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President: Mr. Gaston THORN
(Luxembourg).

AGENDA ITEM 27

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

1. Mr. MALIKYAR (Afghanistan): The Afghan delegation is pleased with the just evolution of the question of Palestine in the United Nations, in particular during the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly, as in our view this question forms the basis and the origin of the Middle East conflict as a whole. Ever since the creation of Israel as a result of an unjust decision taken by the General Assembly, Israel has tried to distort this obvious and well-known reality, by pretending that there was no problem between Israel and the Palestinian people, only border conflicts with the neighbouring Arab countries. On this false assumption, Israel has persistently denied the existence of Palestine, its indigenous people, and its homeland. Such fallacies cannot, as is now apparent, mislead the international community for a long period of time. The United Nations is now fully aware of its responsibilities on this issue as a result of the evidence before it, in particular that of the heroic struggle of the people of Palestine in defence of the restoration of its national rights, its identity and dignity as a nation. The fact that the question of Palestine is being debated as a separate item in the United Nations is, in our view, a faithful and just reflection of the determination of this world Organization to discharge its obligations regarding an issue for which it has prime responsibility. As a result of the decisions adopted by the General Assembly during its twenty-ninth session, it has been possible to place the cause of the people of Palestine in its true perspective, for it is obviously unjust to ignore the party directly concerned while in search of a just and lasting peace in the area.

2. There can be no doubt of the futility of seeking any durable solution that does not take into account the legitimate rights of the people of Palestine. The Situation of Palestine is no different from that of countries which have suffered and are still suffering from alien domination and which have freed themselves after long sacrifice and struggle. The existence of the People of Palestine is a reality which, sooner or later,

Israel will have to recognize, no matter how much it ignores that reality at the present time.

3. The people of Palestine, as is well known, are determined and united under the Palestine Liberation Organization [PLO] and its leader, Yasser Arafat, for the attainment of their national rights and for self-determination in their homeland.

4. As I indicated earlier, the international community and this world Organization have become increasingly aware of the need for the restoration of the rights of the Palestinians in their homeland. They are aware of the enormity of the injustice perpetrated upon the people of Palestine and of the urgent need to apply the principles of justice. It should be stated that total respect for the inalienable rights of the Palestinians and their exercise of those rights are essential for the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

5. In the view of my delegation, there are two essential prerequisites for the building of peace in the Middle East: first, the national and inalienable rights of the people of Palestine must be restored and, secondly, Israel must withdraw from all the occupied territories. There is no doubt that the situation in the Middle East continues to be the most serious threat to international peace and security.

6. Israel's obstinacy in continuing its occupation of the Arab territories and its disregard of the national rights of the people of Palestine constitute, in our view, a continuous and systematic violation of the principles which govern international relations at present and the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

7. My Government recognizes the PLO as the sole representative of the people of Palestine. The General Assembly too has recognized the PLO as the sole representative of the people of Palestine. In this respect we were happy that the PLO was admitted as a full member of the non-aligned movement during the recent Conference of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Lima in August, thus reaffirming the support of the Non-Aligned Movement for the heroic struggle of the people of Palestine for the restoration of its inalienable and national rights.

8. My delegation is of the view that no lasting and stable peace can be achieved in the Middle East unless the people of Palestine attains its inalienable and national rights, including the right to return to its homeland and to enjoy self-determination and political independence, and that Israel should withdraw from all the occupied territories which it holds as a result of its premeditated aggression.

9. For over two decades-and that is too long a period of time-the international community has delayed any sincere and determined search for ways and means that could lead to a just solution of the

tragic problem of the Middle East. We are all well aware in this respect of the violations by Israel of United Nations decisions which have constantly reaffirmed the inalienable rights of the people of Palestine. It should be stated that full respect for and implementation of those decisions is undoubtedly an indispensable element in the procuring of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

10. It is our duty in this Assembly to uphold and support the rule of law and to ensure in the best possible way the triumph of justice. In the view of my delegation, the international community cannot in all conscience remain indifferent to the resolution of the question of this just cause.

11. In conclusion, I wish to state on behalf of my delegation that we want to see the United Nations decisions on this issue implemented by the international community. I also wish to declare that my delegation will support any decision taken by the General Assembly during its present session that will ensure the legitimate and just solution of the problem of Palestine and that of the Middle East as a whole.

12. Mr. NAO (Albania) (*interpretation from French*): The Palestinian problem has always, and most properly and gravely, been of concern to peace-loving Member States struggling to safeguard and ensure respect for the sovereign rights of peoples and peace and security in the Middle East. The Albanian delegation, guided as always by the policy of principle according to which the Albanian Government unreservedly supports the struggle of peoples to achieve and defend their national rights, has taken part in all the discussions here on the Palestinian problem and has always maintained a consistent attitude in favour of the just cause of the Arab people of Palestine, its return to the homeland from which it was driven and the recognition of its inalienable right to self-determination.

13. Almost a quarter of a century ago, a million and a half Palestinians—a whole nation—were driven from their beloved homeland as a result of the open aggression of Israel, strongly supported by international Zionism and by the imperialist Powers, first and foremost the United States, and have continued to live lives of privation and misery, far from their homes.

14. From that time and to this day the Israeli Zionists have continued and still continue to engage in criminal activities against the Palestinian people, daily intensifying their air attacks against the Palestinian population and causing great loss of life and material resources. The purpose of those acts of terrorism and those massacres by the Israeli Zionists is to defeat the national liberation struggle of the Palestinian people, to create the psychosis of fear and insecurity among that people, to make it bend the knee and submit, to deny it the right to return to its homeland, Palestine.

15. It is well known by everyone that the United States has been and is still the instigator and the principal agent of all the criminal activity of the Israeli Zionists. Without its political, military and financial assistance, Israel would not have had the courage to undertake such acts of aggression. Leaders in the White House declare publicly that they have armed and will continue to arm Israel with all the necessary and most modern weapons, even with nuclear warheads.

16. The continued militarization of Israel by the American imperialists has always been followed by a growing number of acts of aggressive provocation, occupation and Zionist expansion in the Arab territories, which Israel continues to occupy by force of arms, thus turning the Middle East into a zone of combat and permanent conflict. Behind all these Israeli activities are concealed the expansionist aims of the United States in the Middle East.

17. Like the American imperialists, the new imperialists, the Soviet revisionists, overtly or covertly, have assisted the Israeli Zionists in their aggressive acts against the Arab peoples and the people of Palestine. The influx of Jews from the Soviet Union to Israel has greatly assisted the Israeli aggressors, who use them as soldiers and military and civilian experts to put into operation and maintain the great Israeli war machine and its political and scientific institutions, and to people the lands of the Palestinian people. Today it is a well-known fact that when the Soviet socio-imperialists request of the United States—the ally of Israel—facilities requiring the approval of the United States Senate or Congress, they play, *inter alia*, a game of laissez-passé, which makes it possible to send a larger number of Soviet Jews to Israel. Recent meetings between the Foreign Ministers of the Soviet revisionists and Israeli Zionists have led to bargaining behind the backs of the Palestinians and other Arab peoples. These new intrigues against the interests of the Palestinian people and other Arab peoples are carried out within the framework of a great anti-Arab conspiracy hatched by the Soviet revisionists and American imperialists.

18. All these facts clearly show that the Palestinian people is faced with co-ordinated activity on the part of its fierce enemies—the two super-Powers and Israel—which in one way or another seek to bring about the liquidation or destruction of its just cause, and the perpetuation of its tragic situation, and to keep them forever refugees, without a homeland and without sovereign rights.

19. Everyone is aware that Palestine occupies a key position in the Middle East and that it is an area that has always attracted the greed of the imperialist Powers. The strategically favourable position of the Middle East, the smell of oil, the black gold, and the dollars they make with the sale of weapons, are some of the many reasons impelling the American imperialists and Soviet socio-imperialists to take over this region. Thus, their interest in the Middle East is dictated by the expansionist aims they pursue in that region in order to establish their influence there, to serve their strategic interests and their economic exploitation of that region.

20. In order to achieve their hegemonic and neo-colonialist aims in the Middle East, the United States and the Soviet Union do not want peace and stability to be restored in the region. On the contrary they seek, by every means, to divide and to wipe out the Palestinian people, to divide the Arab peoples and to pit them one against the other, to support and encourage the aggressive policy of Israel in order to maintain a "no war, no peace" situation in the Middle East and to compel the Palestinian people and the other Arab peoples to obey the *diktat* of Washington and Moscow.

21. The so-called plans and initiatives for the peaceful settlement of the Palestinian problem and that of the Middle East as a whole that have been fabricated in Moscow and Washington and that they have so **zealously** publicized, are traps designed to get the Palestinian people and the other Arab peoples to capitulate.

22. While the United States and the Soviet Union talk a lot about their efforts to find a solution to the Middle East problems and the Palestinian problem, Soviet-American rivalry for hegemony and expansion in that region has been growing sharper in the political, strategic and economic spheres.

23. For a number of years now, the United States and the Soviet Union have been endeavouring to extend their zones of political and strategic influence in the Middle East by elbowing each other out **when** ever they can. We have all witnessed the fact that the diplomacy of American imperialists and that of the Soviet revisionists compete to further these aims. The two super-Powers do not regard the Middle East merely as the permanent source of oil but also as a large market where they can sell their weapons at very high prices. Last year the United States and the Soviet Union sold weapons to the Middle East amounting to the gigantic sum of 13,000 million dollars.

24. But neither the conspiracies of the American imperialists and Soviet revisionists nor the aggressive activities of the Israeli Zionists, have ever brought the heroic Palestinian people to its knees, and they never will. The history of the Palestinian people is the history of superhuman efforts and a superhuman struggle for existence waged with the resolve not to give way to pressure. The long experience it has acquired in the course of its just struggle has taught the Palestinian people that freedom and independence are won with blood and sacrifice.

25. The **many** acts of the Palestinian freedom-fighters against the Israeli occupiers testify to the **intensification** and strengthening of that liberation struggle. They are the best response that the Palestinian people can give to the Israeli Zionists and to the conspiracies hatched in Washington and Moscow. Life has convinced the Palestinian people that it will win its rights and land only by fighting resolutely to the end. "There is no stronger weapon", said Comrade Enver Hoxha, "than the peoples' struggle, for it lights a **fire** in which each aggressor burns and is destroyed". In Viet Nam and in Cambodia it was once again clearly shown that a country and a people, even if it is small and inferior in military strength, will prevail when it fights for a just cause and defends it firmly to the end.

26. The liberation struggle of the Palestinian people against the Israeli Zionists is inseparable from the struggle of all the Arab peoples for the liberation of occupied Arab lands. On the basis of support for the Palestinian question, which is the key to the just and complete solution of the Middle East problem, the unity and solidarity of the Arab peoples, whose strength was shown on the battlefield against the Israeli aggressors, increase continually. In October 1973, they achieved victory against the Israeli Zionists in the military field, destroying once and for all **the myth** of the invincibility of Israel. They used the oil weapon with great effectiveness, inflicting incalculable losses on their enemies. It is for this reason that the American imperialists have gone so far as to threaten

the Arab countries with direct military intervention. But the closely united Palestinian and Arab peoples will never allow their enemies to trample their rights underfoot.

27. The just cause for which the Palestinian people fight, namely, return to the homes taken from them by the Zionists, has the support of the Arab peoples and all freedom-loving peoples of the world. The Palestinian fighters have become a powerful force in the Middle East and are gaining greater and greater prestige throughout the world. At a series of international conferences the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people have been publicly recognized and the will to support their just cause to the end been expressed.

28. Even here, in the United Nations, a growing number of countries support the inalienable right of the Palestinians to return to the homeland from which they were driven. The United Nations, at the **twenty-ninth** session of the General Assembly, recognized the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, national independence and sovereignty. That recognition by freedom-loving States Members of the United Nations is the clear expression of their support for the just liberation struggle of the Palestinians.

29. The Albanian people and Government have always supported and will continue to support firmly the just struggle of the brother people of Palestine and other Arab peoples. We condemn the barbarous acts of the Israeli Zionists as well as the hegemonic and expansionist policy in the Middle East of the American imperialists and Soviet socio-imperialists, which are the parties principally responsible for the tense situation which continues to exist in that region and for the sufferings and privations of the Palestinian people. In reaffirming our sincere **and** total support for the Palestinian people in their struggle for freedom, the Albanian delegation expresses the conviction that the Palestinian people and other Arab peoples, as emphasized by Comrade Enver Hoxha on 3 October 1974, will reduce "to nothing all the intrigues and anti-Arab plans of Israel and the super-Powers and that united they will achieve all their noble national objectives".

30. Mr. RABETAFIKA (Madagascar) (*interpretation from French*): The delegation of Madagascar, aware of the responsibilities and obligations incumbent upon us both collectively and individually, shares the view that it is the **bounden** duty of our Organization to ensure that justice prevails in all the areas it covers, that situations that violate the purposes and principles of the Charter are redressed and that appropriate solutions are proposed for that purpose. We agree that this action cannot in all circumstances lead to definitive or immediate results because of the elements to be considered and the changes that occur from one session to another, whether foreseeable or not. It is therefore natural that the General Assembly should once again consider the question of Palestine, not simply to conform to a ritual, desirable and salutary in itself, but to decide what is urgent, what has to be done in order to achieve the objectives which we have agreed upon at previous sessions.

31. That is why we reject firmly and categorically any cynical, shameless and irresponsible attempt to give the impression that our only aim in calling for

this debate is to make critical and defamatory remarks insultingly and gratuitously about a particular State, while those who put forward such ridiculous arguments know they apply to themselves or to distract the attention of the Organization from other tasks incumbent on it. Every problem in fact is given specific priority according to which the United Nations and the international community as a whole decide on the basis of the known facts, what position to adopt and what action to take. We believe that only a feeling of profound guilt, allied to boundless ignorance could incite certain people to disregard these fundamental truths, and from those people we have no lessons to learn.

32. Each year, for 28 years, we have protested the sincerity of our commitments to the Palestinians. Each year we promise more justice to those who no longer dare to believe in our promises. Each year we reaffirm our concern in the face of a situation which continues to deteriorate. At the same time, we accept that arrogance, intransigence, exclusivity and unlimited fanaticism have free rein, and we turn to those to whom we have given special powers, only to be offered unacceptable solutions.

33. Thus, condemned to impotence and locked in our own contradictions, it would be graceless not to recognize the emergence of an authentically Palestinian approach to the problem is more in keeping with the principle of self-determination and makes possible a more objective and realistic assessment of the pertinent data and elements, without making it necessary for us to defend, in spite of ourselves, interests that run counter to the promotion of the Palestinian cause. Once we have overcome the obstacle of false or partial solutions and given top priority to the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people, it becomes much easier to stand at its side in its aim to build a future in accordance with its destiny. This, we believe, is the primary responsibility of our Organization as regards this people which we have unfortunately sacrificed to facile, fragile and temporary compromises.

34. It is in this sense that we understand the decision of the United Nations to rid itself once and for all of the intimidation, pressure and blackmail, which Zionism has recently **rivalled** imperialism is using, to recognize formally, as it did barely five years ago, the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, to insist on total respect for them; to emphasize the need for their implementation, and finally to make it clear, for the benefit of those who might be tempted to distort its significance, that those rights extend to self-determination, independence and sovereignty. It is no longer possible to disregard these irreversible commitments of the United Nations or to claim that we cannot comprehend their positive consequences for the Palestinian struggle and resistance.

35. Each of these commitments, which, we would recall, are enunciated in clear language and are not subject to any condition, constitutes for our Organization, and particularly for the Palestinian people, a decisive step which falls naturally within an over-all concept of the problem and requires all of us to define a plan of action that is commensurate with our respective means.

36. The Palestinian resistance, which derives its legitimacy from within itself, did not wait, contrary to what has been alleged in this Assembly, for the adoption of resolution 3236 (XXIX), to assert its rights. It did so in order to oppose foreign domination or alienation, whether Ottoman, British or Zionist; and what it expects of us is that we should ensure that its protests are recognized as the inevitable expression of the will of the Palestinian people to safeguard its national identity and to reject all attempts to deny, pervert or transfer that identity.

37. In exercising this second responsibility, the international community, on the basis of the principle of equality of rights, must maintain that the "conditional" existence of a State cannot be used as an argument against affirmation of the identity of the Palestinian nation, which, in its turn, is not an obstacle to the legitimate existence of another State—I repeat, the legitimate existence of another State—provided, of course, that the framework in which that identity is expressed remains Palestine itself.

38. The third area in which the Organization will have a determining part to play relates to the sovereignty and independence of the Palestinian nation. It is pointless to grant a people or a nation inalienable rights if the political and juridical framework necessary for the exercise thereof is not at the same time defined. This stage, which is a prelude to international recognition, will undoubtedly be the most **difficult** and arduous to which to get agreement, because prejudices always tend to impose conditions inherited from a fundamentally unfair approach to the problem. It is therefore essential that the United Nations once more devote its attention to drawing up these conditions, revising the positions it adopted more than a quarter of a century ago in a colonialist and imperialist context, admitting that the sovereignty of a people cannot be negotiated, and that its independence has meaning only if it is declared on a territory that belongs to it in fact and in law.

39. In speaking of the responsibilities of the Organization with regard to the future, the national identity, the sovereignty and the independence of the Palestinian people, we are careful at the same time not to minimize the other responsibilities incumbent upon us which derive from the resolutions adopted as a result of the aggressions of which that people has been the victim. We have purposely restricted our analysis to the areas I have described, for we consider that the exercise by the Palestinian people of the rights to which it is entitled requires formal guarantees, clearly elaborated within the framework of the Charter of the United Nations and drawing inspiration from its principles.

40. It is once again to the Charter that we must resort when these guarantees, at present or in the future, are ignored or violated, and if the Charter provides that, in such circumstances, sanctions must be imposed, the United Nations should not hesitate to call for them to the most appropriate degree. These are the foundations of the decisions taken this year by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity at Kampala [see A/10297, annex II] and the Conference of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Non-Aligned Countries at Lima [see A/10217 and *Corr.* I, annex], and we need not go to any **tendentious**

lengths to recall those decisions. Their spirit will be reflected in a draft resolution of which Madagascar is a sponsor, and we believe that operative paragraphs 3 and 4 of that draft resolution will provide adequate machinery for achieving the objectives sought in General Assembly resolution 3236 (XXIX), making more effective the guarantees that it is our duty to offer the Palestinian people and restoring to the United Nations, which has for too long been left on the sidelines, genuine powers of action and co-ordination in this matter.

41. The representative of the Zionist State said that this specific initiative would run counter to the negotiations, of which the existence and the results so far achieved are known to all. But have those negotiations in fact given the Palestinian question the place it should occupy in the settlement of the over-all problem? 'Can anyone, in all honesty, assert that the search for guarantees for the exercise of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people endangers the peace and security of that region, while at the same time admitting that the existence of the Zionist State came about through annexation, expropriation, expulsion and colonization? To support such arguments is tantamount to seeking the political and legal liquidation of the Palestinian fact in order to endorse a peace that dare not utter its name.

42. The question of Palestine requires specific solutions, which are not necessarily contrary to those for other situations. But to say that the Palestinians and the United Nations must submit to the latter is indicative of a mentality that is hardly surprising, perhaps, in those whose language, when they speak of "democracy", "representation", "dialogue" and "statistics", is strangely reminiscent of the language of the colonialists and partisans of when they boast about their so-called civilizing mission.

43. The Assembly will judge whether the proposals we have presented are extremist, for we have come to this discussion not to impose false truths and to attack the international community vehemently and indecently when it refuses to endorse them, but to ensure by every means given us by the Charter that justice triumphs. We cannot be silent accomplices when an attempt is being made to smother the Palestinian question; and if the defence of just causes results in our being called extremists, then we willingly accept that name, particularly when we denounce the vast indifference of opinion that has grown used to compromises becoming compromising, and to the extreme indulgence of those who do not wish to recognize the errors and injustices of the past.

44. Mr. HULINSKÝ (Czechoslovakia) (*interpretation from Russian*): The attention of world public opinion is once again directed to the Palestine question. The struggle of the Arab people of Palestine is Part of a broader problem, that of achieving a settlement of the long-standing conflict in the Middle East. Of this there can be no doubt. The prerequisite for any political settlement of the situation in that area remains the removal of the consequences of Israeli aggression, the withdrawal of Israeli troops from all the Arab territories they have seized, and the realization of the legitimate rights of the Palestinians. However, in normalizing the situation in the Middle East the Palestine question is a key issue. Unless this is

equitably resolved, it will be impossible to guarantee a lasting peace for all States and peoples in that region.

45. The United Nations recognized the national rights of the Arab people of Palestine as early as 1947 and since that time it has frequently reaffirmed them. For example, in its resolution 2628 (XXV), which was adopted five years ago, the General Assembly recognized that respect for the rights of the Palestinians was an indispensable element in the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. In resolution 3236 (XXIX), adopted last year, the Assembly recognized that the Palestinian people was a principal party in the efforts to establish a just and lasting peace in the Middle East, and again reaffirmed 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 right of the Palestinians to return to their homes and property from which they had been displaced and uprooted, and called for their return. The resolution further recognized the right of the Palestinian people to regain its rights by all means in accordance with the principles and aims of the Charter.

46. Here I should like immediately to stress the following. The Czechoslovak delegation supports the demand that the conclusions reached in the discussion of the Palestinian question by the United Nations should be consistently respected. This would be in the interests both of the Arab people of Palestine and of all peoples in the Middle East and in the entire world.

47. The present policies of Israel are a serious obstacle to a positive solution of the Palestine question. As has been shown by the discussion at the present session of the General Assembly, the representatives of Israel, although acknowledging by their words that genuine peace in the Middle East should include a constructive solution of the problems of the Palestinian Arabs, at the same time stubbornly reject the PLO as a partner in negotiations to reach a settlement of the situation in the Middle East. The representatives of Israel have tried to denigrate the struggle of the Arab people of Palestine for their freedom and to undermine the contents of the resolutions adopted on the Palestinian question at the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly.

48. The representatives of Israel are motivated by a dangerous and chauvinistic logic. While saying a great deal about the rights of Israel to independence and a secure existence, they do not wish to recognize the same rights of the Arab people of Palestine. Israel is using the occupation of the Arab territories to create intolerable pressure and to blackmail the Arab countries by its outrageous demands. Israel supports and inflates the tension in the Middle East, indulges in subversive and propagandistic manoeuvres, persecutes the Arab people of Palestine even in the territory of other States, systematically violates their sovereignty and undertakes aggressive action against those countries with which the Palestinian people have found temporary sojourn. Can we be surprised that Israel is criticized and condemned by an ever-growing number of Member States of the United Nations? The discussions taking place in the United Nations and in the forums of other organizations of the United Nations family, such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, show con-

vincingly that the Israelis are finding it more and more difficult to mislead world public opinion in their propaganda by fairy tales about a peace-loving paradise called Israel drowning in an Arab sea.

49. The crisis in the Middle East and the situation which derives from it as far as the Arab people of Palestine is concerned, has even broader and deeper causes and ramifications. That crisis and that situation are the result of and an integral part of the broad attack against the progressive development of the Arab world. The Israeli governing class is playing the part of a strike force, while, of course, at the same time also pursuing its own selfish aims. Consequently, the crisis in the Middle East is not only an overt conflict between the Zionist segment at present in power in Israel and the Arab people. In the Middle East the Arab national liberation movement is encountering one of the forms and ramifications of world imperialism. We support and have great sympathy for the dauntless and resolute struggle being waged by the Arab people of Palestine and by the peoples of Arab countries in general against reaction and violence. The solidarity of the countries of the Socialist community is on their side, as is the solidarity of all progressive and **peace-loving** forces.

50. The overwhelming majority of States—even those which up to now have been on Israel's **side**—recognize the danger involved in the explosive situation which has arisen as a result of Israel's policy in the Middle East. They realize that the crisis in the Middle East represents a daily threat to all nations in that region, and not only in that region; but what certain circles up to now have refused to acknowledge is the fact that genuine peace cannot be achieved in the Middle East until the Arab people of Palestine have fully obtained their rights and steps have been taken to settle all the Middle East problems, and until full account has been taken of the interests of that people, of its desires, and of the persistence with which it is struggling for their implementation. The international community has sufficient instruments to hand for the fulfilment of the aspirations of the Arab people of Palestine. It is essential that we should implement to the letter the resolutions adopted by the United Nations, in particular the resolutions adopted at the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly, resolutions 3236 (XXIX) and 3237 (XXIX), and Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973).

51. Czechoslovakia considers itself to be an integral part of those forces which are seeking a political settlement for the entire complex situation in the Middle East by peaceful means. We are entitled to make such a claim because of our fundamental foreign policy, which is ruled by a desire for peace, security and progress, and also because of our traditional friendship with the Arab States and peoples. We honour this friendship and in so far as we are able, we give our support and assistance to the Arab peoples in their struggle for progressive and independent development. This has been amply borne out by recent state visits, that of the President of the Syrian Arab Republic, **Hafiz Al-Assad**, in September of this year to the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic and the visit of the Prime Minister of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, **Lubomir Strougal**, in October of this year to the Libyan Arab Republic.

52. Therefore we cannot agree that the inalienable rights of the Arab people of Palestine, a people struggling for their cause, should be in any way disputed. That people, in their struggle against injustice and illegality, are gaining ever-growing international support, as is shown by the decision adopted at the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly which granted observer status to the PLO [resolution 3237 (XXIX)]. The PLO is a cardinal factor in the struggle of the Palestinian people for its rights. It represents the interests of that people and at this international forum it speaks on its behalf as its legitimate representative. This year in accordance with Assembly resolution 3237 (XXIX), the PLO actively participated in the activities of the United Nations and the specialized agencies, making constructive statements and thus promoting peaceful international co-operation in the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations.

53. In May of this year Yasser Arafat visited Czechoslovakia. In the conversations that were held in Prague, leading representatives of Czechoslovakia once again affirmed their support of the demands of the Arab people of Palestine and also of the readiness of the PLO to participate in negotiations on the settlement of the Middle East situation, a participation to which they are fully entitled.

54. The intensifying process of international detente has created conditions that hold out the hope of a fundamental decision on resolving the situation in the Middle East by peaceful means. Israel has an opportunity to act now in such a way as to allow the peoples in the Middle East to achieve a lasting peace and security, that is, by implementing the resolutions of the United Nations and withdrawing from all the territories that it occupied in 1967 and respecting the rights of the Arab people of Palestine. In order to permit a settlement on this basis, the appropriate international machinery was set up, namely, the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East. In that forum it should be possible to discuss and resolve all aspects of restoring the situation to normal. All the parties should participate in that Conference on an equal footing—all those that are directly involved in the conflict, including the PLO, and the Soviet Union and the United States as Co-Chairmen of the Conference. If **that** Conference is to renew its work, it is essential that all delegations should attend with the sworn purpose of establishing a durable peace in the Middle East. We are in favour of a comprehensive solution to the situation in the Middle East which would guarantee the rights of all countries in that region to an independent existence and self-sustained development. We are in favour of a comprehensive solution, a solution which must, in consequence, also satisfy the demands of the Arab people of Palestine, including its right to self-determination and its right to set up its own State.

55. Therefore, we believe that the time has now come for the United Nations to take steps in order to implement its decisions on the Palestine question. It is precisely to this end that the resolutions of the thirtieth session of the General Assembly on the question of Palestine should be directed.

56. The **PRESIDENT** (*interpretation from French*): I call on the representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

57. Mr. AQL (Palestine Liberation. Organization): Immediately after the 1967 war, when Israel expanded to envelop the whole of Palestine in addition to Egyptian and Syrian territories, Moshe Dayan, the then Defence Minister, declared: "If you look in the book of the Bible, you will find the land of the Bible and, on no account, are we going to give up our right to this land." In a later interview with the London Sunday Times, the former Israeli Prime Minister, Golda Meir, declared with arrogance and cynicism: "Who are the Palestinians? They never existed."

58. The purpose behind the reference to these familiar stereotyped Israeli pronouncements is not to elicit further condemnation of the designs of Zionism, but rather to shed light on the time element adroitly employed by Zionism, which unfolds its expansionist and racist programmes gradually, but systematically.

59. When the Balfour Declaration was promulgated in 1917, it implied that the wandering Jew had had enough persecution and that it was high time he settled somewhere in Palestine because of religious and emotional ties. At the time, that is, in 1917, the Palestinian Arabs constituted more than 96 per cent of the population and owned no less than 98 per cent of the entire land of Palestine.

60. By 1947, through illegal immigration, blessed and aided by the British Mandatory authorities, the Jewish community constituted 30 per cent of the population with a land ownership not exceeding 6 per cent. It was then that the Zionists unfolded another stage of their programme when, through the back-stage manoeuvring of the United States and in the absence of almost all the countries of the third world, the General Assembly recommended the partition of Palestine, allotting to the Zionists 56 per cent of the territory of our homeland.

61. The stage was set for the implementation of the statehood stage in the Zionist programme. Consequently, in 1948, the Zionist forces occupied 72 per cent of the land of Palestine, uprooting and dispossessing its indigenous Arab population at bayonet point.

62. Having established their Israeli State, the next stage in the Zionist programme was aimed at luring the Jews in the Diaspora to settle in Palestine, hence Ben Gurion's famous pronouncement: "In the past we were a people without a land, now we are a land without a people." This stage was also characterized by persistent attempts to curb the development of the neighbouring Arab countries by constantly attacking them and engaging them in complex issues.

63. By that time almost 20 years had passed since the Palestinian exodus. Israeli occupation, by Zionist and United States logic and standards, had become a fact, and facts are facts, irrespective of the rights of the indigenous Palestinian people.

64. The time was ripe for the implementation of the next stage which resulted in the occupation of the whole of Palestine and the expulsion of the Palestinians, some of whom were made refugees for the second time in their life.

65. The declarations of Dayan and Meir, referred to earlier, were, therefore, from the standpoint of timing, a crowning of the prophecies of the founders of Zionism

who, as is evident in Herzl's diaries, envisaged the expulsion of the Palestinians as early as 1897, and decided to eradicate the Arab character of Palestine as early as 1917, as recorded in Weizmann's memoirs, *Trial and Error*.

66. But have the Palestinians succumbed to those prophecies? Have they surrendered to Israel's American sophisticated war machinery? Have they perished or disintegrated? In point of fact, the Palestinians are so far aware of the real designs of the Zionist programme, as to have experienced a rebirth, a revolution.

67. The Palestinian struggle for liberation has been endorsed by this Assembly. Materially and morally it has deserved the support of the overwhelming majority of the Member States. At the same time, your Assembly has repeatedly recognized and condemned the pernicious character of Israel and its aggressiveness. Any other State so frequently censured and so seriously condemned would have either tried to reform itself and conform to the principles of the United Nations and to the norms of behaviour of the civilized world, or else it would have withdrawn from the United Nations of its own accord to evade censure and condemnation. These would have been the responses of any State with a semblance of dignity; but Israel, being a colonial-settler regime, has neither dignity nor shame: it awaits expulsion from the ranks of the civilized. Though enough messages have been signalled to it by international organizations and United Nations affiliated agencies, it persists in its aggression, oppression and exploitation.

68. Greatly assisted as it is by the United States, Israel can certainly afford to flout the will of the international community and defy this Assembly. Does Israel's representative wonder how so much contempt and scorn are heaped upon his State? He should know that in this day and age no other State in the world offers an entire people, whose whole land his State occupies, the option of national extinction. No other State in the world offers a people valiantly struggling to liberate its land, the territory of another State as a solution to its national quest. No other State in the world adheres to the principle of conquest as a valid principle of international behaviour. But we must pay the Zionist representative the compliment of consistency. In the past, the Zionists persuaded Britain to assist them in conquering Palestine and they both succeeded temporarily; now the United States has pledged to sustain this conquest. At present, the disciples of these same Zionists are callously asking the international community to solve the Palestine problem by effecting the conquest of another State. It should have become clear to the Zionists and their allies that the Palestinians wish and will is to liberate Palestine. Not only will the liberation of Palestine solve our national problems it will also accomplish much more—it will liberate the Jew in Israel and elsewhere from the oppression of Zionism and its tyranny.

69. The Palestinian alternative to a Zionist Israel will enable people—regardless of their faith, national origin or language—to coexist on a footing of complete equality. The Palestinian revolution struggles for the establishment of such a political community.

70. Despite our physical expulsion from our homeland, resulting in severe economic hardship in exile

and under occupation, and despite the occasional war or the surprise raid against one of our refugee camps, we have dealt with our problems and arrived at our solutions creatively and diligently. Meanwhile, we have attained a high level of education as evidenced by statistics-11 per thousand Palestinians are today at university (whereas only 3 per thousand is the rate among the so-called Arab citizens of Israel). Ninety per cent of all our school-age Palestinian children are in school so we expect to achieve universal literacy in less than **five** years. We actively participate in the economic development of the Arab world-thanks, in part, to the support and assistance of our Arab brothers.

71. We are proud of the fact that the high educational achievements of our people and their skills have been creatively utilized by the developing States of the region which, in turn, have made it possible for our highly skilled population to contribute to social and economic development schemes therein.

72. But neither the passage of years nor fraternal assistance can make us ignore or forget our Palestine. We continue to call for a just solution to our national problems and for the retrieval of our homeland. Our acute political awareness has been instrumental in frustrating all schemes envisaged by Israel and its allies to settle us in territories other than Palestine. This same political consciousness makes us respect the integrity of political communities that have sustained us during our exile and given us shelter. That is why we are gravely concerned about all external threats to Lebanon whose peaceful development in the past contributed to our development, and whose stability in the future will aid our continuing struggle for the liberation of Palestine.

73. The culmination of this process of national political reintegration came in 1964, when we sent representatives to Jerusalem to reassume the initiative in determining the type of programme and strategy of liberation to be pursued in the coming years. That was not an easy task. The Zionists and the imperialists tried in vain to place serious obstacles in our way. Nevertheless, we emerged from the Palestinian National Congress of 1964 with a charter which spelled out, in detail, the major outlines of a national **programme** of liberation and specified our absolute need for national independence. That Congress gave rise to the organization that was to mobilize the Palestinian people to undertake the task of national liberation and elect an Executive Committee. Ever since then, the PLO has organized and led a dispersed population. The Palestine National Council, to which the Executive Committee stands accountable, is the highest legislative **authority** of the Palestine people. It is this authoritative body which promulgates our national goals, formulates our aspirations, and enacts our legislation. It comprises representatives of all political groups and individuals active among the Palestinian people. Our organization acquired its legitimacy from its acceptance by the Palestinian people in exile and under occupation. Today all Palestinians are represented in the Palestine National Council whose Constitution they accept and implement. As a liberation organization, our task has been defined with clarity-liberation. While engaged in our liberation struggle, politically, militarily and diplomatically,

we continue to work actively to promote the welfare of our people in the refugee camps and to alleviate their suffering. Thus the PLO creates and supervises; educational, social and cultural institutions for the well-being of our Palestinian people.

74. In the discharge of our objectives and the implementation of our programmes we have been immeasurably aided by friendly States and peoples throughout the world. The recognition which the majority of the States in this Assembly-particularly the socialist and the non-aligned countries-has extended to our Organization, has enabled us to reach our present status at the United Nations. As early as 1969, members of this Assembly began to recognize the legitimacy of our armed struggle, and acknowledge that our revolution is an answer to a colonial **occupation** which deprives us of the exercise of our right to independence. The culmination of this steady recognition came when the majority of the members of this Assembly voted in 1974 to endorse our rights, calling, in its historic resolutions 3236 (XXIX) and 3237 (XXIX), for our independence in Palestine and recognizing the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

75. Our transitional programme, adopted by the National Council, is a clear programme for independence. We are engaged in translating that programme into action and continue to implement it politically, militarily and diplomatically; in doing so we have the support of all our people. The Assembly's historic resolutions confirmed the international validity of our programme for independence.

76. The stage is set now for the United Nations to undertake effective measures to implement resolution 3236 (XXIX). The Assembly has before it a draft, resolution which calls for the implementation of the Palestinian right to independence and sovereignty. It is being urged to create effective mechanisms and machinery for the implementation of a right it has endorsed and affirmed! it is asked to set a time-table for independence; and it is urged to consider punishing those who flout its will.

77. Our people expect you to honour your pledge to uphold the Charter of the United Nations and its resolutions and to thwart all efforts, irrespective of their source, to frustrate the will of the international community, divert it or undermine its endeavours. By contributing to the process of restoring the rights of the Palestinian people in Palestine and ensuring their national sovereignty, you will be contributing to peace and justice in the Middle East. Only through the full restoration of our rights in Palestine, including our right to independence, will an enduring and just peace prevail in the Middle East.

78. The Reverend Benjamin **NÚÑEZ** (Costa Rica) (*interpretation from Spanish*): This is the first time that I have spoken at the present session and it is for this reason that I venture to introduce myself. I am Father **Núñez**, a Catholic priest by profession and vocation; a left-wing man and therefore in my country I am called by some "the communist priest" although I am not one. And I represent here a small **country**, but a great democracy, Costa Rica.

79. In the years 1954-1956, when I was head of my country's mission, I fought at this very rostrum for the

independence of Algeria and Indonesia; for the struggle of New Guinea against the Netherlands, **Cyprus** against the United Kingdom. If you take a look at the records of those years you will see how I stood up to great powers in struggles that I regarded as just and sacred.

80. As Ambassador of Costa Rica, I had the privilege of living for two crowded years in Israel and of getting to know the Jewish people and the Arab people in Israel in the so-called occupied territories. I am what jurists call an eyewitness. I know what happened because I lived through those events, and because I know I feel it my duty to speak in this Assembly, at the special request of my Government.

81. He who knows the truth and does not say it is not only an intellectual coward but deserves to be judged as a traitor to his God, his faith and his brothers. I am convinced that in this hall there are other witnesses to the truth that I myself have lived. Because I serve God, only God can judge me. Besides, I am too old at this stage in my life to stray from the path of truth. But at the same time, I feel too young to remain silent when I see that attempts are made to distort the truth and to accuse a whole State and a whole people.

82. We are dealing here with the question of Palestine, the same question that year after year has taken so many of the precious hours of this Assembly. But this year the situation is different. In all those years much was said of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, and few knew what that actually meant. And the fact is that it is very difficult for anyone to understand, in the abstract, the legitimate rights of a people. My country has given sufficient proof that it is always ready to support the liberation efforts of any country or people on earth.

83. Nevertheless, yesterday, 5 November, on the same day and at the same time that the President of Egypt, Anwar El-Sadat, speaking before the United States Congress in Washington about the Palestinian Arabs was handing out olive branches, here in New York the official representative of the PLO was telling us frankly and in no uncertain terms what this legitimate right of the Palestinian people actually meant. He said:

"This Israeli solution not only ignores the CNX of the Palestinian problem but insults the intelligence of the States represented in this Assembly and defies the principles of the Charter. The crux of the problem is the liberation of geographic Palestine, which is now totally under Israeli occupation." [2394th para. 77.]

84. If there is any insult to the intelligence of the members of this Assembly it is to be found in an assertion such as the one made by the representative of the PLO. It is enough to open any history book to see that the territory held today by Israel is an infinitesimal part of historic Palestine, and that the territory that the League of Nations put under the British Mandate for the creation of the Israeli State represented only one part of historic Palestine, 110,000 square kilometres; and that, of those 110,000 square kilometres, the British Government, in a first partition, converted 80,000 square kilometres into a sovereign political entity called Transjordan and left only 30,000 square kilometres west of the Jordan, which was again divided in 1947 when the United Nations decided to recom-

mend the creation of a Jewish State and an Arab State. These are the facts.

85. How is it possible for fanaticism to blind men to such an extent that they can maintain such flagrant misrepresentations of the historic truth? I wish to analyse the fallacy of the two arguments of the Arab Governments and the PLO in connexion with the Middle East problem. They maintain that peace will return to the area when two conditions are met: first, that Israel returns the territories it occupied as a result of the June 1967 war, the so-called Six-Day War; and secondly, that the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people are recognized.

86. In order to show that this position is totally false, I ask this question. On 14 May 1948, when the State of Israel was created, there was no problem of Arab refugees or of territories. Why then is it that the armies of all the neighbouring Arab countries rushed forward to destroy the nascent State of Israel? Why could not the Arabs have had the generosity to accept a small Jewish State of about 14,000 square kilometres, and why was not the Arab State created, with the population and territory proposed by the General Assembly? There is only one reply: the Arab leaders of that time, like many of them today—note that I do not say "the Arab people", because the Arab people was not consulted then and is not consulted now on this or any other question—did not wish, and do not wish today, to accept an autonomous entity, a Jewish democratic State.

87. The Mufti of Jerusalem, the Arab leader at the time, an ally and a disciple of Hitler, was also in favour of a final solution: a world without Jews. His disciples of today incite to genocide of the Jewish people by saying that **zionism** is racism and racial discrimination.

88. The Arab refugees were a consequence of the blindness of the Arab leaders. The Arab refugees were not the cause of the attacks of the Arab States in their unbridled war against Israel, but rather a consequence of that war. Knowing both peoples as I do, and aware as I am of the statements of the spokesmen of Egypt and the PLO, and of other Arab leaders, who say that the Jews should be cast into the sea, I must state that I am firmly convinced that if there were Arab refugees it was because the people of Israel, which is its own army, is a people and a State with profound and deep-rooted moral principles. That is why there were Arab refugees. If—God forbid—the Arabs had been victorious in any of those wars there would have been no Jewish refugees, because not a single Jew would have been left alive.

89. Let us state another fact. The problem of the Arab refugees has not been settled because the Arab leaders have not wanted to solve it. They continue to use it as a political weapon. For the last 28 years the world has witnessed a satisfactory solution of the problem of 50 million refugees from many countries and peoples. In 27 years, the small State of Israel, with all its problems, with all the wars declared against it, has absorbed over 700,000 refugees, mainly from the Arab countries, and today has a total population of just over 3 million in its very small territory; yet the Arab States, with over 100 million inhabitants, with land covering over 12.9 million square kilometres and with the tremendous economic strength of their peoples, have been unable to solve the problem

of just over 600,000 Arabs whom they themselves, in their blindness and their irresponsibility, have turned into refugees. But let us be even more precise. It is not that they have been unable to solve the problem. It is that they have not wanted to do so.

90. The United Nations has already spent more than \$1,250 million on the Arab refugees. If those funds had been used constructively for education, health services, housing and industrial development for the Arabs there would have been no such problem today.

91. I remember with what distress I saw, in the centre of Jericho and round about, hundreds of homes built with international funds that had been abandoned by the Palestinians when they received orders after 1967 to go to Transjordan, where they again began to live the lives of refugees.

92. But let us leave history aside, which some governments now want to distort in retrospect. I do not want to distract the attention of representatives by speaking of the historic, age-old rights of the Jewish people over the land of Israel. That is also to be found in history books.

93. What is being called for now? The representative of the PLO told us on 5 November: "... the liberation of geographic Palestine, which is now totally under Israeli occupation" [ibid.].

94. If we analyse the falsity of that argument, regardless of the territory to which it refers, we can have no doubt that what is being sought is the elimination of the State of Israel. This explains why the PLO does not accept—does not want to accept—Security Council resolution 242 (1967), because that resolution recognizes the existence of a State that it wishes to eliminate, a State that must have secure boundaries.—That also explains why in the proposed draft resolutions... that are being circulated—I do not know whether they have yet been introduced—no mention is made of resolution 242 (1967). That is rather strange. I remember how devotedly, years ago, those same Arab Governments which today support the PLO accepted that resolution. However, on the other hand, reference is made to the creation of a committee, which, within the shortest possible time, would establish bureaucratic machinery the only purpose of which would be to eliminate Israel from the map of the world and remove it from the United Nations. Mention is made of sanctions and of suspension or expulsion and, what is even more serious, the cancellation at one stroke of that small step towards peace that was made by the recent agreement hailed with such great hopes by the whole world.

95. The purpose of this whole battery of lies and falsehoods is to raise a smoke-screen before our eyes. Whom does the PLO represent? The 470,000 Arabs in Israel? The approximately 1 million Palestinian Arabs from the territories occupied after the Six-Day War? The 650,000 Palestinian Arabs who live, work and govern in Jordan and represent the majority of its population? Who has given it representative powers? A congress of Arab leaders, many of whom do not represent democratic Powers? Has there been a plebiscite? Those who have spoken so loudly about the self-determination of peoples, in whose name are they speaking and disrupting the whole world? I ask specifically: if they do represent the Palestinian Arabs,

why were they expelled by their Palestinian brothers from Jordan in September 1970—or do they claim that King Hussein and the Palestinians living in peace in Jordan are Zionists too? Why were the true Lebanese people, who were living in peace, working and achieving progress in one of the few democracies of the Arab world, convulsed by conflict the moment the Palestinian terrorists arrived? Are the Zionists going to be blamed for that too?

96. Let us say once and for all, the PLO does not represent the Palestinian Arabs. Believe me, I try to understand the people in the PLO; my mission is to understand men. I understand their concern and impatience and I hope that their concern and impatience will find the right channels of expression, in the spirit of peace and justice that they themselves proclaim before this Assembly. They were nurtured by the Arab Governments on the vinegar of hatred; but, even so, how is it possible that there should be so much hatred, so much injustice, so many crimes committed against innocent victims? How is it possible to prevaricate and to distort history to that extent?

97. The tragic paradox with which we are faced is that we have before us two groups of people, each of which speaks of peace, and one wonders how it is possible that both the Arabs and the Israelis speak of peace. If they really want peace, why are there so many wars? The fact is that each is thinking of a different kind of peace. I am inclined to believe that the Israelis want a peace that would enable them to build and to consolidate a progressive democratic State that might be a beacon for their people and, in so far as they can set an example, for others who in reality want to live with them as brothers.

98. But the Arab extremists—and I draw a clear distinction—also speak of peace for the region. What they want for Israel, however, is the peace of the graveyard, and they have come up against a generation of Jews who have returned to the land of their forefathers not to dig their own graves but to build roads of peace, to plant trees of life and construct cities of progress. That is the difference between the peace that each group seeks in the Middle East.

99. The call for the extermination of the State of Israel, which in itself constitutes one of the most serious crimes in history, would appear not to be enough for the Arab leaders and the PLO. Filled with euphoria and supported by an overwhelming majority, the Third Committee approved the greatest aberration in history that could be imagined, a blasphemy against truth and common sense and an insult to human decency; they have adopted the principle that **zionism** is racism and racial discrimination. What a tragic paradox, that the Jewish people, with its ideal of Zion, the greatest victim of racism and racial persecution throughout history, is now, by virtue of a draft resolution of the "petro-majority", a racist people and movement. The truth is that, rather than reality, it seems like a **Dantean** nightmare. That same majority could have voted for a resolution stating that "we, the majority of the United Nations, decide that, as from today, there is no God".

100. We must have a coalition of peoples and men of good will to eliminate the hatred that exists in a group of leaders. We must root it out from their hearts and minds as we root out weeds. Hatred is the bastard

of stupidity and mistrust, and feeds on lies. Grown, it becomes a monster that devours everything in its path and, very often, even those who created it.

101. I am convinced that there are some Arabs who understand that with these anti-Israeli, anti-Zionist festivals we deviate from the cause of peace and all the honest efforts made to achieve it. Please God that the day may come when we hear these voices.

102. This institution, the United Nations, was created 30 years ago to become a temple of faith in truth, friendship and brotherhood among peoples, a temple of civilization; but it could easily become an uncivilized jungle in which the law of the strongest and the most powerful reigns, which could threaten the world with a boycott that would paralyse it and give effect to that boycott; which could threaten it with death and murder.

103. I, a simple priest, the representative of a small country, which cherishes democracy and is ready to support peoples in the great process of liberation, ask those representing their Governments and peoples here whether they will allow this to come about.

104. Let us be tranquil and rise above hatred and human wickedness. The fate, not only of the United Nations, but possibly of something much more serious, is in our hands-something greater, which perhaps we are not able to understand. Let us support the legitimate aspirations of peoples, without in any way harming the aspirations of other peoples.

105. It depends on you, on the decision you adopt, whether future generations, when they recall your names and those of your Governments at this critical moment in history, pronounce a curse or a blessing. May God enlighten us.

106. Mr. AKHUND (Pakistan): Palestine is a land of history, the birthplace of three great religions which for centuries coexisted in peace and tolerance in the Holy Land. Today it is torn by strife, and its people have been dispersed and driven from their homes.

107. An explanation of Pakistan's position on the question of Palestine would not be complete without reference to the long and abiding spiritual, cultural and political ties that exist between our people and the land and people of Palestine. But here I shall only recall that in 1940, at the same meeting at which the Muslims of India proclaimed a desire for the establishment of the State of Pakistan, a resolution was also adopted expressing "grave concern" at the delay in reaching a settlement with the Arabs on Palestine and warning against any arrangements contrary to the pledges given to the Muslim world.

108. In a statement to this Assembly in 1947, after the adoption of the resolution on the partition of Palestine, the then Foreign Minister of Pakistan, Sir Mohammed Zafrullah Khan, commented:

"We much fear that the beneficence, if any, to which partition may lead will be small in comparison to the mischief which it might inaugurate. . . ."

109. What followed is a matter of history. In three wars and the strife which has never abated, hundreds of thousands of lives have been lost, the Palestinian People have been turned into refugees, the peace of the region has been shattered, and the peace of the world itself has been placed in jeopardy. Year after

year, the United Nations has debated the issues, but mainly as a matter for humanitarian concern or, at best, as a territorial dispute. For 25 years this Assembly has avoided coming to grips with the fact that a whole nation has been obliterated from the political map and that, unless the people of Palestine are afforded the possibility of national existence, there can be no lasting peace in the Middle East.

110. Last year, for the first time since 1947, the General Assembly considered the question of Palestine in a comprehensive manner, in all its historical, political and humanitarian aspects. It adopted, by an overwhelming majority, resolution 3236 (XXIX), which recognized that the Palestinian people were entitled to exercise their right to self-determination and national independence in Palestine and to return to their homes there. In the view of my delegation that resolution accords fully with dictates of peace, with justice, in the Middle East.

111. That there is today a clearer perception by the international community of the aspirations of the Palestinian people and the justice of their cause is no accident. It is the result of the heroic and dauntless struggle carried on by the people of Palestine in the face of immense difficulties and endless calumnies, in order to make their voice heard again by a world which had chosen to forget their entity. No less important in changing the situation was the determination and unity exhibited by the Arab peoples, and particularly Egypt and Syria, during the war of October 1973, to regain their occupied lands and restore the legitimate rights of their Palestinian brothers.

112. The Arab struggle and Arab unity have given new momentum to the search for peace in the Middle East. Three agreements have been reached for military disengagement-two in the Sinai and one in the Golan Heights. The latest accord has been described as a "turning point", and indeed it will prove to be so if the process of building peace goes forward purposefully and clearly towards a final settlement which accords with the dictates of justice. Any attempt to use these developments to sow division among the Arabs and any hope of reaping benefits from such divisions would be a grave miscalculation and a setback to the prospects of peace.

113. It is obvious, and it is admitted on all sides, that a partial settlement is no substitute for a solution which fulfils comprehensively and completely the conditions for a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. Such a peace requires the withdrawal of Israeli forces from all occupied territories, including the Holy City of Jerusalem, and the restitution of the national rights of the Palestinian people in their homeland.

114. A realistic interpretation of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) has to be based, in the view of my delegation, on the fulfilment of the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people. The existence of a Palestinian entity can be ignored no longer. The parties to the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East must come face to face with this reality. Once the national rights of the Palestinian people are recognized and the PLO acknowledged as a party to the process, we have no doubt that a *modus vivendi* will be found to ensure the security and well-being of all the peoples in the region on the basis of equality. But it is not reasonable to expect such assur-

ances while the very national identity of the Palestinians and their right to sovereign existence are dismissed. The recognition of the right of all the peoples in the region to coexist in peace has to be based on the principle of reciprocity.

115. It is not for my delegation to suggest the precise manner or modalities whereby the search for an overall and lasting settlement should proceed. The idea that it must go forward by deliberate stages has been put to the test and has in fact yielded some results. But the time must come, and we believe that it has come, to initiate efforts to obtain a comprehensive settlement. Whatever the method or procedure adopted by the parties directly concerned, it is relevant to recall here that this Assembly, in its resolution adopted last year, recognized the Palestinian people as an integral party to the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East and designated the PLO as their only legitimate representative. It is obvious, therefore, that any effort to reach an over-all settlement, such as that envisaged in the context of the Geneva Peace Conference, must include the full and effective participation of the PLO.

116. Whatever the procedure adopted by the parties, the United Nations must fully discharge its responsibilities—both its historic obligation to make amends for the sufferings imposed on the people of the region and those obligations arising out of the resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly. As President Anwar El-Sadat stated recently in this Assembly, there is an “organic link” between the efforts that are being made within the United Nations and those that are being made outside to seek a lasting peace in the Middle East. Neither the Geneva Conference nor any other initiative for peace can succeed if it ignores the principles of the Charter and the decisions of this Organization concerning a solution of the conflict. Attempts to do so will create further complications and add to the obstacles in the way of peace in the Middle East.

117. My delegation is confident that Members of the United Nations will use all the means at their disposal to guide and lend impetus to the efforts for an over-all settlement.

118. The Assembly, more truly representative today of the hopes and aspirations of the peoples of the world, will, we are confident, act with realism and foresight and, above all, with a sense of justice, . . .

119. To ignore the dictates of justice in this case is to reject peace. The situation in the Middle East remains volatile and is liable! as can be observed, to breed and intensify further violence. Another Middle East war would throw the whole world into turmoil and disequilibrium. There is the ever-present danger that an outbreak of hostilities may involve outside Powers in a confrontation. It is therefore of immediate concern to the entire membership of our Organization to help, through persuasion and influence, in building a just and lasting peace in the area.

120. Mr. HUSSEIN (Somalia): One of the major accomplishments of the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly, in the view of my delegation, was to give a new impetus to the search for a settlement of the Palestine question. For 26 years the General Assembly was prevented from making any progress

towards a just solution because of the determined opposition of Israel and its powerful supporters, who formerly wielded a preponderance of power and influence in the world community. Today we have a different situation, brought about by the great increase in the number of non-aligned States and consequently in the effectiveness of the principles of non-alignment. It is now possible to deal with the question of Palestine on the basis of principles formulated by the United Nations rather than on the basis of the material interests of particular States or groups of States. It is possible, too, to resolve the stalemate on this question which has for so long threatened both regional and international peace and security, and to exert new efforts to bring about a just and lasting peace.

121. This renewed effort found its expression in resolution 3236 (XXIX), a resolution which illustrated the determination of the United Nations to carry out its responsibilities, assumed so many years ago, with regard to the displaced Palestinian people.

122. In 1948, the General Assembly agreed that the displaced Palestinians were innocent people, uprooted from their homes by the terror and ravages of war, and, by its resolution 194 (III), it affirmed their right to return to their homes. Since that time Israel has refused to fulfil the condition of its recognition by the world community, namely, that it restore the rights of the displaced Palestinians. It has been universally agreed that the failure of Israel to comply with their just and reasonable claims has been the cause of chronic conflict in the Middle East for nearly three decades.

123. These are some of the basic factors of the Palestine question. The United Nations, as a whole, has been remarkably clear and consistent in its view of these factors, and this is reflected in the relevant resolutions it has passed over the years. There are always attempts from some quarters, however, to draw red herrings across the issue and to ignore certain, political, moral and historical questions that are perhaps even more fundamental than the ones already mentioned.

124. It has to be asked, for example, whether the decision of the Zionists, made early in the history of their movement, to seize every opportunity to establish an exclusive Jewish State in Palestine, at whatever cost to its inhabitants, was a decision that could be supported with any respect for justice and legality.

125. If the Balfour Declaration³ is to be accepted as a valid document of international agreement, it has to be asked what became of its promise that the establishment of a national home for the Jews would not prejudice the rights of the existing inhabitants of Palestine. It has to be asked, too, whether the religious arguments put forward to justify the establishment of an exclusively Jewish State at the expense of another people can be countenanced in our secular and ecumenical world where all religions are equally respected and where none is accorded a specific place or role in international affairs. In this regard, we cannot fail to note the arrogance of the Zionists in declaring a superior religious claim in an area equally sacred to two other major religions.

126. We must question the validity and sincerity of this claim to moral and religious exclusiveness when we note that the former victims of the Diaspora and the

Holocaust seized eagerly on the opportunity to create another diaspora of an innocent people; and when we also see the survivors of the Nazi attempt at genocide drawing ever closer to the inheritors of the Nazi racist philosophy of South Africa.

127. These questions are all very pertinent, because if they are answered honestly we can understand why the Palestinian Arabs were forced into exile by a deliberate campaign of terror in 1947 and 1948, a fact which is substantiated in the writings of many of the leaders and founders of Israel; and we can understand too why the United Nations has steadfastly refused to forget the plight of the Palestinian people or to accept the Zionist attempt to deny them a national existence.

128. But our efforts to find just solutions can be hampered by the continuing attempt to obscure the real issues. We are told, for example, that the establishment of the Zionist State of Israel was an expression of the right of the Jewish people to self-determination, as though the same right to self-determination did not exist for the Arab people of Palestine. It is also asserted that the Palestinians could achieve self-determination by becoming Jordanian or Lebanese or Syrian or Egyptian citizens. We see once more the arrogance of the implication that the soil of Palestine is less vital to those whose unbroken tenure goes back 2,000 years than it is to the European immigrants of comparatively recent times.

129. My delegation believes that the world community must particularly guard against the Zionist attempt to hide behind the position that any criticism of their unjust, racist, expansionist and aggressive policies is an expression of anti-Semitism.

130. Israel alone among the nations of the world takes the unique position of equating any criticism with an attack on the ethnic character of the State. This attitude, of course, provides a convenient cover for Israel's transgressions. But no one should be deluded by this further attempt to cloud the Palestine question in particular, and the Middle East question in general.

131. My delegation believes that all the foregoing considerations must be kept in mind when the General Assembly reaffirms the principles laid down in resolution 3236 (XXIX) and addresses itself to the task of translating those principles into positive action.

132. It is demanded by the logic of history that the United Nations safeguard and reaffirm the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people in Palestine, their rights to self-determination without external interference and to national independence and sovereignty. One of the lessons of history is that peace and security in any region can be secured only by safeguarding basic human rights and eliminating any festering bitterness caused by a sense of betrayal and long-standing injustice.

133. The reaffirmation of these rights is also demanded by instruments of our developing system of international law stemming from the Charter of the United Nations: instruments such as the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples [resolution 1514 (XV)] and the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security [resolution 2734 (XXV)].

134. The right of the Palestinians to return to their homes and property has always been upheld by the United Nations both on political grounds and as a simple question of justice and humanity.

135. Other provisions of resolution 3236 (XXIX) which have the greatest potential for moving the question of Palestine away from its former state of stagnation, are those which recognize that the Palestinian people is a principal party in the establishment of a just and lasting peace, and which identify a political entity representing the Palestinian people, namely, the PLO. These practical measures provide, at long last, the proper basis and the tangible lines of communication necessary for the convening of an effective Middle East conference. They provide also for an essential condition of any conference dealing with the Palestinian question—that the representatives of the Palestinian people should attend on an equal footing with other parties.

136. It has long been recognized that the Palestine question lies at the heart of the Middle East conflict and that it will not be possible to establish a just and lasting peace for the whole area unless the particular issue of the displaced Palestinians is settled, and settled satisfactorily.

137. While my delegation welcomes any reduction of tension in the Middle East, we reiterate our belief that the world community must spare no effort to bring about the convening of a Middle East conference which would deal comprehensively with all the issues involved. In this regard, my delegation particularly welcomes the proposal, now before this session, to set up a committee whose concern will be the implementation of resolution 3236 (XXIX). We hope that the committee will set as its major goal the convening of such a conference.

138. The United Nations in its role of custodian of international legitimacy can provide the framework for progress on these lines. We know that the Secretary-General is always ready to provide his good offices in support of any negotiations.

139. The year 1976 has been called the year of the Palestinian people. It is the hope of my delegation that 1976 will see not only the fulfilment of the long-denied aspiration of the Palestinians, but also the establishment of peace and security in the Middle East.

140. Mr. DRISS (Tunisia) (*interpretation from Arabic*): The general debate of the General Assembly which took place at the beginning of this session indicated a growing awareness of the major and vital importance being attached to the question of Palestine, on the solution of which depends the achievement of a real, lasting and just peace in the entire Middle East area. We have also realized that no one any longer denies the presence of the Palestinian people. In fact, there is unanimity in recognizing the need to find solutions to the Palestinian problem in response to the inalienable legitimate national desires of that people.

141. Only one delegation spoke of what it called the "legitimate interests" of the Palestinians, while a very small minority chose not to deal with this important question. However, the overwhelming majority of those who participated in the general debate called for the confirmation of the inalienable rights of the

Palestinian people. The Government of France joined action to words and recently gave permission to the PLO to open an office in Paris. I mention this in order to express our gratitude.

142. These important gains registered by the question of Palestine within the framework of the international Organization and at the world level can be added to the gains acquired at the twenty-ninth session when the General Assembly, in November of last year, adopted its resolution 3236 (XXIX), which affirms the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people, their right to self-determination without any external interference and the right to national independence and sovereignty.

143. In the very same resolution the General Assembly also recognized that full respect for and the realization of those inalienable rights were indispensable for the solution of the question of Palestine, and that the Palestinian people was a principal party in the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

144. At its twenty-ninth session, the General Assembly also adopted a resolution inviting the PLO to participate as an observer in the sessions and the work of the General Assembly and in the work of all international conferences convened under the auspices of the General Assembly or other organs of the United Nations.

145. All those victories have been achieved as a result of the heroic struggle of the Palestinian people, led by the PLO, which was recognized by the Arab summit conference held at Rabat in 1974⁴ as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. This has also been accepted and affirmed by the United Nations which now joins the majority of the countries of the world in supporting the right of peoples to liberty and justice. The situation is not as it was 30 years ago when in 1947, and by 33 votes only, the United Nations decided to partition a land which already had owners, paying no regard to the repeated warnings which were sounded at that time by various Arab parties, and by others, of the consequences and possible grave effects of this very serious measure.

146. The situation in Palestine and in the Middle East in general remains fraught with danger. There has never been peace or security and the situation has exploded in the form of successive wars.

147. We had the war of 1948, the war of 1956, the war of 1967, and more recently, the war of 1973. The ferocity of those wars increased, bringing the entire area and its people under the threat of death and destruction and increasing the complexity of the Palestine problem in all its aspects. In fact, each of those wars left conditions which carried the seeds of another war. The question that we ask ourselves today is: will this persistent disregard and denial of the right of the Palestinian people to its homeland **continue to** threaten with failure the efforts exerted for the attainment of a just, peaceful and lasting solution? In such a case hope will turn to despair and we will have a fifth war, particularly since Israel has exceeded the boundaries that were set up by the Plan of Partition [resolution 181 (II)] and has continued with its expansion until it could add important parts of the territories of neighbouring Arab States to all of Palestine.

148. While Israel is consolidating its occupation, it is changing the character of Jerusalem and violating the sanctity of Al-Ibrahimi Mosque in Al-Khalil. At the same time it dares to make accusations against the Arab States and levels illusory allegations in an attempt to defend its racist-imperialist policy. But is there anyone in the world community who still does not understand the true nature of Israel? Can anyone be deceived any longer by such allegations? Israel constitutes in that part of the Middle East a racist State which carries within itself the elements of its own decline, unless, of course, it should decide to change its nature and adapt itself to the requirements of the area, as proposed by one of its constituents, Nahum Goldmann. An objective examination of the nature of the Israeli entity would show that time is not on the side of Israel. This has finally been realized by the Israelis themselves, which perhaps explains their obstinacy and the extreme nature of their attitude.

149. Zionism is a political movement carried out by a minority of Jews designed to set up an artificial State in reaction to the oppression that befell the Jews in Europe and that culminated in the acts of the Nazi regime. Thus, using terrorism and continued violence, it has usurped the land of a peaceful people and brought in settlers from abroad, replacing the original indigenous population, who paid the price for a crime they did not commit and who became the victims of oppression and aggression. Thus the Zionist movement changed from the **defence** of the Jews to enmity towards the Arabs. Its racist character was revealed by its opposition to another part of the Semite race, namely, the Arab people of Palestine, and the Arabs in general.

150. It has been said that the problem resides in a conflict between two forces of nationalism striving for one land. That, however, is not correct. There should be no racist conflict between the Arabs and the Jews. Both are Semites and both are descendants of Abraham-may God's peace and blessing be upon him. If we look at the question objectively, it is very clear. The legitimate inhabitants of Palestine and the owners of the land are known, and their position does not need any further proof. But the question has become complicated over the years until it has become one of the most complex problems facing the world since the Second World War. It has gone beyond the conflict between the Arabs and the Zionist movement over the land of Palestine and has now involved the Arab countries; it has become of interest to the **super-Powers** and it has also become the source of either peace or war. As the great militant Yasser Arafat said in his statement before the General Assembly last year: "War flares up in Palestine, and yet it is in Palestine that peace will be **born**."⁵

151. In the light of present conditions, we consider that the possibility of the danger of war, unfortunately, is closer than the chance of peace. This is **something** that we must take into consideration when we **deal** with the question of Palestine and when we attempt seriously to find a genuine solution. We must not **slip** into fruitless rhetoric and controversy, for that is what the Israeli authorities want to draw us into when **they** try to defend the present dimensions of the **Zionist** entity, totally rejecting even the very thought of the formula proposed by the PLO, which basically **aims**

at finding the key to peaceful coexistence for Muslims, Jews and Christians. At the least, such rhetoric is premature, and we see no reason for such a discussion as long as Israel is committed to its policy of aggression and usurpation and so long as it continues to flout the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people.

152. Our attention should be directed towards finding a way out of this vicious circle in which we find ourselves. There are truths, there are facts, and sooner or later we must recognize them. The attacks waged by the representatives of Israel against the PLO are useless and will not assist in the attempt to reach a solution by peaceful means. The responsibility for this failure falls on Israel alone.

153. Among those facts and truths there is the fact that the PLO is the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and its official spokesman. The President of the Republic of Tunisia, Mr. Habib Bourguiba, in his statement to the General Assembly in 1968 said that any attempt to seek a solution of the Middle East problem required the participation of the Palestinian people and its acceptance of that solution.⁶

154. The repeated campaigns that are being waged against the United Nations are equally useless and are being carried out because the United Nations is not responding to the ambitions of Israel. The fact is that this Organization now represents the majority of the States of the world and stands for the concepts of right and justice and of the freedom of peoples. These concepts are given adequate expression and due respect now that a large number of countries, whose peoples have experienced the agony of occupation and have suffered from the bitterness of insult and injury, have joined the United Nations.

155. Israel's contempt and disregard for the States of the third world and its friends will not enable it to avoid the implementation of the resolutions of the United Nations. It has not implemented the resolutions of the Security Council; and even the Plan of Partition adopted by the General Assembly in the absence of the countries of the third world was not implemented honestly by Israel, which in fact used it as a spring-board for expansion year after year. Thus the resolutions of the United Nations remain paper resolutions, while in Palestine and the occupied Arab territories the violation of human rights and the defiance of the letter and spirit of international law continue.

156. These flagrant violations, acts of defiance and challenges to the United Nations cannot, however much Israel tries, disguise the core of the problem which is before us now. It is no longer a question of conflict between national aspirations; the question now is the right of the Palestinian people to their homeland and to self-determination.

157. The new element that should be taken into consideration in the Middle East, as was mentioned by the President of the Republic of Tunisia, Mr. Habib Bourguiba, in his statement at the dinner in his honour given by the then President of the United States Mr. Lyndon Johnson, on 15 May 1968, is the emergence of the Palestinians themselves of the international scene. The Palestinian people have assumed and will

continue to bear the responsibility for the struggle for the restoration of the right to its homeland and it will choose the formula that will put an end to the struggle in that area.

158. The Arab summit Conference held last year at Rabat⁴ indicated the practical methods and means capable of ensuring attainment of the objectives for which the Palestinian people has struggled and which would enable it to set up a Palestinian State in its homeland, Palestine. The policy of oppression practised by Israel in the occupied territories and its military aggression against refugee camps cannot, however cruel they may be, weaken the determination of the Palestinian people or prevent the attainment of its just objectives.

159. The attitude of my country to the Palestine cause is well known. It has been affirmed by the President of the Republic of Tunisia on various occasions, most recently in the statement he made last week when he announced once more that Tunisia would always stand by the Palestinian people and support it with all the means and possibilities at its disposal. This absolute support for the just struggle waged by the Palestinian people under the leadership of the PLO is based on our firm belief in the legitimacy of this struggle. However long the continuous sacrifices of the proud Palestinian people may last, they will not be in vain. Victory will be achieved and the determined will of the people will be implemented.

[The speaker continued in French.]

160. Mr. President, before closing my statement, may I offer you once again the congratulations of my delegation and wish you every success in the remaining activities of the General Assembly.

161. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): I thank the representative of Tunisia for the kind words he addressed to me.

162. Before adjourning the meeting, I wish to remind representatives that we decided yesterday that the deadline for the submission of draft resolutions or proposals would be tomorrow, Friday, at the beginning of the morning meeting.

The meeting rose at 5.45 p.m.

NOTES

¹ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Second Session, Plenary Meetings*, vol. II, 128th meeting, p. 1426.

² Agreement between Egypt and Israel, signed at Geneva on 4 September 1975. See *Official Records of the Security Council, Thirtieth Year, Supplement for July, August and September 1975*, document S/11818/Add.1.

³ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Second Session, Supplement No. II*, vol. I, document A/364, annex 19.

⁴ Seventh Conference of Arab Heads of State, held at Rabat from 26 to 29 October 1974.

⁵ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-ninth Session, Plenary Meetings*, 2282nd meeting, para. 83.

⁶ *Ibid.*, Twenty-second Session, Plenary Meetings, 1658th meeting, para. 15.