish writer Joseph Reinach in the 30 April 1919 issue of his magazine *Le Journal des débats*. He said:

"There is no Jewish race or Jewish nation and, since there is only a Jewish religion, Zionism is a

threefold misadventure from the historical, archaeological and national points of view."

35. Undoubtedly the modern Zionist movement, with its starting point in the book *The Jewish State* by Theodor Herzl, first published in 1896, is a colonialist movement. The establishment of Zionism had a basic target—namely, the setting-up of a Jewish State. At the outset Herzl suggested Argentina, Uganda, Sinai or the Holy Land as a territorial crucible and container for the future State. However, soon he decided on Palestine, and the first Zionist Congress, held at Basle in 1897, confirmed that choice.

36. The defined aim of the first Congress was the setting-up of a Jewish homeland in Palestine, which would be secured by general law. Among the methods ratified and adopted by that Congress was the racial colonization of Palestine by the settlement of Jewish farmers and craftsmen. In his memoirs, Herzl said, "Our slogan is 'Palestine, David, Solomon, and the area from the river of Egypt to the Euphrates'".

37. Once Zionism had prepared its economic, legal and religious mobilization it remained only for it to receive effective aid from the great Powers. Thus Zionism worked intelligently to link its organs to those of European expansion. At the time when Herzl and his group made the final choice of Palestine for the establishment of the Jewish State, the great Powers set up a board of administration to carry out that great and expanded political plan. Herzl, who played a decisive role in the establishment and direction of the Zionist movement, realized that the approval of the main European States for his programme and project would be sufficient. He also understood that their interest was a *sine qua non* for the victory of the Zionist movement.

38. Palestine was part of greater Syria and the Arab east, and part of the Ottoman Empire until the First World War brought the decline of that Empire. When the Western allies divided the heritage between them, Arab Palestine was given to Great Britain. The first thing Great Britain did was to make the unfortunate Balfour Declaration and promise in which it stated that it would create in Palestine the economic and social conditions that would facilitate the establishment of a Jewish national homeland in that country.

39. At the same time it made it possible for world Zionism to own land in Palestine and to bring Jewish immigrants from every part of the world to live in other areas they were able gradually to acquire. However, this aroused the attention of the Palestinian Arabs, who started to work against Jewish immigration and the ownership of Arab lands by Jewish immigrants. There is no need to refer here to the repeated and successive revolts against those evil aims since the start of the century. As a result of that policy, the number of Jews in Palestine increased from 84,000 in 1922, or 11 per cent of the total population, to 590,000, or nearly 30 per cent of the total population, at the end of the Mandate period.

40. In 1948, the Jewish minority was able to seize by force of arms 78 per cent of the total area of Palestine, whereas it had controlled only 6 per cent of the total area. It was able to disperse and drive out a million Palestinian Arabs so that it could bring in aliens and strangers and settle them in Palestine.

41. In 1967, in another wave of expansion, Israel occupied all the land of Palestine in addition to the territory of other Arab States. The Palestinian Arab people were either dispersed outside their own territory or had to live under the yoke of Israeli occupation. But throughout the Mandate period the Palestinian people never gave up their right to self-determination.

42. The international community affirmed the right of the Palestinians to return to their homeland—the people who were forced to leave their land against their will. In 1948, the General Assembly adopted resolution 194 (III), which called for the return of the Palestinian refugees to their land; the Assembly has reaffirmed that resolution year after year by a number of other resolutions. It also confirmed Israel's violations of human rights and condemned them, for the proofs of Israel's defiance and violation of its resolutions are more than can be enumerated. Thus we learn from Israeli legislation or from the acts of the Israeli authorities that they have no respect for the Geneva agreements or the resolutions of the United Nations. For instance, we find that the Arab city of Jerusalem has been annexed and that its religious and historical features have been obliterated and the Arab population expelled from it in order to Judaize it, as occurred in the western part of Jerusalem after its occupation in 1948 and the changing of its character. The burning of the Al-Aqsa Mosque which took place on 21 August 1969 and the usurpation of the Al-Ibrahimi Mosque are only a link in the chain of Israeli projects, to Judaize Jerusalem and Hebron, to alter the nature of the sacred Islamic areas, to destroy the mosques, to set up new Israeli temples on the debris of these, Islamic areas and to present the world with a fait accompli.

43. As a result of the escalation of the struggle of the Palestinian people on the political and military levels, the United Nations has begun to recognize the rights of the Palestinian people and to regard the Israeli Zionist occupation of the Arab territories as imperialism and colonialism. It has affirmed the legitimacy of the struggle of peoples under imperialist and foreign occupation, whose right to self-determination must be recognized as a first step in their reclamation of those rights by all means at their disposal. The United Nations has announced its total respect for the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, which cannot be given up, and which are a basic factor in the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. The United Nations has also affirmed the legitimacy of the struggle of the peoples for self-determination, for liberation from colonialism, domination and foreign enslavement in Asia and Africa and, in particular, the rights of the peoples of Palestine, Zimbabwe and Namibia, which should be restored by all the means available to them that are in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and provided for by it.

44. The two historic General Assembly resolutions: 3236 (XXIX) and 3237 (XXIX) are the latest resolutions adopted concerning the rights of the Palestinian people. They define and reaffirm the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination, independence and sovereignty and their right to return to their properties and to the homeland from which they were expelled. The resolutions also spec-

ified that respect for these rights was a basic factor in the settlement of the Palestinian question.

45. The Palestinian people, represented by the PLO, which the General Assembly recognized last year, is a principal party to the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the area. The General Assembly has also recognized the right of that people to regain all its legitimate rights by all means available to it under the Charter. The two resolutions called upon all States and international organizations to assist the Palestinian people in its struggle with regard to all unsolved problems concerning the restoration of its land and its legitimate national rights.

46. In conclusion, I should like to state here that the Arab nation and all peace-loving and freedom-loving peoples will stand by the Palestinians and support them in their bitter struggle to terminate Israeli Zionist aggression, because the right of these people to their land is inalienable. It cannot be changed with the years, however long they may be, because these people will continue to struggle for affirmation of this right and for the restoration of their Palestinian land and the setting-up of a secular democratic State to enable Muslims, Christians and Jews to live together in an atmosphere where brotherhood, stability and love prevail.

47. Mr. TRAORÉ (Mali) (*interpretation from French*): Last year the man who appeared in so many cartoons holding a knife and with an ammunition belt around his waist came to the General Assembly Hall, a Hall that was filled to capacity, impatient and tense, to express the full dedication of his people to the objectives of the Charter of the United Nations and to peace.

48. He spoke to us of the frustration of his people but also of its determination to reconquer its freedom and its homeland.

49. He also spoke to us of Palestine, of that green and generous Palestine which we know from history and Holy Scripture and where in earlier days Jews, Christians and Muslims used to live in perfect union and reciprocal respect for their religious beliefs.

50. The Chairman of the PLO, Yasser Arafat thus only continued the long tradition of leaders who at crucial moments in the history of their peoples have been able, with a characteristic humility and greatness, to incarnate the hopes of their peoples. We heard this man, this leader of the Palestinian revolution, set forth, with a force and conviction all his own, the dramatic record of the tragedy which he has been living through for a quarter of a century with his people. The tragedy the Palestinians are living through constitutes precisely one of the crucial periods in their long history.

51. The world, which still bears the scars of the last world war, cannot remain indifferent in the face of this tragedy, which could have been averted if the United Nations had from the outset assumed all its responsibilities in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter.

52. But as it is said, it is never too late to mend. Indeed, after a correct re-evaluation of the situation, our Organization committed itself at its twenty-ninth session to the right path to a just and lasting settlement

of the Palestinian question, which is at the very heart of the crisis in the Middle East. It was able to rise to the level of its noble mission of helping all peoples, without any exception, to forge their destiny freely, transcending the ideological and philosophical quarrels that it had unfortunately been drawn into. Thus it recognized the legitimacy of the struggle of the Palestinian people and adopted resolution 3236 (XXIX) of 22 November 1974, which reaffirmed the national rights of the Palestinians, their right to return to their homes, their right to the restoration of their property, their right to a national existence and their right to self-determination and independence.

53. But the noble objectives which our Organization has set itself cannot be achieved by simple statements of principle or by resolutions. Each one of our sessions must bring its contribution to the dynamics of peace. In that respect, the international Organization can very properly be proud of the admission to the international arena of so many States of Asia and Africa, which have made a fundamental contribution to the progressive democratization of international relations. The orientation of the activities of our Organization and its methods of work have thereby been profoundly influenced.

54. The opening of the thirtieth session of the General Assembly was accompanied by a twofold warning. The first concerned the certainty of the triumph of the struggle of peoples under colonial domination. The accession to independence of new nations is proof of this. The second concerned the vanity of armadas designed to break the will of peoples which have decided to live in unity and in accordance with their deep aspirations. The brilliant victory of the brave fighters of Viet Nam and Cambodia against the forces of aggression is an eloquent illustration of that.

55. It must be recognized that there have been partial responses to those warnings. Efforts undertaken over a period of years by States to make their relations, upset by mistrust and hegemonic designs, more flexible have resulted in the conclusion of agreements which have created an appreciably healthier international atmosphere. But resistance to the full and complete emancipation of peoples under foreign domination continues to exist, and the Palestinian drama is a painful example. In our day is there another people in the world that, like the Palestinian people, continues to be subjected both to oppressive colonialism and to the perfidious racism that is Zionism and to which even the simple right to remain in or to return to its homeland is denied?

56. What right has Israel to try to obliterate from the map of the world the name of a country which has survived the cynical carving-up of territory that went on in the ferocious colonial period? It can only invoke brute force, hatred, arbitrariness, expansionism and hegemony.

57. It is certainly not our intention to rewrite the history of Palestine, but we must recall here that since the time of the First World War the Palestinian people has been one of those rare peoples to have taken up arms against the colonialists and not yet to have put them down. Last year, during the consideration of the question which we are now discussing, my delegation laid sufficient emphasis on the evolution of this struggle for liberation.

58. Palestine would have regained its national outline by the beginning of this century, had it not been for the intrigues of foreign diplomacy and of the Powers which were clinging to the preservation of their regalities to the detriment of peace and justice. Indeed, the publication in London of successive White Papers on the Palestinian entity, in particular the one that followed the national uprising in 1933 against the administering Power in Jerusalem and Jaffa reflects this.

59. Thus, this people, the Palestinian people, which was arbitrarily thrown out of its territory and has been confined in camps at the mercy of natural disasters and every form of privation, continues to subsist only by the strength of its faith and on very hypothetical international charity.

60. The documents published by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East [UNRWA] and by the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories give abundant information of the tragedy of more than a million men, women and children, and of the brutal and inhuman methods used by the Government of Tel Aviv to break the resistance of the Palestinian people.

61. But a people which refuses to fight against its torturer will die. One of the leaders of the Palestinian people told us on 3 November [2390th para. 63], before this Assembly, that the Palestinian people wanted to live, and to live nowhere else but in Palestine. The equation thus could not be set forth in clearer terms.

62. By its resolution 1514 (XV), the General Assembly recognized that all peoples had the right to self-determination and independence. By its Charter, the United Nations committed itself to building societies without distinction of race, colour or creed. The immense suffering of the Jewish people shook the whole world, and millions of men from all continents and of all creeds paid with their blood to crush Hitlerism. Thousands of Palestinians fell on the battlefields beside their Jewish brothers in the struggle waged by the Allied forces against nazism. Thus the Palestinian people has also contributed with its blood to the restoration of democracy in the world and to the survival of the Jewish people. The struggle which it is waging now can have no significance other than that of an attempt to complete the victory of democratic forces.

63. History has already condemned the forces of the Axis which, despising the will of those peoples who wanted to live in harmony and enjoy a common destiny, dreamed of empires dominated by some chosen race. History will also condemn those who have failed to learn the lesson of that mad undertaking.

64. Did not Christians, Jews and Muslims once jointly pursue their destiny in this same land of Palestine? Was it not in this Promised Land of Palestine that the word of God was first spoken, -preaching love, mercy and mutual help?

65. Every people has the right to the perpetuation of the traditions and civilization of its ancestors; but only a tyrannical people will believe in the pre-eminence of the value of those things which are exclusively

its own. The former right is precisely what Israel is refusing to the Palestinian people.

66. Therefore, the question before us today is not simply a Palestinian question, but, properly speaking, a question of justice and peace. Any attempt to divert the attention of our Assembly from this reality must be rejected. In addition, the national rights of the Palestinian people have always been affirmed by those in authority.

67. Referring to contemporary events I would recall in this respect the assurances which President Roosevelt gave to King Ibn Saud I, in his message of 5 April 1945:

"I shall not, as chief executive, engage in any action which could be considered hostile to the Arab people. Our principle is that the Jews must not dominate the Arabs, nor the Arabs the Jews."

68. The full value of that expression of faith is clear in that it was made three years after the American Jewish organizations had decided to carry out the "Biltmore Programme" which was designed to create in Palestine a Jewish State with the political philosophy and the methods of government which are today those of the Zionist leaders in Tel Aviv. Even though it was relevant, that expression of faith was lost sight of in 1948 when the State of Israel was arbitrarily founded with the complicity of the United Nations. On reconsideration at the twenty-ninth session, the General Assembly decided to put an end to that complicity. In adopting resolution 3236 (XXIX), by which it unequivocally recognized the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, independence and national sovereignty, it gave proof of this.

69. During the thirtieth session it is less a matter of the Assembly taking decisions than of implementing that resolution before it falls into disuse like all the other resolutions adopted on this dramatic question. We have no right to permit the continuance of the long suffering of the Palestinian people, which is unique in the annals of history, both because of the injustice inflicted and because of the tragedy it has engendered. We must now commit ourselves to action so that the Palestinian people can enjoy the rights which we have recognized as theirs.

70. Since the adoption of resolution 3236 (XXIX), no change has been noted in the defiant attitude which Israel has adopted with respect to the United Nations. We must therefore envisage appropriate measures to implement that very relevant resolution. We believe, in this regard, that a committee should be set up for the purpose of studying the question and of making recommendations to the General Assembly and the Security Council for the restoration of the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people. That would not be an innovation, because the Assembly has already had occasion in analogous circumstances to set up various committees or commissions for the purpose of implementing its decisions. We are aware that there is already UNRWA and the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories, but those bodies are concerned only with specific aspects of the problem, which for 27 years has been represented as a purely humanitarian problem in order to avoid dealing with its substance.

71. As has finally been admitted, the Palestinian problem is not in essence humanitarian; it is fundamentally political. It is at the very heart of the crisis in the Middle East. The stage which we have now reached is crucial, not only for the authority of our Organization, but also and especially for the future of international peace and security.

72. My delegation has no doubt that its views are shared by the majority of this Assembly, which, despite pressures, manoeuvres and intimidation, will fully assume its responsibilities to put into effect resolution 3236 (XXIX). That will be to the advantage not only of the Palestinian people but also of the Jewish people, which is not to be confused with the Zionist régime of Tel Aviv.

73. Mr. DATCU (Romania) (*interpretation from French*): The debate in the General Assembly on the question of Palestine constitutes both a remarkable event because of its importance and a recognition of the role which our Organization is called upon to play in the political settlement of the situation in the Middle East and the establishment of a just and lasting peace in that region.

74. The question of Palestine and the situation in the Middle East in general are part of the outcome of the policy of domination and oppression of the past. That is why their settlement is an integral part of the struggle and the efforts of all the people of the United Nations to abolish the former policy of inequality and oppression, remove the sources of tension and conflict and establish new relations based on respect for national independence and sovereignty.

75. The twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly was a landmark in the efforts made by the international community to find viable solutions to the problem of the Palestinian people. The inclusion of that item on the agenda of the United Nations has provided for the first time an opportunity to discuss the Palestinian problem within the framework of our Organization as a separate and urgent question. At the same time, the decision to invite the PLO to the United Nations was a political act which institutionalized the right of the Palestinian people to participate, through its legitimate representative, in the consideration of questions directly affecting its rights and national interests. The granting of observer status in the United Nations to the PLO was an act by which the international community endorsed the legitimacy of that organization. It was the direct result of its increasing international prestige and its ever-growing recognition as the only representative of the Palestinian people. This process was completed this year by the admission of the PLO as a full member of the Non-Aligned Movement at the Conference of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Lima in August 1975, to which Romania also had the honour of being invited.

76. My country was one of the promoters of the move to include in the agenda of the United Nations an item on the question of Palestine. It also supported and sponsored the decision taken by the General Assembly to invite the PLO to participate in its deliberations on the question of Palestine [resolution 3210 (XXIX)] and to grant it observer status [resolution 3237 (XXIX)]. We welcomed with satisfaction the participation of the Chairman of the Executive Com-

mittee of the PLO in the plenary meetings of our Assembly during the twenty-ninth session. His participation afforded us the opportunity of learning from the most authoritative source of the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people.

77. As is well known, Romania was one of the first States to recognize the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. The ties of friendship and solidarity between the Romanian people and the Palestinian people were also reflected in the opening in Bucharest of one of the first offices of the PLO, as well as in the development on many levels of contacts and relations with that organization.

78. The summit talks and meetings held between the President of Romania, Mr. Nicolae Ceausescu, and the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the PLO, Mr. Yasser Arafat, the last of which took place at Bucharest a few days ago, are the most eloquent expression of those relations. At the recent meeting, they reaffirmed their decision further to develop good relations of friendship, co-operation and solidarity between the peoples of Romania and Palestine.

79. The adoption at the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly of resolution 3236 (XXIX) on the question of Palestine constitutes an acknowledgement of the fact that the settlement of the Palestinian question, in keeping with the national interests of the Palestinians, is a *sine qua non* for the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

80. Like other speakers who have taken the floor before us, the Romanian delegation believes that the present debate in the General Assembly on the question of Palestine should lead to new steps towards a settlement of the problem of that sorely tried people. If we continue to ignore its legitimate rights and aspirations, we will only perpetuate and, what is worse, aggravate the conflict in the Middle East, thus jeopardizing peace and security in that area and in the whole world. Israel must understand that its security and its independence can be assured only to the extent that it recognizes and respects the rights of the Arab people of Palestine, based on the truth, confirmed by history, that a people cannot be free if it does not also recognize the right of other peoples to freedom and independence.

81. Socialist Romania was one of the first States to stress that the national rights of the Palestinian people can only be fully realized by the establishment of an independent Palestinian State, with the aim of creating the conditions necessary for the political, economic and social development of the Palestinian nation. The Palestinian people could thus benefit from the rights and guarantees conferred upon it as a member of the international community and, at the same time, could exercise the obligations incumbent upon it as such. We see in the legitimacy of the Palestinian State a practical confirmation of the sacred right of all peoples of that region to develop freely and independently and to benefit from the advantages of international co-operation. These concerns of my country have been expressed by its most authoritative spokesman, the President of Romania, who emphasized that:

"It is important that the problem of the Palestinian people be adequately resolved on the basis

the encouragement of certain countries, a plot that until very recently has been ignored by the whole world.

105. The peoples of the world today have awakened to the fact and have denounced the killing, extermination and dispersal of the Palestinian people. They have shown without any doubt whatsoever that we can no longer ignore these facts, and that we cannot close our eyes to their constant repetition. Resolutions 3236 (XXIX) and 3237 (XXIX), which were adopted by an overwhelming majority, are clear proof of the growth of this feeling and its crystallization. We are happy to say that no force can disguise the facts or can turn the clock back on events.

106. For over a quarter of a century, Israel through its propaganda machinery has continued in a doomed but constant effort to disguise the true situation of the Palestine Arab people and to level various accusations at the PLO. However, this Assembly has become aware of these efforts and will no longer be taken in by such tricks.

107. We do not want to reiterate what we have said previously and what most other delegations have said in this forum. We are fully cognizant of the dozens of resolutions adopted by this Organization. The question of Palestine was loosed from the fallacious bounds within which it had been attempted to confine it for the past 25 years when the General Assembly last year recognized the national rights of the Palestinian people and accepted the Palestinian people, represented by the PLO, as an observer in this international Organization.

108. The principles of the United Nations and the legitimacy of human rights make it incumbent on this Assembly to penetrate to the very core and substance of the problem in the Middle East, namely, the problem of the Palestinian people and their legitimate right to self-determination.

109. Our delegation, understanding this Organization's efforts to maintain world peace and security, aware of the need to consolidate the important role played by it to set up a just and lasting peace in the Middle East, and realizing that such a peace in the area

cannot be brought about without the positive participation of the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, on an equal footing with the other parties, in the efforts exerted for that purpose, has joined in sponsoring draft resolution A/L.768, which was submitted by the Egyptian delegation.

110. We firmly believe that the adoption of this draft resolution by the General Assembly would certainly consolidate the chances for justice and peace in the Middle East. We hope that friendly delegations here will support this draft resolution, remembering what our brother, Mr. Kaddoumi, the representative of the PLO, said before this Assembly:

"We declare once more to this Assembly that there can be no peace in the region without justice and no justice without the full recognition and ultimate attainment of the national rights of our people. We declare also that no international conference has the right to discuss the Palestine problem in isolation from the PLO or in its absence; for the PLO is the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people." [2390th meeting, para. 29.]

111. The invitation extended to the PLO to participate in the deliberations of the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East is in fact a faithful application of the meaning and substance of General Assembly resolution 3236 (XXIX), in accordance with what is required of us at this present stage. The participation of the PLO in any conference for the establishment of peace in the Middle East is a basic condition and the only guarantee for the stabilization of peace that this Organization, the United Nations, aims at and for which it works with great and praiseworthy faith, determination and effort.

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.

NOTE

¹ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-ninth Session, Plenary Meetings, 2282nd meeting, paras. 3-83.*